# The Process of Inferencing in Language: A Comparison of English and Yoruba Languages

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**A thesis submitted to the Postgraduate School, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in English Language**

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**MAY, 1998**

## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis titled 'The Process of Inferencing in Language: A comparison of English and Yoruba Languages' has been written by me and it is a record of my own original work. It has never been presented anywhere for a higher degree.

All quotations are indicated and the sources of information are acknowledged by means of references.

Signed: _____

Date: 5/7/98

## CERTIFICATION

This thesis entitled 'The Process of Inferencing in Language: A comparison of English and Yoruba languages' has been read and approved as satisfying the regulations governing the award of degree of Master of Arts in English Language of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Nigeria.

Chairman, Supervisory Committee — Date: 4/09/98

Member, Supervisory Committee — Date: 9/9/98

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Dean, Post Graduate School — Date: 14/07/99

## DEDICATION

To my late husband, Dr. OLUKUNLE FADIMU

and

My late parents:

MR. OLUWASANYA OGUNLADE and

MRS ADUKE OGUNLADE

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My deepest gratitude goes to the Creator who is the source of all wisdom, knowledge, inspiration and ability.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. J.S. Aliyu of the Institute of Education, A.B.U. Zaria for his constructive criticisms and suggestions which have been of tremendous help to the successful completion of this work.

I am much indebted to Dr. T.O. Gani-Ikilama of the Department of English for her advice, comments and assistance which have enabled me to maintain my focus throughout the course of working on this study.

I would also like to thank Dr. A.A. Joshua for the necessary motivation for the success of this research study. I am indebted to several staff members of English Department and my classmates for the joy of sharing ideas and academic materials together.

I am also very grateful to the following who were available to me as study subjects - Tope Bogunjoko, Mayowa Oyedele, Ifedayo Fadimu, Segun Agunbiade, (JR), Stephen Oyedele, and Oluwole Agunbiade.

I am much indebted to Mrs Taye Omojuwa, Dr and Mrs Agunbiade who strongly motivated me and made study materials available to me.

I am also grateful to my friends who supported me from the very beginning to the end of this study. In particular, I am grateful to Dr. Ọlabisi Ọbadọfin of Faculty of Education, Lagos state University, Ọjọọ, Mrs. E. Atere-Roberts of NARICT, Zaria and Dr. Foluke Adeniyi of Faculty of Education, A.B.U., Zaria.

I also thank Esther Ibiobamimo who has helped to type some parts of this work. I am grateful to Dr. Bamikunle of the Department of English, A.B.U. for his readiness to provide useful advice and materials and Mr Matemilola of Federal College of Education, Zaria for reading through this work and providing very useful suggestions, in particular, the segments on Yoruba. I also thank Dr. Sadiq of languages section, Institute of Education, A.B.U. Zaria.

Realistically, it is not possible to list the names of all the people who have given me one assistance or the other while I was working on this research, but I do appreciate the help everybody has rendered and pray that the Almighty reward you all.

I accept responsibility for all the mistakes that still remain in this work.

# ABSTRACT

The use of English language, both oral and written, is always intriguing particularly at the metaphorical level. It has always been fascinating to observe that in the attempt of a writer to 'conceal' some information in his writing, he ends up provoking his audience to make inferences (whether correctly or wrongly). The question one is tempted to ask is, 'why a writer (or speaker) should make some information overt, and others hidden. If this is a literary technique, how does it aid the process of interpretation?'

This study set out to examine the use of language in a special way by studying newspaper articles and texts from magazines. It focused on two languages - English and Yoruba. The purpose of the focus on these two languages was to compare the techniques that make statements prone to inferencing in the two languages and to highlight the areas of similarity and (or) dissimilarity. These two languages employ expressive or subjective language (that is, language that has some emotive function to perform) among other styles. They both use figures of speech extensively, although in terms of interpretation, Yoruba texts and speeches are often translated as 'wholes' for effectiveness, fragmented translation though possible, will not provide accurate interpretation of a Yoruba text.

The study is divided into five chapters. The first chapter introduces the research problem and states the aims and scope of the study. It also provides justification for research.

Chapter two discusses the review of related literature to the study of language and the process of interpretation.

Chapter three discusses the theoretical framework adapted for the study which is a combination of modified functional grammatical approach to interpretation and frame-system theory.

Chapter four provides the analysis of the selected texts and the discussion of the data. It also includes the comparison of the linguistic and non-linguistic observations made *on* the English and Yoruba texts which form the corpora of this study.

Chapter five summarizes the research work and conclusions are drawn from the analyses in chapter four. Areas of further study are also suggested in this chapter.

From this study, it became obvious that all the elements which are present in a particular piece of writing or utterance which will make the audience to attempt to interpret it beyond the literal level are present in both English and Yoruba.

It was also discovered that, in the two languages, the writer or speaker is the one who initiates the process of inferencing by deliberately making some information overt and some others hidden. He also provides conversational clues to assist his audience to make inference.

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CHAPTER 1

# INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Language, Culture and Style

Language serves as a link between the writer or speaker and his audience. The way one person makes use of a language differs from the way another person makes use of the same language even when they are describing the same thing. This is partly because of the experience the individual writer/speaker has been through and the level of exposure he expects his audience to have attained in relation to the use of that language and the subject of discourse.

The linguistic study of different styles is called stylistics (Chapman, 1973:11). Holman and Harmon (1986:488), define it as 'the study of style in literature which concentrates on the choices available to a writer, chiefly vocabulary, syntax and texture of diction...'

Any linguistic choice is inevitably a stylistic choice since it affects the style of an utterance or a text. Stylistic choices may be deliberate and conscious or automatic and unthinking (as in many everyday communication). Many definitions have been put forward for stylistic meaning. Among these are those of Crystal & Davy (1969); Crystal (1985) and Leech (1974:16). In particular, Leech (1974:16) says we 'decode' the stylistic meaning of a text by our recognition of

different dimensions and levels of usage within that same language.

The forming of conclusion from an information (or premise) or the conclusion drawn from data is inference. When an utterance is made, the listener interprets it according to the experiences he has had. When a set of sentences is read, the reader makes many assumptions which are inferred from the information provided in the individual sentences. For example:

1. Umaru knew that a new engine was expensive.
2. There was always Uncle Togun.
3. Umaru reached for his telephone notebook.

Much inference can be made in tying these sentences together. For example, Umaru's need for money to buy a new engine, the money to buy the engine had to be borrowed because Umaru did not have it. There is a willing Uncle who can be reached on the phone. Rumelhart and Ortony (1977)[1] note that these three sentences form a 'snippet' of a story which many people can interpret quite readily. Also in children's stories, inferences are made to link sentences together to form a coherent event. The writers of these stories 'deliberately' leave out some information gaps for the children to fill. This is a stylistic device which is widely used by writers either for media reports or entertainment. The particular inferences made are also guided by aspects of the story context. The text below is an illustration:

> The truck driver was tired and worried. His truck came to a halt and he was all alone. It was extremely dark and the harmattan wind was blowing. The man took off his overall, rolled down the window and got out as fast as he possibly could. Then, he began to move towards the city. He felt relieved when he saw the city lights afar off!

This passage appears easy to understand but many assumptions may have to be made by the reader. Some of these assumptions are that the truck stopped on the road, the driver rolled down the window and opened the door and got out. But when the passage is read with the clue that the truck was submerged and that it got stuck in the muddy water, many events will be understood differently. Contextual clues affect inferencing while one is reading or listening, the addition of one adjective or substitution of one connective with another can affect how a reader understands a set of events.

As earlier stated, language is a method of communicating ideas, the number of languages in use in Nigeria alone today is over Four hundred and fifty according to the 1963 census[2]. In India, eight hundred and forty-five languages are spoken according to the Guinness Book of records. When some people speak the same language, we say they have 'one' language. How do we define language as 'one' and classify some (languages) as its varieties? The Yoruba language for example, has many other languages or dialects which are closely related to it in the sense that a speaker of the Oyo Yoruba (considered by the Yoruba people as the original version) can 'understand' some

words used in some versions of Yoruba while in many other versions he cannot. However, the users of these 'other' versions understand and do speak the Oyo version of Yoruba. The Owo dialect is quite distinct from the Ijesa dialect but the speakers from these regions use the Oyo (version of) Yoruba language when the occasion calls for the use, even though their two dialects are not mutually intelligible.

'Language' says Bollinger (1968)[3], 'are people', language reflects the culture of the people and so a group of people who speak the same language have the same cultural background or 'one great tradition' as Fishman (1971) puts it.

Again Bollinger is of the opinion that varieties may be enormous but similarities in human language abound. He considers language as 'a system of vocal auditory communication using conventional signs composed of arbitrarily patterned sound units and assembled according to set rules, 'interacting' with the experiences of its users'. Language is seen by scientists like Pavlov, (1849-1936) and Skinner (1904-1971) as a patterned behaviour. It is a way of acting. It is skilled behaviour and it has to be learned. When an individual speaks language in an incomprehensible way, what he has spoken is not considered as an effective use of language. A language user is expected to use the language in such a way that his audience is able to infer what the language user has the mind to communicate.

Language as an activity cannot be restricted to only speech ability. Human beings can also communicate efficiently through writing, though the art of writing leaves a great deal out of the art of communication. Take for example intonation. This researcher is of the opinion that no communication is as effective as the face-to-face communication, because some of the 'communicative act' is usually contained in the face expression and posture of the communicators. This is called Gesture. Gestures are of great importance to the art of communication and are of prime importance to inferencing. For example:

You don't mean this is your husband.

The sentence above can be interpreted in several ways by the hearers depending on the expression on the face of the speaker. For example, with the head of the speaker slightly forward, his mouth left open after 'husband', the sentence is a question asked with surprise. But with head erect, mouth closed after 'husband', the utterance is a statement. Sometimes, expression is the only way to tell a question from a statement. Gestures are very important to inference as they accompany accents in intonation to further reinforce the syllables on which the accent falls.

Language of humans is considered to a large extent arbitrary. There is largely no connection between the sound of a word and its meaning. If there were, an individual will be

able to infer the meaning of a word by merely listening to their sound. However, language users have ways of giving cues to the audience to aid them in inferring correctly what the speaker or writer is talking about. It is usually of great interest to learners of language to discover that even though different languages do not express things the same ways, there are some basic similarities in all languages. 'There are differences in details' as Bollinger (1975) puts it but when broadly looked at, all languages are 'put together' in similar ways. This discovery led to an extensive study on the subject of universality of language. In the end, the study made remarkable discoveries among which are that in all languages, nominal and verbal phrases are used and that the nouns far exceed the verbs. A noun in one language can therefore be expected to translate a noun in another.

For example: Oliver lifts up the mortar.

Yoruba: Oliver gbé odó náà sókè

The Yoruba word 'odó' clearly translates the English word 'mortar'. All languages according to the discovery have nominal and verbal modifiers. These operate as adjectives and adverbs. Looking at the sentence above, 'the' article (adj.) specifying which mortar, has the Yoruba translation 'na a' although it comes after the noun 'odó' which it qualifies. In the English language an adverb does not come after an article because a qualifier is positioned 'close' to the word it

qualifies. All languages have a dominant order of words but at the same time they allow variations on their basic word order. The theory of language universals also reached the conclusion that all languages have ways of turning verbs or verbal phrases into nouns phrases.

For example: Kill (verb) - Killer (noun)

Pa (eniyan) - apànìyàn

Kill a person One who kills people

A reader or listener who is acquainted with the meaning of 'kill' is most likely to infer the meaning of 'killer' in a discourse. This is most likely to infer the meaning of 'killer' in a discourse. This is closely related to another discovery of language universals, that is, that all languages have ways of 'making' adjective phrases and adjective words out of other kinds of words and phrases. For example:-

Beauty (noun) - is - beautiful (adj.)

Ẹwà - l'ẹ́wà (Yoruba)

The cat eat - the cat which ate
Adj. Phrase

Ológbò jẹun Olọgbo tí ó jeun
adj. Phrase

In Yoruba language some words have two, three or four meanings depending on the tone marks they have. The word 'ogun' which is given as an example above can have six separate referents.

'ògùn' - Name of a river and state in Nigeria

ogun - War

òògùn - Medicine

ogún - inheritance

`ogún - Yoruba god of iron

`óógùn - sweat

To sum up then, because the primary function of a language is communication, for effective communication, the language user conceptualizes accurately and bearing in mind the level of exposure of his audience to the language and the concept he has in mind, he goes ahead to make some linguistic choices to put his message across.

The meaning of an utterance is not brought about by the sequence of its components or of the meaning thereof The relation of the meaning of a sentence to its superficial form is in fact complex. For example, the statement:

1. Fola isn't rich but polite.

'n't denies the proposition 'Fola is rich' but not

The proposition 'Fola is rich and polite'.

Another example is the intriguing sentence:

2. John doesn't beat his wife because he loves her.

The sentence can be interpreted as:

(a) John does not beat his wife (this is because he loves her).

(b) John beats his wife (the reason he does it is not because he loves her).

What devices should a language user adopt when communicating? Why do writers - novelists, newspaper columnists have styles? Why do we have to use some linguistic devices, including gestures to communicate?

## 1.2 Statement of research problem

This research study focuses on the issue of inferencing in English and Yoruba languages. The study will examine the extent to which these two languages resemble or differ from each other in terms of inferencing. Certain critical questions to be addressed in the study include:-

1. What is inferencing?
2. What is the background to the problem of inferencing?
3. What features characterize inferencing at both spoken and written levels?
4. Are there differences or similarities that exist in English and Yoruba within the area of inferencing? If so, how significant are such differences and (or) similarities?
5. How far have the signal or clues to inferencing aided correct interpretation in both languages?

## 1.3 Aims and Scope of the Study

The study looks at inferencing in English language and compares it with what operates in Yoruba language. The researcher focuses on techniques used by the writers and speakers

of each of the languages to enable their audience to draw inference from what they hear and read. In doing this, the researcher examines styles of writing in the two languages to see if they are coterminous or there is the possibility of an interwave.

The set objectives of this research are closely linked to the questions that are posed in 1.2 above:

- a discussion of what inferencing is and the background to the problem of inferencing in English and Yoruba languages.
- a discussion of what makes a particular utterance prone to inferencing and
- a discussion of the clues used by writers and speakers to assist their audience in making correct inference.

The linguistic and extra-linguistic levels of analysis used in this study do not, however, imply these are the only levels that can be used to analyze inference in utterances.

This study also did not attempt to compare and contrast the effectiveness of different linguistic choices speakers and writers make.

## 1.4 Strategy Adopted in this Study

The strategy adopted in this study is the analyses of sentences in both languages to see how language has been used. The corpora from which these sentences are drawn are the everyday use of both languages in conversation, and relevant texts.

The sentences that are examined were drawn from the conversation of different speakers at different points in time, newspaper columns and magazines. They were used to examine the process of inferencing.

When listeners therefore misinterpret what they hear or read in English or other languages, is it a linguistic or an extra-linguistic problem?

This researcher analyzed the article and utterances used for this study at both linguistic and extra-linguistic levels and at the end of the analyses, threw more light on the question of whether the problem of inferencing is phonological, semantic or syntactic (i.e. contextual) or even extra-linguistic.

As written above, the experiences of both speaker and audience in the use of a particular language in question and in the topic or subject of discussion play a great role in the speaker - listener interaction. This study examines if this issue of experience is the main problem or if there are other elements such as the totality of the clues used in the language. Some of these clues are overt while some are hidden. The conversational clues as said above are of two broad types - the linguistic clues and the extralinguistic clues. The linguistic clues include the grammar at semantic, syntactic and phonological levels. The extralinguistic clues include the use of tone, intonation, gestures, speech figures and symbols. The use of extralinguistic clues calls for a shared world of experience

between the speaker and the listener as regards the subject of discussion. For example, if I waved my forefinger at my twelve year old, it means 'no' but in some other cultures, it means 'you dare not'. This researcher will examine all these areas to find out how these clues (linguistic and extra-linguistic) combine to aid correct inferencing in language.

## 1.5 Justification of the study

This researcher believes that this study is justified because of the high rate of wrong interpretation of information which is prevalent in our society. After listening to the same passage for example, a group of students were asked what the passage was all about. They all gave different answers. Then, three clues were given to them one at a time, by the end of the release of the third clue, every student was able to make a correct inference.

Is incorrect inferencing the mistake of the speaker or listener, or the problem of the language used in communication? Does the native speaker of English face the same problem of inferencing that a non-native speaker faces? It is the opinion of this researcher, based on the extensive studies that renown researchers have conducted on the subject, English as a second language, that most of the problems of inferencing an average user of English language in the Nigerian society faces is probably caused by the fact that English is an L2 for him. But

how about incorrect inferencing in Yoruba language? The researcher feels it is important to observe if there are similar or different factors that make inferencing possible in English and Yoruba and to highlight the extent of their similarity or otherwise.

## Notes to chapter one

1. Rumelhart, D.E., and Ortony, A. (1977) in their article 'The Representation of Knowledge in memory' - published in Schooling and the Acquisition of Knowledge. Edited by R.C. Anderson, R.J. Spiro, and W.E. Montague and published in Hillsdale, New Jersey by Laurence Erlbaun Associates.
2. Sylvester A. Omodiaogbe's article - '150 years on : English in the Nigerian School System - past, present and future' - as published in ELT Journal volume 46/1 January, 1992 published by Oxford University Press.
3. Aspects of Language (1968) was written by Dwight Bollinger and published by Harcourt, Brace and World Inc.
4. Semiotics is the study of signs and symbols in language.

CHAPTER 2

## REVIEW OF RELATED WORK AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

**2.0 Introduction:** This chapter is divided into two parts. In the first part, this researcher does a general review of works on literary interpretation. She goes on to review works that require special or secondary interpretation especially within the context of the Nigerian reader. It is also in this part that she examines some works on the theories of meaning and draws a relation between the idea of inference and meaningfulness.

In the second part, the researcher discusses some elements that trigger inferencing, the technique or tools used by writers and speakers to guide their audience to draw correct inference, and signals that aid inferencing only at the oral level.

### 2.1 Review of works on interpretation in Nigeria

Newspapers, magazines, novels, plays and market literatures employ derision or wit, under the guise of entertainment, to expose the ills, such as corruption, wickedness, greed, pretence and folly of the leaders in particular and of the community in general. The oral communications the Africans engage in are deeply rooted in the culture and linguistic traditions of the people. In their oral traditions, the use of riddles, folktales, songs and myths forms an integral part of what an African writer easily goes into, to draw both inspiration and linguistic

techniques to put his idea across. In Nigeria, many of these figures of speech may sound insulting when translated literally but their real meanings lie in the deep structural level. They are used as words of advice or encouragement during weddings, naming ceremonies, funeral and annual traditional festivals.

In the Yoruba tradition, the lyric called ekun iyawo (the cry of the bride) is full of incantations and loaded with emotional account of the biography of the bride. The recitation called 'oriki' (praise song) is recited or chanted during important ceremonies organized by, or for celebrants. In the lines of the chant, the individual may be reminded how courageous and strong his forefathers were and so, he too must not tolerate weakness. On some occasions, these chants are accompanied with witty comments and jokes for the entertainment of the people around, but the celebrant will still get the message. The ordeal of a disobedient child in Yoruba language can be described as: 'aja to ma a s'ọnu kii gbọ fere ọdẹ'.

Translation: A dog that will get lost pays no attention to the hunter.

This is . translated to mean that a dog that is destined to get lost never listens to the whistle of the hunter or it's keeper. Where the child has become delinquent, Yorubas will say :

'Asọ ò bá Ọmọ́yẹ mọ́, Ọmọ́yẹ ti rìn hòhò wọ' jà'

Translation: Omoye can't be clothed again, she has entered

the market naked.

It is a belief in Yoruba culture that once a crazy person enters the market place naked, his ailment cannot be controlled. This is because the Yorubas believe greatly in the activities of witches and wizards and their activities are more prevalent in the market places. The mad person, by entering the market, receives a sort of 'stamp of permanence' for his condition.

A singer in one of his songs called the Shonekan regime[2], a transitional regime created by the military pending the take-off of the third republic in Nigeria, 'Ijọba fidi hẹ'. This is translated as a government which is sitting at the edge of the chair, a government under stress, which means that it was tottering and therefore could be terminated any time.

A gifted Yoruba song writer and actor, the late Dr. Hubert Ogunde (1916-1988) wrote songs to extol the virtues of his political mentor and personal friend, Chief Obafemi Awolowo when the latter was imprisoned in the early 1960's. Another song writer and dramatist, though a comedian, is Moses Olaiya. He wrote and acted 'Mosebọlatan' (I thought wealth has finished). He highlights the evil of greed. The use of language in a way that it indirectly criticizes the ills of society is obvious in the three genres of literary exposition. These are the prose, poetry and drama. Most writers make use of the three forms in their writings. A typical example is the Nobel Laureate himself, Professor Wole Soyinka[3], who wrote the play, A dance of the

forests (1963) , Kongi's harvest (1967) and The Lion and the Jewel (1969). Soyinka also wrote The Trials of Brother Jero (1969) which is probably the most popular among his plays. It is regularly performed in the theaters. It was written to condemn the manner in which some Nigerians take advantage of fellow Nigerians to extort money from them under the guise of religion. The protagonist of the play, a prophet, sees himself truly as a trader and his congregation, the customers. He says in Act 1 scene III:

> I am glad I got here before any customers - I mean worshippers. Well, customers if you like. I always get that feeling every morning that I am a shopkeeper waiting for customers.

Femi Osofisan's novel titled Kolera Kolej (1975) is one of the sharpest satires ever presented to the Nigerian audience. Each of the characters represents a vice in the society and most of the names clearly reflect the character. When translated from the Yoruba language, for example, Professor Atiro (one who limps), Dr. Wahala (trouble), Dr. Paramole (the puff adder), Professor Sugbon ('but' depicts unstable temperament). This researcher will like to stress that no matter the genre adopted by the writer, poetic,prosaic or dramatic, there is a unifying factor among the three and that is, the use of language in a special way to bring out a message or information at a particular time. And this is done, bearing in mind the level of exposure of the audience to the language in use and the level of experience

acquired by the audience on the subject of discussion.

## 2.2 Meaning and Inference

Extensive work has been done by linguists on theories of meaning, reference and semantics. 'These theories', according to Fodor,(1977), 'do not give correct answers to the question of what meaning is, but they might nevertheless at least specify the identity conditions of meanings,' that is, tell us when the meanings of two expressions will be identical and when they will be different. For example, the two phrases 'the morning star' and 'the evening star' are both said to refer to the same planet Venus. If this is so, the sentence:

(a) The morning star is the evening star' , should mean the same as:

(b) The morning star is the morning star.

Sentence (b) is 'uninformative' while (a) expresses a basic truth about the universe. The meaning of an expression according to Fodor (1977) is 'what the expression refers to, or the idea associated with it in a person's mind, or the stimuli which elicit utterances of it and (or) the behaviourial responses it evokes'. As much as this piece of work will not like to delve into the various arguments on meaning and its definition, which obviously is beyond the scope of this study, it will look at some aspects of meaning and some of the terms associated with

meaning in relation to inference.

## 2.3 Review of some works on Linguistic theories and Meaningfulness

Bloomfield (1973) pointed out that linguists must endeavour to be 'scientific' and that the study of meaning was a weak point in linguistic theory. Linguists like John Lyons believe that there is no clear-cut line between grammar (the rules that make up the correct use of a language) and semantics (scientific study of meaning). In a recent study, Noam Chomsky agreed that there is a syntactic deep structure which is responsible for the semantic interpretation of the sentence. Before then, Chomsky was skeptical about the whole issue of meaningfulness of an utterance. His emphasis had been on syntax (or sentence formation). He wrote in Aspects of the theory of syntax (1995). 'Syntax is the most important aspect of grammar because it helps the language users to generate sentences'. But Kempson (1977) is of the opinion that 'any linguistic theory that does not take into account semantic generalization (meaning) and syntactic ones cannot be true'. It is, no wonder then that recently Chomsky and Jackendoff proposed an interpretive theory which is the modification of the standard theory outlined in Aspects(1965). Chomsky also asserted in 1972 that :

there are other rules of interpretation that

> depend on surface structures or intermediate structures or even several structures and that this is besides the projection rules that operate on deep structures.

Since the whole essence of inference is interpretation of utterance, the semantic interpretation (meaningfulness) of an utterance, is closely related to inference. Either an utterance is to be interpreted on the literal or it has to be at the surface level or the metaphorical level, there has to be an understanding of the meanings of the lexical items that make up the utterance and the understanding of the rules guiding the way words are joined together in the string (syntactic aspect).

## 2.4 Syntax and correct interpretation

The study of meaning is closely related to syntax, this is expressed in Chomsky's words (1965):

> Grammar is best formulated as a self-contained study independent of semantics....Nevertheless, we do find many important correlations, quite naturally, between syntactic structure and meaning.

Along this line, generative semantists like Fillmore and Langendoen (1971) and Lakoff (1970) contend that morphemes generally express 'minimal semantic properties'. This is partially the view of the traditionalists who analyzed sentence structures on the basis of the individual lexical items.

Fries (1952)[5] distinguishes between two different kinds of meanings. He calls them the lexical and structural meanings and

contends that in order to get at the literal meaning of a sentence,both the lexical meaning (the dictionary meaning) and the structural meaning (the grammatical functions) of the words in the sentence must be known.

In Fries' (op cit) words:

> In the usual approach to the grammatical analysis of sentences, one must know the total meaning of the sentence... The total linguistic meaning of any utterance consists of the lexical meanings of the separate words plus such structural meaning. No utterance is intelligible without both lexical meanings and structural meanings... The grammar (phonological, syntactic and semantic) of a language consists of the devices that signal structural meaning.

Another thing that can hinder correct inferencing as well as meaningful interpretation of an utterance is structural ambiguity.

The sentences: 'They are flying planes!' and 'They are eating apples'! Are some of the examples of ambiguous sentences written by Palmer in English Grammar (1979). For example, in the first sentence, 'they' can refer to people who are doing the flying of planes or 'they' and 'flying planes' may refer to the same thing. In the second sentence, 'they' may refer to people eating apples or have same referent with 'eating apple' which means there are some apples which are not edible.

In closing this section, both linguists and psychologists seem to agree on the importance of Chomsky's deep or conceptual structure as closely associated with meaningfulness, but there is

some disagreement as to how to characterize this conceptual structure that represents people's understanding of the language. For example, Ross (1974) argues that the deep structure is much 'deeper' than Chomsky imagined when he wrote Aspects in 1965. Others wrote that Chomsky's analysis is much too syntactic and so fails to capture other levels of meaning which may specify psychological use of the language depending on the intention of the speaker. This is the essence of this research work.

## 2.5 Elements that Trigger the making of Inference

Kathleen McWhorter (1987) sees inference as a 'reasonable guess' about what a writer says and what he does not say. Individuals make numerous inferences in daily living without consciously thinking about them. For example, in the introduction to this work, the researcher gave an illustration of the waving of the forefinger to mean different things in two different cultures. Suppose an individual waves at a friend while driving on the highway and the friend does not wave back? The individual may infer that, based on some previous disagreement, the friend is still feeling hurt and has ignored him. This inference may be wrong. It could be that the friend did not see him. An inference is a logical connection that you draw between what you observe or know and what you do not know. The key to correct inference is logicality.

Apart from vocal communications, writers usually go beyond what they write. They expect their readers to make use of what

they write to infer what they mean. This is an effective literary device whereby the reader or listener finds the subject of discussion more interesting as he makes use of the cue or signal the writer gives to draw inference about what he has not written but implies. For example in the Bible there is this short story:

> A sower went to sow, as he sowed, some of the seeds fell by the way side, and the birds ate them. Some fell on the rock where there was no soil, they grew but because there was no soil, they had no roots, they withered and died. Some fell among thorns and the thorns grew with them, but choked them and they died off. But other seeds fell on the good soil, they brought forth fruits...[6]

The narrator here expects his audience to make an inference from the story and get what he means. To be able to make a correct interpretation of what we read, McWhorter (op cit) is of the opinion that we need to do three things:

(a) Identify the author's purpose. In the passage above, the purpose of the speaker is to teach the people (his audience) about their creator and the importance of obeying his instructions to them.

(b) Recognize the type of language used . Every event has their language or register peculiar to them. For example, there is language of aviation, language of medicine and that of sports. The language of the above passage is agrarian. This points to the fact that the audience comprises mainly

farmers. Readers can rightly infer that a teacher is teaching an audience whose main occupation is farming.

(C) Make inferences from the signals given in the passage or utterance.

From the passage above, we have identified a teacher whose purpose is to get the attention of his audience. He talks about sowing a seed, it will not be incorrect to infer that the teacher is the sower. Since the atmosphere is that of religious teaching, the seed is likely the word he is preaching. The description of the four locations on which the seeds fall may depict the different kinds of lives (of people) to whom the word is preached. The performance of the seeds on these locations may depict the response of the individual to the word preached. It will therefore, be correct to say that language use and the purpose of the author or speaker play a great role in making a sentence prone to inferencing. The use of images and figures of speech also makes statements prone to inferencing. This is discussed later in this chapter. The tone a speaker adopts while speaking is another important device that makes an utterance prone to inferencing. It is relevant to mention briefly some of the prominent tones in English. There are:-

1. The falling tone where the peak of greatest prominence is towards the end of the sentence like we have in :

she was looking HAPPY to'night.

YOU THOUGHT SO.

2. The rising tone which is used to indicate inconclusiveness of an utterance. For example:

Don't be UNPLEASANT.

3. The fall-rise tone which speakers use to express 'genuine or sarcastic warmth'

According to Quirk and Greenbaum (1976) each tone unit stands for a unit of information and the point where the nucleus falls is the 'focus of information' .

## 2.6 Statements and the potentiality of inferencing

In language use, an audience is required to make inference when a writer or speaker suggests an idea but does not directly state it. For instance, suppose a writer describes a character as follows:

> Looking into the mirror, he noticed that his hair was greying at the temples. As he picked up the newspaper, he also realized that he could no longer see well at all without his eye glasses.

The information given above leads us to infer that the man is aging even though, nothing is mentioned about the word 'age'. There are some utterances that are so direct and straight forward that the audience may not need to make any inference at all. For example in the two utterances below, one has inferential possibility while the other does not.

1. After closing from work, Mr Olu walks towards his house. His dog growls to welcome him.

2. A dog growls as Mr. Olu walks towards his house.

The first utterance is direct and straightforward while the second has some inferential possibility. In (2) it can be inferred that the dog does not recognise the man because it is not his. In most written comprehension texts, questions are set based on the literal meanings of the passage, candidates are expected to know what the author says and retain in their memories the literal factual content of the passage. Usually, such passages are direct and their meanings are basically realized on the surface levels for the sake of clarity and facilitation of comprehension.

### 2.6.1 Objective and subjective writings and Inferential possibilities

The two basic types of writing are the objective and subjective writings. Most objective writings are factual and direct while subjective ones reflect the writer's feeling and attitude and so subjected to analysis on an extra-linguistic level. The objective language is the language of accounts, reports, science and technology. It describes ideas and events without any personal involvement. Most of the written materials we use everyday are written in the objective language. Such materials include reference books, textbooks, contract forms, job application forms, phone directories and news stories in newspapers (some newspaper reporters adopt subjective language

for special purposes).

In this piece of writing where objective language is used, the writer is attempting to present facts without 'colouring' them with his or her own personal opinions and judgements. Therefore, in objective writing, the writer is detached from the idea he is presenting. The language is factual and direct. The reader is in most cases not burdened with the task of thinking what other possible inferences can be drawn from the piece of writing. For example, in the two passages (a) and (b) below, (a) is written in an objective language while (b) is presented in a subjective language.

(a) Abortion is technically defined as the expulsion of a foetus from the womb before it is sufficiently developed to survive.

Abortion was legalized in the United States of America in January, 1973. The supreme court decided that prior to the end of the third month of pregnancy, the decision to have an abortion was solely that of the pregnant woman and her physician. After that stage, abortion is permissive if the health of the mother is in danger.

The passage above (a) can be compared with (b) below;

(b) Abortion can be defined as taking the life of another human being during its foetal development.

The inhuman act of abortion was legalized in the United

States in January, 1973. The Supreme Court decided that killing a foetus prior to its third month of development was acceptable but after that point, only the self-interest of the mother for her own well-being should allow it to occur.

Passage (b) above carries the same information about abortion as passage (a). It is written in subjective language with a number of strong negative connotative words. The use of this language allows the probing mind of the audience not to only look at the literal meaning of the passage but to make inferences based on the language and choice of words of the writer. Words and phrases underlined by this researcher in the passage above help the reader of the text to deduce that the attitude of the writer towards the whole idea of abortion is that of disgust. It is the opinion of this researcher that in most cases, objectively written texts lack inferential possibilities but, as mentioned earlier, a few of them are prone to inference.

### 2.6.2 Degree of inferencing

There are texts or utterances that have partial inferential possibilities and those with total inferential possibilities. Any text or utterance is said to have total inferential possibility when almost all the words or phrases carry metaphoric or secondary level meaning like the parable of the sower discussed in 2.6. The text carries an entirely different meaning

from what we read literally. Other examples of texts and utterances with total inferential possibilities are folk-tales whose purpose is mainly pedagogical. In some cultures, when a child pilfers, the adults in the community know which story to narrate to the child to evoke repentance from him. The same is the case for other societal vices, the adults will narrate a story in which some individuals engaged in such things sometime in the past and how they faced an unpleasant situation.

Partial inference is evident in figurative language. This is the language used to describe something that makes sense only on an imaginative level rather than on the literal or factual level. For example:

> Wale's two-timing girl friend found the door to Wale's heart closed against her when Wale got engaged in Aisla.

'Two - timing' is an expression used to indicate unfaithfulness to one's partner and in the phrase 'door to Wale's heart', there is no literal door to his heart. A part of the sentence is clear literally while the two figurative expressions used give rise to partial inferencing in the statement. Further examples on this are:

> The school authority decides to get to the heart of the matter.
>
> (Matters do not have hearts)

The College Principal drained the P.T.A. account.

(account cannot be drained literally)

The degree of inferencing in an utterance can be partial or total. Another language that makes use of partial inferencing extensively is the persuasive or biased language. Because biased or persuasive essays are aimed at convincing the reader or the listener of a particular attitude or point of view, the writer of such essays make use of persuasive devices, though linguistic, to appeal to the reader's emotions. Such linguistic devices are lexical as well as syntactic items which are carefully chosen for the particular occasion. For example, the excerpt below is taken from the article - The Brussel's Declaration published in the New York Times of June 30, 1985.

> A specter is haunting the world again, the specter of anarchy. The source of this deadly and epidemic disease is the Soviet policy of indefinite expansion, achieved by aggression and intimidation. In pursuing its conquests, the Soviet Union systematically exploits regional conflicts throughout the world, employing querrilas, terrorists and sophisticated techniques of subversion disinformation.

To convince his audience, the writer made use of logical arguments and emotional appeal using words with strong negative connotation that the 'expansion' of the Soviets is a threat to the security and peace of the whole world. He also provided a scenario of an ugly outbreak. On the syntactic level, there are frequent use of comma and full stop to indicate pauses. This is

a persuasive device to build emphasis.

In effect, the writer has been able to assist his audience to deduce what message he wanted to put across to them, that is, the Soviets are a threat to world peace and that he (the writer) was not only unhappy with the situation but felt intimidated and wanted every reader to feel the same way as well as be at alert.

## 2.7 The Techniques or tools used by writers and speakers to assist their audience to draw 'correct' inference

'Correct inference' is what the writer or the speaker wants his audience to deduce from his statement. To effect this, various literary tools are used. These include diction or the choice of words, imagery, folk-tales, symbols, figures of speech and idioms.

### 2.7.1 Choice of Words

The importance of words to style is unlikely to be underestimated even though there are other elements to consider when we discuss style. The study of the choice of words a speaker or writer makes cannot be separated from sounds and syntax. The complete meaning of a word is always contextual and no study of meaning of a word apart from its contextual use can be regarded as complete. A certain component of a word is described when it is given a grammatical designation. Generally speaking therefore, we can say we have two meanings for a word,

the first is the true original and essential meaning and secondly, the many meanings it comes to have in application or use.

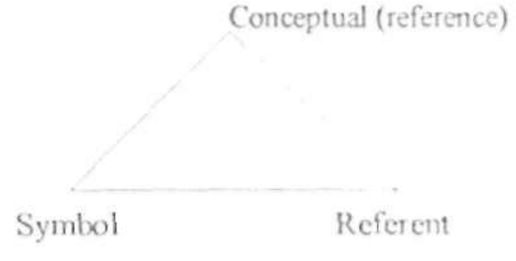
In Zipf's study of the principles of relative frequency in language (1932), he used the terms 'primary' meaning or denotation in the singular and 'secondary' meaning, metaphors or connotations, all in the plural. Sperber and Stocklein (1988) emphasized the fact that a change of meaning of a word is not brought about in a single word as such but in a complete functioning context.

Lyons (op cit) while discussing word meaning in terms of sense and reference, identifies them as 'ways of expressing descriptive meaning which is different from social and expressive meaning'. Reference is the relationship which holds between an expression and what it implies or stands for on a particular or specific occasion of it's use. For example, the word 'goat' in the sentence : Tinubought a big goat for Christmas'. Here goat specifies or refers to a domestic four footed animal reared in Nigeria purposely for production of meat. Palmer (1977) defines reference as 'a notion that deals with the relationship between linguistic elements and the non- linguistic world of experience'. He uses a triangular illustration to explain his view.

The symbol is the linguistic element - the word, sentence or

expression; and the referent is the object in the (non linguistic) world of experience. Similar to the views of Lyons and Palmer (op cit) is the view held by Fromkin and Rodman (1981) that reference stands for the relation which holds between words and the events, actions and the qualities they stand for. The views on reference as seen in the preceding paragraph shows that there must be a relationship between an expression and the external world. On observation however, one notices that there are some words which do not belong to the external world of experience yet such words are in use. For example, 'with', 'by' and 'but'. To make for this inadequacy in Palmer's, Fromkin and Rodman's definition of reference and the use of 'with', 'by' and 'but' is Lyon's view which is more appropriate here; that is , reference is the relationship between a word and what it implies.

**Palmer's illustration of Reference**



Opaque expressions also interfere with the adequacy of Palmer's view on referencing. For example, the sentence below: 'Mallama Gambo is looking for the V.C.' The speaker may be referring to the Vice Chancellor not in person but anybody occupying the seat of the Vice Chancellor. The speaker may be reporting that Mallama Gambo does not know who the Vice Chancellor is, and where this is the case, reference is opaque and the meaning of the expression is interfered with.

Sense is the notion which holds between the words or expressions of a single language independently of the relationship, if any, which holds between these words or expressions and their referents. Frege (1982) gave the popular expression 'The morning star is the evening star'. Both 'the morning star' and 'the evening star' refer to the same planet Venus but do not have the same sense . That is the reason he said that 'something extra' is usually added to reference or meaning of a word or expression and that extra thing is called 'sense'.

Apart from this wide range of categories of words from which the speaker or writer can choose depending on his intentions, writers do create words for specific occasions. The word 'unkempt' which does not have a free morpheme was used in a special way in a newspaper - The Observer, 14 April 1968 - where it talks of 'a kempt baby'. Poets too, are known to coin new compound words, for example E.E. Cumming's line 'the poor-but-

honest-working man'.

Satirists, because of their intention and purpose of writing, make immense use of connotative words. Connotation is a term used in semantics as part of a classification of types of meaning, as opposed to denotation. Its main application is with reference to the emotional associations (personal and communal) which are suggested by or are part of the meaning of a linguistic unit especially a lexical item. For example, the connotation of the month of December in Nigeria includes harmattan wind, dust, haze, Christmas shopping, parties, gifts and travelling. Crystal (1980) identifies effective and emotive meanings as alternative terms for connotative meaning. In relation to connotative meaning is euphemism which is the practice of referring to something offensive or delicate in a way that makes it sound 'nice' or pleasant, or at worst, tolerable. This technique which comes under word choice consists of replacing a word which has an offensive connotation with expressions that make no overt reference to the unpleasant side of the subject. That is why a lady will want to go to the 'ladies'' while a man will want to go to the 'Gents'. We hear of such expressions as 'the third world' countries (instead of underdeveloped or backward) and 'correct petroleum pricing' (instead of a hike in the price of petroleum products) in the news media.

There are certain words associated with socially distasteful subjects as death, disease, crime, punishment and so on.

Examples of euphemism relating to death are common. For example 'passed away', 'slept in the Lord', 'called to a higher service' and 'his sun has set while it is still day'.

The second passage (b) in 2.7 about abortion is an example of the selective use of the words to highlight the writer's intention. Such words with negative connotations like 'inhumane', 'self-interest' and 'killing' are used pointedly in the text.

In the Nigerian context, particularly in Yoruba language, which is one of the languages under examination in this study, euphemisms abound. When a man falls into the trap of dupes, the Nigerians will say 'he has been 419ed'. Yoruba will say in their language that 'he has been slapped'. A lady who has been married for a while and is becoming anxious because children are not forth-coming is described in Yoruba language thus;

O nwoju Olorun (she is looking at God's face)

A Yoruba man or woman will never say they want to visit the toilet rather they will say:

Mo fe se ga (I want to weigh less)

The word 'ga' may be related to 'lightness' of the body in terms of weight reduction.

### 2.7.2 Figures of Speech and Inferencing

Figures of speech are varied and they are commonly used in

both languages to bring out clearly to the audience the writer's intention or purpose. They include irony (a literary technique which involves bringing a message across to one's audience in an indirect manner. This has been constantly adopted by satirists). Metaphors, hyperboles and idiomatic expressions are other such figures of speech.

2.7.2.1 Metaphors

In the use of metaphors, the writer, rather than writing that one thing is like the other in terms of comparison of qualities, he writes that it is the other. Metaphor has been discovered to be the most commonly used figure of speech in language.

In No longer at Ease, Achebe writes:

'A University degree was the philosopher's store'

In Julius Caesar, Shakespeare writes:

'The skies are painted with unnumbered sparks' thus indicating the presence of many stars in the sky. In conversation, we hear speakers us such expressions as 'swallow one's pride or words', 'slim patience' and 'rottenness of some'. Perhaps the most fascinating use of metaphors is where a particular figure is sustained over many sentences. This technique was widely adopted by poets. In the play Macbeth, Shakespeare has these lines:

> Life is but a walking shadow, a poor player, that struts and frets his hour upon the stage. And then is heard no more; it is a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury signifying nothing.[8]

Shakespeare's real message here is that life has no substance, it is difficult to grasp or to understand. In the process of bringing across his message, he calls life a walking shadow, a poor player, and a story which a fool narrates. In each case, the writer stresses the point that life is meaningless. These 'figures' (a walking shadow' a poor player and a story told by a fool) naturally and clearly appeal to the imagination of the audience who finds it easier to interpret the central message the speaker (or writer) intends to put across.

**2.7.2.2 Hyperbole**

A Hyperbole is an exaggeration which is widely used by praise singers, satirists, newspaper columnists who are desperate to get the attention of their readers. Some of the exaggerations are not entirely true but are effective in 'carrying across' the author's intention and message.

A figurative expression as written earlier, is not factual and the writer is not restricted to a direct literal presentation of his concept. The reader is therefore expected to regard the writer's presentation as expressions of opinion and judgement rather than as factual information. An example of the use of hyperbole is written below. It is a 'good will' message to Dick Tiger (A former Nigerian titled boxer) when he was to challenge Fulmer in a boxing tournament in 1962:

> Whatever happens, let Fulmer know that he has met the strongest man from the continent of Africa. Fight with the strength of

fifty-five million Nigerians.

Now it was impossible for Tiger to fight with the strength of all Nigerians. Other figures of speech used by writers to aid inferencing include personification and simile. A comprehensive study of the application of each of them in language may be beyond the scope of this study and may result into a diversion from the course of the study. The point this researcher intends to establish is that each of them is linguistically relevant to the course of inferencing in language. They are cues provided by authors and speakers for their audience, they are clues to decipher the intention of the writers.

2.7.2.3 Simile

In the use of simile, the writer simply compares two things or ideas that have common features. The words used are usually 'like' 'as...as'. For example, the sentence:

John works like a machine.

A machine is not a strange object to anybody and we are aware of the fact that once a machine is properly serviced, it works without stopping or complaining. John's ability to work ceaselessly is thus brought out clearly with this comparison.

2.7.2.4 Idioms

Idioms are very relevant to the art of making correct inference. They are widely used in virtually all the languages of the world. Some even describe their use as a way of speaking that is peculiar to a particular language which therefore is

understood by the members of that language group only. In effect, if an expression is used by the speaker of a particular language and the symbols used in such an expression represent meanings which only the language group can interpret, then that expression is very likely to be idiomatic.

In the use of the other figures of speech, you may translate them into other languages and the concept will still remain the same, but for idioms, they are strictly for the use of a particular language. For example 'make hay while the sun shines' is an English idiom. Other examples are 'bury the hatchet', 'stick to your guns', 'looks daggers'. These expressions cannot be translated into other languages without altering their meanings.

2.7.3 Folktales

Perhaps the most widely used literary technique in Nigerian homes is folktales. The tales are numerous and used daily, more tales are being added to the list as soon as the need arises. Parents and grand parents use them (tales) to correct their scions and religious leaders use them as a means of conveying their religious and moral message. In Yoruba culture, the tales are usually about animals endowed with human attributes. From tales we hear of the cunning and greedy tortoise, the gentle dove, the foolish elephant, the loyal dog. For each of the virtures or vices, there is usually a commensurate reward or punishment. Here, we see a wonderful interplay of language,

experience and story that work together to bring about inferencing in a fascinating way.

### 2.7.4 Imagery, Symbolism and Inference

Paivio (1971)[9] proposes that the 'ability to create images of words affects the ease with which they can be learned and retained'. In order to explain why images facilitate retention, Paivio (1971, 1975, 1976) proposes a dual-code theory which postulates 'two separate but interconnected memory systems'. The first is verbal in nature while the other is visual. A word like 'condition' can only be verbalized and does not suggest any image while a word like 'lake' evokes both verbal and visual images. Words that evoke both verbal and visual images, Paivio discovered, are easily learned and retained in the memory when utterances are made. This discovery has been of tremendous help in language and teaching. This discovery is also related to inferencing because before a correct inference can be made, there has to be an understanding of all the symbols (linguistic) that are used in the utterance. Closely related to learning is another variable pointed out by Underwood and Shultz[10] (1960) which is 'meaningfulness'. The words used by a writer or speaker must be such that are meaningful to the audience. Some words have been labelled 'low frequency' words. These words are found in the dictionary but are not in frequent use in everyday conversation. Perhaps, for the audience to understand the message of the author, he (the author) should endeavour to use

'high frequency' words as well as more of the words that create images than the ones that do not.

Symbolism is closely related to imagery. The author or speaker, instead of going straight to mention the object he has in mind, uses another name. But his audience, from his choice of words and the context of his use of the symbol, is able to make correct interpretation of what his message is.

## 2.8 Signals that aid inferencing at the spoken level of the Language only

### 2.8.1 Stress

Stress is the degree of force with which a speaker pronounces some syllables when speaking. In many homographic words, it is the manner of stressing that determines whether a word is a noun or verb. This is so in many two-syllable words in English.

'Survey (n) sur'vey (vb)

'Export (n) ex'port (vb)

In a few cases, the changing position of the stress could make a distinction between a noun and an adjective. For example:

'August (n) au'gust (adj)

'Content (n) con'tent (adj)

These distinctions are made possible at the articulatory level of the utterance. In the written language, the reader has to make use of the context of the utterance for correct interpretation of the homographs. At the sentence level, stress falls on the key

words, actually on one of the syllables of the words. The key words are usually adjectives, verbs, nouns, adverbs and demonstrative pronouns. However, the speaker may want to place 'special' emphasis on some grammatical words which ordinarily will not need such emphasis. He may want special note to be taken of the word for some particular reason and so he stresses it.

For example:

The 'ball is on the 'table (normal utterance)

The 'ball is' on the 'table (the ball is not under the table

This is your 'husband? (normal)

'This 'is your 'husband? (There is an element of doubt)

On some occasions, the speaker may be very sure of his facts that he wants his audience to take everything he is saying as correct and so, he stresses almost every word. For example:

'This 'man murdered 'his 'wife and 'her 'friend.

### 2.8.2 Intonation

This may be defined as the rise and fall in the pitch of the voice when we speak. The spoken form of language consists not only of variation of sounds and of accentual/rhythmic patterns but also of significant changes in the musical pitch of the language. In some tonal languages, for example Chinese and Yoruba, the meaning of a word depends on the tone adopted when it is articulated. 'Intonation in English' Christophersen wrote 'is something which is added to the utterance, whether a whole

sentence or merely a single word said by itself, to give it a special personal colouring or meaning'. Intonation expresses the speaker's attitude to what he is saying. Let us look at the following:

1. It's 'beautiful 'isn't it?

2. It's 'beautiful ,isn't it?

In (1), the speaker uses a rising tone which indicates that he seeks information. In (2) he uses a falling tone which seeks a confirmation of the opinion he (the speaker) already has.

In the Yoruba language, the intonation carries a lot of important information which is not only accentual but attitudinal. For example, the meaning of this expression depends on how it is pronounced.

Wò' bí' (look at a parent)

wo'bí' (a calm imperative - 'look here')

wo'bi (look at something evil)

wo'bi! (a command, 'be attentive' spoken in a forceful and emphatic manner)

In this chapter, the researcher has attempted to write a review on some works that require special interpretation. She has also examined some elements that trigger off inferencing. It is her belief that the next chapter will not only agitate the reader but also provide an in depth exposition on the use of language to provoke inference.

Notes on Chapter Two

1. 'Omoye', the shortened form of Omoyeni. A Yoruba name for girls. It literally means a child will 'fit' anybody.
2. Sonekan regime. A regime created by the Nigerian Military Government in 1993. It was composed of men and women handpicked by the Military Government, when the then Military President General Ibrahim Babagida 'stepped aside' in preparation for the commencement of the Third Republic.
3. Professor Wole Soyinka - the 1986 Nobel laureate for literature is a prolific playwright and novelist. He wrote the play A dance of the forest staged to mark the Nigerian Independence in 1960. He is antagonistic to the Military regime in Nigeria and is currently on self exile in Europe.
4. Kempson,R. wrote Semantic theory (1977) which was published by Cambridge University Press.
5. Fries, C.C. wrote The Structure of English in 1952.
6. One of the parables of Jesus, as recorded by one of his disciples in Matthew chapter thirteen verses three through nine of the Holy Bible.
7. These two texts on Abortion are illustrations of McWhorter K. in Efficient and Flexible Reading (1987) pages 381-382.
8. Shakespeare, W. Macbeth A play. Act v scene v lines 24-28.
9. Bransford, J.D. in 1979 published Human cognition and in it, he stated that in 1971 Alan Paivio published Imagery and Verbal processes in which he examined variables that affect

the ease of learning and remembering.

10. Underwood, B.J. and Shultz, R.W. in 1960 published meaningfulness and verbal learning in which they wrote the result of their observation on what they term 'low frequency' words that is, words that are not commonly used even though they are grammatically correct and 'high frequency' words, that is, words that are in frequent use in language.

CHAPTER 3

## APPLICATION OF THE LINGUISTIC FRAME TO A SAMPLE TEXT

3.0 **Introduction**: The chapter is divided into three main sections. These are: the role of inference in comprehension, highlights of the linguistic framework adopted for this study, and inference in Yoruba language.

3.1 **The role of Inference in comprehension**

The researcher examines the importance of inference to comprehension.

3.2 **Highlights of the Frame system theory**

Here, Minsky's (1975) frame system theory is discussed to the extent to which it can be adapted for this study.

3.3 **Highlights of Halliday's functional analysis and language**

Here, the researcher discusses Halliday's analysis of language on the basis of their function.

3.4 **Proposed framework of analysis**

Here, a representation of both the Minsky's frame system theory and Halliday's functional analysis is made to represent a model which can provide 'a sufficiently adequate' analysis for the sample text.

3.5 **Application of the linguistic framework to a sample text**

3.5.1 **Interpretation at the conceptual level**

3.5.2 **Analysis at the linguistic level**

3.5.3 **Analysis at the extra-linguistic level**

## 3.6 Inference in Yoruba language

Here the issues of inference in Yoruba language and the tools Yoruba language users use to deliberately create opaque expressions are examined.

## 3.1 The role of Inference in Comprehension

The notion that inference plays a role in comprehension of discourse can be traced back to Bartlett's (1932) study of remembering. The continuation of such studies, due to the revival of interest in language, led to two main research strategies. On the one hand, researchers wrote texts which include the premises of explicit deductions in order to investigate whether the conclusion was drawn as part of the normal process of comprehension. For example, Frase (1969,1972)[1] gave passages including such information as:

> The forest dwellers are illiterate.
> Illiterates are predominatly idol worshipers.
> Idol worshipers are outcasts.

He (Frase) expected his audience to underline those parts of the passage containing information necessary to draw a conclusion that says:

'The forest dwellers are outcasts' at the end. In his research, he discovered that sentences which do not fall within this chain of inference were very poorly recalled. On the other hand, researchers examined the effect of denying or providing their audience with necessary key informatiom about a text to

determine the effects on comprehension. And as Dooling and Lachman (1971)[2] observed, the provision of a title to a passage can assist the reader, to a remarkable extent, in comprehending what the language is all about. Bransford and McCarrell (1975)[3] collate the results of several experiments showing that 'comprehension entails going beyond explicit linguistic information in order to make coherent interpretation'. Kintsch (1974) and his colleagues have also carried out experiments on inferences and comprehension and have investigated their students' ability to remember inferred information in comparison to the same information if presented explicitly. For example:

The security man slept off.

The thief made away with N1 million.

The student can then be asked to answer true or false to the statement:

The security man was not alert that was why N 1 million was stolen.

An inference is necessary in this case but not where the information was made explicit. For example:

The thief came to the bank and discovered that the guard was asleep. He then broke in and made away with N1 million.

To resolve the issue of ambiguities, Katz and Fodor (1963)[4] devised the 'selectional restrictions'. They are of the opinion that the lexical meaning of a verb is explained in relation to the noun phrase it can occur with in a sentence. For example,

the verb 'to kick' has selectional restrictions on its grammatical object, the object must be a physical entity of some sort. For example, the sentence:

He kicked the ball.

The ambiguity in the use of the word 'ball' is solved because the other meaning of 'ball' apart from a round physical object is 'dancing' which does not collocate with 'kick'. However, a number of criticisms have been levelled against Selectional Restriction. The most serious objection for the purpose of this research is that 'selectional restrictions' have not been able to account for the use of language metaphorically. Based on the identical world experience of language users, (both the speaker and the listener), they can communicate effectively even though the verb and the noun phrase, on the literal level, are strange bed-fellows. For example, expressions as the following have distinct meanings.

1. Stop beating the air (stop struggling aimlessly or work without a focus).
2. Eat your words (to deny what you have said or apologize for saying it).

Many discourses begin by identifying a specific referent and once that referent is identified, a whole chain of 'identification - referent links' can be built up around it. This process is illustrated in table 1 below. An identifying expression generally precedes its corresponding referring expression with

the exception of where a reference can be made directly because the existence of the relevant entity can be inferred from what is already known. The links between this chain require inferences which depend on the conventional distinction between 'given' and 'new' information. Language in general provides a variety of means of distinguishing between what is taken for granted by a speaker (the 'given' information) and what is being introduced for the first time (the 'new' information). The information marked 'given' is common to the speaker and his audience and the one marked 'new' introduces new materials to the audience. This convention, if observed, will enable a listener to draw those inferences necessary to establish a variety of limits which are left implicit in actual utterances.

**Table 1:** **A CHAIN OF IDENTIFICATION - REFERENCE LINKS BASED ON AN INITIAL SPECIFIC REFERENT OR 'ANCHOR' AT THE BEGINNING**

| TEXT | INTERPRETATION |
|---|---|
| Oni has got a job. | 'Oni' refers to an Individual because it is a proper noun. |
| His wife is from Delta state of Nigeria. | 'His wife' refers to an individual because she is in the relation of marriage with 'Oni' - the 'anchor', 'Delta state' identifies a specific state in Nigeria and an individual comes from there. |

| | |
|---|---|
| The state recently elected a new Governor. | 'The state' refers to the previously identified state. 'A new Governor' identifies a specific Governor since he has been elected by a state that has been identified and referred to and a state has only one governor. |
| It was through him that the couple met. | 'Him' refers to previously identified Governor. |

The principles governing identification and reference apply to various usage of pronouns. Hence, pronouns refer to entities that have already been identified, that is, to 'given' information. For example: 'When Rachael saw the house, she was surprised to find it vacant'.

An exception to this principle is when the main clause is preceded by a subordinate clause:

'When she saw the house, Rachael was surprised to find it vacant'.

In order to determine the reference of 'it', Winograd (1972)[5] organized a program assigning candidates to the list of potential referents and the observations he made,work according to these rules. The first is that if the pronoun 'it' has already occurred in the same or previous sentence, it is taken to have the same reference as before. When 'it' occurs as part of a complicated noun phrase, then it is taken to refer to the same entity as the head of that noun phrase. There is otherwise the following rank order of preferences: a 'new' referent in the

sentence, the subject of the sentence, the object of the sentence, a noun phrase in a prepositional phrase or a subsidiary clause. For example in the questions:

(a) Does the car contain a side mirror?

(b) And is it red?

In the question (b) 'it' may be taken to refer to 'the car' because it is a given referent. 'Side mirror' is also a given referent, 'it' is therefore, ambiguous here. I put my pen in my bag and because it had a hole, it fell out. Some young children to whom this statement was given and who were requested to identify the instances of 'it' gave their answers as follows:

**Table 2:** RESULT OF THE EXPERIMENT TO DETERMINE THE REFERENCE OF 'IT' IN A GIVEN SENTENCE

| NAME | AGE | FIRST 'IT' | 2ND 'IT' |
|---|---|---|---|
| Wole | 9 | Pen | Pen |
| Junior | 12 | Bag | Pen |
| Stephen | 8 | Bag | pen |
| Rabiu | 5 | Pen | Pen |

The younger children tend to treat the first 'it' as referring to 'pen' and they treat the second 'it' as co-

referential with the first. Adults use their general knowledge in order to infer the referents appropriately. From this simplified survey, some observations can be made; To be able to grasp the significance of an utterance, the listener must do more than recognizing referents, he must note the intention of the speaker and the illocutionary force of the utterance (instead of reference). The concept of speech act was introduced in order to capture the idea that sentences are uttered in order to achieve such aims as making a statement, asking a question, issuing an order and so on. It is quite distinct from the syntactic categories of Declarative, Interrogative and Imperative, though these categories are not perfect. For example, an interrogative utterance can be a statement:

Do you know I already have two kids?

Also, a common type of misunderstanding is to fail to grasp the illocutionary force of an utterance. For example,

A: Can you tell me the time?

B: Yes

B takes A as asking a question instead of making a request. The act of determining the illocutionary force of an utterance is always a matter of inference. The force of a statement can be made explicit by some formula as:

I say to you that ....

In effect, a listener should take into account his knowledge of the speaker, the linguistic context and the general circumstances

of the utterances before making inference.

A speaker clearly plays a role also in that he must make inferences about what a listener is likely to infer in order to ensure that his remarks are interpreted correctly. His task, though a demanding one, makes a characteristic asymmetry between speaking and listening. Speakers are often, from observation, satisfied with utterances from which intended inferences are to be made, but it should be noted that other unintended interences are equally feasible. For example,

You are welcome to our humble home.

We couldn't be happier to have you around.

From observation, the significance of an utterance is inferred on the basis of five main components:

1. Its literal meaning
2. Its linguistic context
3. Its social and physical circumstances, including a knowledge of the speaker.
4. A knowledge of the conventions governing discourse
5. General knowledge.

The linguistic structure is determined by the interplay of these five factors. Text grammars that apply to units of utterance larger than the sentence have been proposed by some linguists (e.g. Van Dijk 1972; Dascal and Margalit 1974). There are of course linguistic elements that make for cohesion and provide 'signposts' to the structure of a text, Halliday and Hasan,

1976). According to Rumelhart (1975), there may also be rules structuring the sequence of information in stories. However, sociologists and particularly the so called 'ethnomethodologists' have studied what actually happens in real conversations, and their accounts establish, beyond reasonable doubt, that no purely linguistic analysis is capable of fully explaining the way discourse is structured (e.g. Schegloff, 1972; Schegloff and Sachs, 1973; Schegloff and Jefferson, 1974). Part of a speaker's linguistic competence is his ability to engage in discourse according to the conventions of his culture. Grice (1975) has formulated some of the conventions into a set of precepts or conventional maxims. Deliberate breaches of these maxims are made by speakers. Listeners make inferences from such violations because they recognise the intentions of the speaker. For example:

A: How much do you have on you?

B: Nice weather we've been having.

leads one to infer that to say 'B' is a relevant answer to 'A' is unthinkable. A statement which is deliberately uninformative can be spoken to put someone in their place for example:

You are his teacher, not his mother.

It may therefore be assumed that the abruptness of an answer or rejoinder is sometimes indicative of the perceived inappropriateness of the earlier utterance. That is, the rejoinder states in some ways that 'I can't travel along with you

on that path'.

Table 3: THE COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLE OF CONVERSATION PROPOSED BY GRICE (1975)

| | |
|---|---|
| The cooperative principle: | Make your conversational contribution such as is required by the accepted purpose or direction of the exchange in which you are engaged. |
| Specific conversational maxims:<br>Quantity: | Make your contribution as informative as is required; give neither too much nor too little information. |
| Quality: | Don't say what you believe to be false. Don't say what you lack evidence for. |
| Relation: | Be relevant |
| Manner: | Avoid obscurity and ambiguity. Be orderly and brief. |

## 3.2 Highlights of the Frame system theory.

The essence of the frame theory resides on training. When an individual encounters a new situation, he selects from memory a structure or frame into which he 'fits' the new situation to facilitate comprehension of the new situation. The frame he chooses can be adjusted for the situation to fit into it and if it (the new situation or information) does not fit, the

individual drops the frame and chooses another one, until he gets a suitable one, the process is re-enacted. A 'frame', according to Minsky (1975), is a data structure for representing stereotyped situations. The concept of 'frame' originates from the results of experimental study on remembering which Bartlett did in 1932. The 'prototypes' which he identified then were closely associated with what Minsky (1975) calls 'Frames' Kintsch, (1976) Rumelhart and Ortony, (1977) 'Schema' (plural schemata), Shank and Abelson, (1975) 'scripts' .

A frame is a network of nodes and relations. The upper portion of the frame is fixed representing things that are always true about the situation while the lower part has many 'slots' into which specific instances and data are filled. Simple conditions are specified by 'markers' that might require the terminal assignment to be a person, an object of sufficient value, etc. It is the duty of each terminal to specify the conditions its assignments must meet. These assignments themselves are usually smaller sub-frames of sub-schemata. In the case of visual scene analysis, the different frames of a system describe the scene from different view points, and the transformations occurring between one frame and another represent the effects of moving from place to place. (For non-visual kinds of frames, the differences between the frames of a system can represent actions, cause-effect relations or changes in conceptual view points). The different frames of a system share

the same terminals because this is an important point that makes it possible to coordinate information gathered from different view points. Each frame terminal is filled with 'default' assignments which are fixed loosely (to the terminals) to be displaced by new items that fit the situation better. Let us look at the sentence:

John Kicked the ball.

An individual cannot think of any abstract ball, he has to imagine the characteristics of a particular (though vague) ball, which has a certain default size, default colour, default weight. It may resemble in his imagination the ball he had the last time. All these default features are very likely to change, adapt or detach from the processes that operate upon them.

The concepts of frame and default assignments have been employed by Minsky to discuss the phenomenon of 'meaning'. In Chomsky (1957), the two utterances below were treated separately, B was regarded as a nonsentence.

**A:** Colourless green ideas sleep furiously.

**B:** Furiously sleep ideas green colourless.

Both are nonsensical but they are used to draw out the useful point that what is involved in the recognition of sentences is quite different from what is involved in the appreciation of meanings.

In the process of building the structure that will represent the meaning of an utterance, an individual will need to take into

account the analysis between the positional and structural relations of the words of the utterance and the choice of words. The words of 'A' above are more effective than those of 'B' because 'A' is grammatical. The word order in 'A' exploits the grammatical frame or convention which people normally use when making utterances. Sentence A according to Minsky, (1975) can generate an image. The dominant frame here is that of someone sleeping, the default system assigns a bed, and in it lies a frame or shape with a translucent green colour. In this frame, there is a terminal for the description of 'sleep' - restless, the word 'furiously' seem to be inappropriate at that terminal. 'Ideas' is even more inappropriate because one expects a person or something animate. Utterance B does not get close to the analysis that we are able to do with A. This is because no sub-frame accepts any of its fragments. As a result, no larger frame has anything to match its terminal, and no 'sentence' or 'meaning' frame can organize the utterance as either meaningful or grammatical.

From the short story below, this researcher will present the various scenarios and highlight which of them will be most useful in terms of being framed 'thematic' i.e. scenario concerned with topics, activities and setting.

(a) Rali was invited to Rabiu's graduation party.

(b) She wondered if he would like a gold-coloured tie-clip

(c) She opens her bag and checks her passbook.

(d) She has less than ten Naira in her account.

Without the (graduation) party scenario, the second sentence does not make sense, though grammatically correct, it seems mysterious.

She wondered if he would like a gold-coloured tie-clip.

Possible scenarios from a-d above are:

Rali must get a present for Rabiu

Rali chooses a present

Rabiu must like the present

Will Rabiu like the present?

Rali must buy the present

Where is Rali to buy the present?

Rali needs to get money

Will Rali get money?

(Sub-frames may come in under 'present' frame)

Rali must dress up

What will Rali wear?

The frame (larger) terminals are these questions. There is provision for sub-frames or sub-schemata. The largest of the frames, as indicated above, is the party scenario frame, for without the party occurrence, Rali will not think about a present, money, and dress to wear. This observation assigns the party scenario frame which is essentially thematic in function. The key words and ideas of a discourse evoke substantial thematic or scenario structures. The word 'wondered' in the second

sentence requires a deeper study to understand the use. This can be done by making use of the information provided in the frame to assign default to what is going on in Rali's mind about Rabiu's possible response to a gold-coloured tie-clip as present from her.

### 3.2.1 The Script Theory

Schank and Abelson (op cit) use 'scripts' to describe frames. Even though there are differences in terms, there are some important commonalities. The areas of concurrences of these terms and observations are what will be discussed in order to bring out clearly the linguistic analysis that will be done while the frame system theory is adapted.

'A script is a structure which describes an appropriate sequence of events in a particular context' (Schank and Abelson, 1977). It is made up of slots and requirements about what can fill the slots. The structure of a script is interconnected because what happens in one slot affects the other. Scripts handle stylized everyday situations. They are not subject to change. They are predetermined stereotyped sequence of actions that define a well-known situation. Scripts allow for new references to objects within them. This is done specifically through the default system. Stories are usually scripts with some interesting deviations. The scripts or frames imply that for a story to be understood, inferences must connect each input

conceptualization to all the others in the story that relate to it. Scripts are numerous in language. There are graduation party scripts (like the frame we have above) a classroom script, a football game script, traditional wedding script, a funeral service script. A script has many players who assume roles in the action. A script takes the point of view of one of these players and the script often changes when presented from another player's point of view.

The example below is a sketch of a script for exchange of New Year present:

| | |
|---|---|
| Script: | Exchange of New Year present |
| Roles: | Host, hostesses, guests, relations and friends. |
| Scene one: | Preparation for end of year celebration. |
| | - Tidying up around neighbourhood. |
| | - Inside and outdoor decorations. |
| | - Purchase of different gift items. |
| Scene Two: | Eve of New year: lots of cooking |
| | - Identification and wrapping of presents by close friends. |
| Scene three: | New year day - lots of eating and drinking. |
| | - After morning service, then exchange of visits. |
| | - Visitors begin to stream in. |
| | - Despatch of presents to relations, friends, neighbours and passers-by. |
| | - Acceptance of presents |

- 'Thank-you' visits to deserving people.

In this script, the instrument for performing an action might vary with circumstances. For example, in scene 2 the wrapping of presents and even the cooking can be done by one's grown-up children.

Each act sequence uses the principle of casual chaining (Schank, 1973b; Abelson, 1973). This indicates that each action results in conditions that enable the next to occur. For the next act to be performed in sequence, the previous acts must be completed satisfactorily. Where there are hitches, the default component which is closely associated with many of the deviations we have in stories, come to play. Such hitches as the quality of food served by the waitress, the length of time it took the waitress to serve the food, the cleanliness of the tables and so on can be slotted into a restaurant script. If for example, the present a man gives to his wife is not valuable in her estimate and she knows that he could afford something better if he had wanted to, then a 'processor' in the mind of the wife may infer that her husband perhaps thinks she has not put in her best into their relationship. But on the other hand, if he bought her something very valuable, she can infer that he is pleased with her.

These indicate that a script is not just a list of events but rather a causal chain; a script can branch into multiple

possible paths that come together at crucial defining points. In order to know when a script is appropriate, script headings are necessary. The headings for exchange of the new year present script are concepts having to do with celebration of the birth of a new year, cooking, visitations. Scripts arrange new inputs in terms of previously stored knowledge. In the restaurant story, many items that are part of the restaurant scripts are added to the final interpretation of the story. We did not need to write that the waitress took the order or that the customer ate the food with cutlery or chop sticks. These ideas are firmly part of the story even though not spelt out.

### 3.2.2 Application of script/frame theory at lexical level

Having discussed frame/script at the sentential and discourse levels, some illustrations at the lexical level will be discussed. The knowledge of the concept 'move' in the sentence 'the boy moved' comes to mind. When this concept appears in the sentence above, the idea that comes to mind is something that is not stationary. But when one comes to think deeply about the word again, one realizes that 'move' has a more complex meaning. What about if we have the sentence 'the table moved?' The idea that comes to mind is that something like a force or an agent has been employed to effect the task of moving.

Figure 1 below is an illustration of a schema for the concept 'cut'. The schema portrays some of the knowledge that we

have about the verb 'cut'. From the schema, we observe that the knowledge of 'cut' includes such subschemata as:-

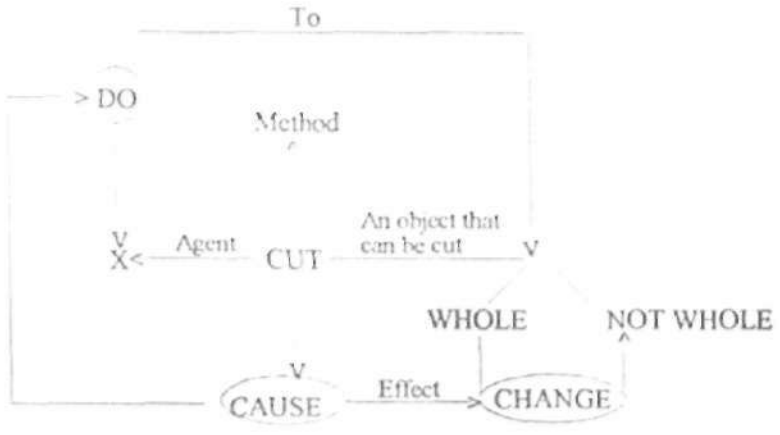
(a) The agent that does the cutting

(b) The object that is cut and

(C) The method of doing the cutting.

The encircled word in the diagram below specify the knowledge of such concepts as 'cause', 'change' and 'do'. A 'do' schema places a 'constraint' on the method adopted for the cutting. The notion of subschema is important because the listener does not always need to consider all the details of a concept when it is mentioned. An example is when one is given the concept 'teacher'. The individual probably makes general assumptions on the word 'teacher', and does not think about each of these aspects in detail. He may have a particular teacher in mind and his assumptions may make him to assign defaults in terms of colour, height, dressing and extent of devotion to duty. These defaults, as we said earlier, are flexible and subject to change as more information comes about the concept depending on what the speaker has in mind when he uses the word 'teacher'.

Figure 1: An illustration of a 'cut' schema




As an illustration, the way the information specified in the 'cut' schema in figure 1, may guide inferential activities in the sentence: 'The girl cuts a piece of cloth'. The agent will also involve the method of cutting, though this is not specified in the text, a default can be assigned. This can be a pair of scissors, or a razor blade. If the context provides additional information, this may constrain the specific types of assumptions that are made. An example is : If the sentence reads;

Y. The girl cuts a piece of cloth with a sharp knife.

Or Z. The dark-skinned girl, who often boasts that she trained abroad, cuts a piece of yellowish green cloth with her mother's sharp kitchen knife.

There are more assumptions that can be made, in Z above

because more information is made available about the agent, object and method. The listener may decide to infer from Z that the girl must have used a kitchen knife to demonstrate her expertise at cutting clothing materials. That is, no matter what instrument she uses to cut, she still cuts straight without making errors. Schank and Abelson's script theory holds a great resemblance to Minsky's Frame theory. Minsky (1974) describes it as fitting into the notion of frames. Both of them make an interesting contribution to the concept of inference.

### 3.3 Highlights of Halliday's Functional Analysis of Language

M.A.K. Halliday's interest in models of language is based on the function the language is required to perform. According to him:

> The criterion is that of relevance ; we want to understand and to highlight, those facets of language which bear on the investigation or the task in hand. In an educational context, the problem for linguistics is to elaborate some account of language that is relevant to the work of the English teachers...[8]

He went on to explain that in the construction of an utterance, some semantic options are available from which the speaker has to make a choice. These options from which we have to make a choice he referred to as '<u>processes</u>'[9] or 'types'. Whenever we speak or write, somebody or something is involved in a process. The

people or things that are involved in this process are termed participants. The process takes place in a particular 'time' which he termed circumstance. This circumstance may be accidental or could be circumstance of time. Berry (1975) further explained Halliday's model by commenting on the idea of transitivity choices.[10] She explained that,

> We make choices between different types of processes, between different types of circumstances, between different roles for participants and circumstances, between different ways of combining the processes, participants and circumstances. These choices are known collectively as transitivity choices.

The limitation of Halliday/Berry's framework is that since the analysis focuses mainly on transitivity choices of processes, participants, circumstances and role, it does not apply to total analysis on inference. This is because the whole issue of correct inference is not only based on transitivity choices rather, there are other salient points to be considered before a correct inferential analysis is done. As a result of this limitation, this researcher has evolved a model which is eclectic in nature for effective analysis of the proposed texts.

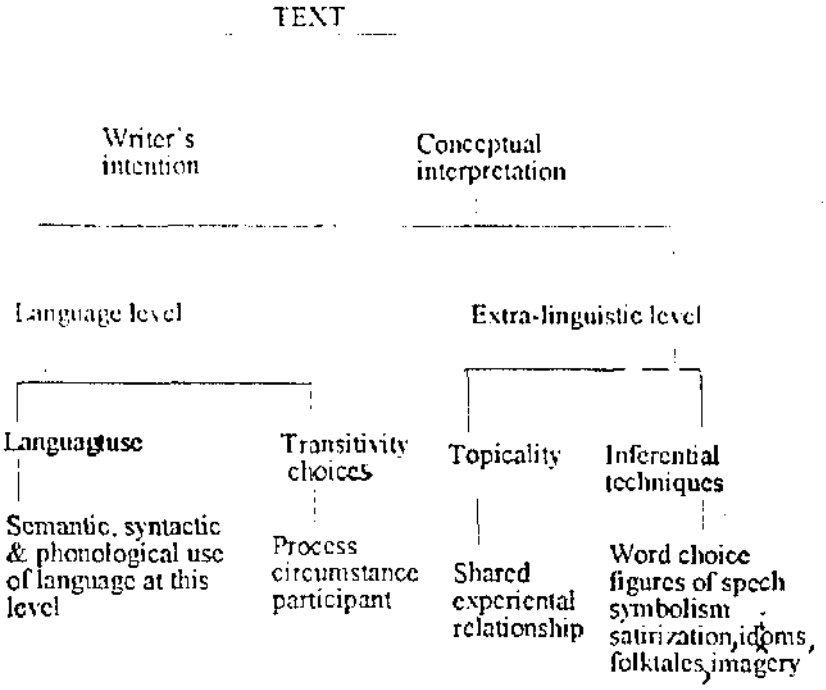
## 3.4 Proposed framework of Analysis in this study

The analysis of the text starts with a general discussion on the sample text. This is done at the surface level where the conceptual, ideational or illocutionary [11] meaning is expressed.

The writer's intention will also be examined at this level. The analysis then moves on to the second level which is the linguistic level. On this level, the transitivity choices or processes will be discussed. The way and manner in which language is used to produce a coherent and sensible utterance will be examined. The third level of analysis adopted in this study is on the extralinguistic level where the researcher examines the inferential tools or techniques adopted by the speaker or writer of the text to aid correct interpretation of the text. The topicality here is closely linked to the level of shared experience. Here, this researcher will examine the subject the writer chooses to write on, where it is of interest to his audience and the degree of shared experience between the writer and his audience to determine whether there is effective communication.

The framework of analysis adopted for this study is an adaptation of the Minsky's frame-system theory and a modified Halliday's functional analysis of language.

FIGURE 2:




**An illustration of the framework of Analysis adapted for this study. A combination of Halliday's functional language analysis and Minsky's frame-system theory**

## 3.5 Application of linguistic framework to a sample text

> I heard their wailings first as rumour; I heard them far, far, away in the course of my countless wanderings from land to land, town to town, village to village, seeking peace and finding none.
> I came to this land of Kutuje to see for myself the truth of the rumoured wailings. Crossing seven waters, I, a son of the tribe of Ijekun Yemoja, found my way to this strange land of Kutuje. I came to see sufferings, and I felt suffering. 'Get up,

Get up', I said to them, not to do something
is to be crippled fast. Up, up, all of you;
to lie down resigned to fate is madness.
Up, up, struggle; the world is struggle ...

### 3.5.1 Conceptual interpretation and writer's intention

The conceptual level of interpretation is the surface meaning of the text. It is the plain interpretation a reader will give to the text without considering any underlying meaning that the text may have. The sample text is the speech of Odewale, a character in Rotimi's The gods are not to blame.[12] Here Odewale describes his unusual encounter with the Kutuje tribe - a tribe rumoured to be faced with sorrow and misfortune of all kinds. He became moved by the stories he has heard about the suffering of the people and decided to go to the town to see for himself. Odewale is a wanderer. Because he had inadvertently killed an old man because of a very minor argument, he lost his peace and he became a wanderer because of his guilty conscience. Apart from 'speaking confidence' to the Kutuje people, Odewale gathered the people together and led them to war against their neighbours who had been invading their land, killing and enslaving them. Their enemies were defeated and Odewale joyfully declared, 'In their joy, the people made me king, me, of Ijekun tribe. They broke tradition and made me, unasked, king of Kutuje... '

Rotimi portrays Odewale as a man who is very courageous and selfless. His motive for coming to Kutuje was to help out, although he had his own problems. At thirty-two he was unmarried

and had no child to answer his name. His guilt worried him so much that he could not settle down in one place. Hence, his constant movement from one land to the other until he started to hear 'rumours' about the plight of the people of Kutuje.

### 3.5.2 Writer's intention

This is the secondary or deep structural meaning we may give to the text. As illustrated in figure 2, the conceptual interpretation is quite different from the writer's intention. The intention of Odewale for making this speech is to justify himself, to present himself as a messiah of the Kutujes. He feels he deserves more honour and respect than the quality of appreciation being accorded to him now. The reason for his speech is that problems have arisen in the land again. People are dying of some weird kind of diseases and when anybody dies, the family rushes to the king. He has consulted their medicine men but help seemed to elude him this time. He wanted the people to know that for all the years he had been their king, he had done them more good, and the present predicament they are going through 'touches' him, but he does not know what to do. He sums up by exploding:

> Does the rain fall on one roof alone? ... whoever the rain sees, on him it rains. Does it not? It is the same with sickness. You do me great wrong, to think that, like a rock in the middle of a lake, forever cooled by flowing waters, I do not know, and cannot know the sun's hotness that burns and dries

up the open land...,

### 3.5.3 Analysis at the linguistic level

The style adopted by the writer is poetic and rhythmical. He uses cataphoric expression and this is obvious in the first two lines where Odewale speaks 'I heard 'their' wailings....

I heard 'them' far, far away'

'their' and 'them' here have a common diectic [13] reference, that is to say, they both 'point' forward to the reference. The sentences are short and emotive. There is the use of apposition in 'I, a son of the tribe of Ijekun Yemoja...

I came to this land of Kutuje to see for myself the truth of the rumoured wailings'

The second line of the sentence above is structurally a subordinate infinitive clause. For extra or greater force, the sentence can be re-written with the infinitive coming first viz 'To see for myself the truth, I came to the land of Kutuje'. 'The truth of the rumoured wailings' is a noun phrase within the subordinate infinitive clause.

For language beauty, poetic style adopted for this speech is very effective. To emphasize the extent to which Odewale suffered, the phrase 'crossing seven seas' was shifted from the more appropriate position, which is the end of the sentence to the beginning of the sentence The use of 'to be + a participle' in 'to be crippled fast' suggests finality, a kind of arrangement

that cannot be reversed.

The use of the imperative is highly effective in that a measure of force is released into the utterance in such a way that his audience is 'gingered up' to move forward and fight for themselves since this is his intention. He cried at them 'up, up, struggle; the world is struggle' He uses such words as 'struggle', 'suffering', 'wailing', to pass across the message of war to his audience. A negative non-finite (infinitive) phrase functions as the subject in the sentence, 'Not to do something is to be crippled fast', while another infinitive, 'to lie down resigned to fate', performs the same function. This he did to make his utterance forceful.

The participants in the process specified in this text are 'I' (Odewale the speaker) 'we', (Odewale and the people of Kutuje) 'he' (proverbial, signifying anybody) as we have in the proverb 'he who pelts another with pebbles asks for rocks in return', 'Ikolu', 'they' (the Kutujes). The process include hearing, coming, crossing as signified by 'I', 'attacked' which was performed by the participant, 'we' (Kutuje and the speaker) 'freed people', siezed the land of Ikolu'.

The circumstance in which the process takes place is referred to by deictic references and adverbial of time and manner. The deictic references, as written above, can be cataphoric (referring forward) or anaphoric (referring backward) for full reference. For example, words like 'as follows', 'the

following', and 'thus' are cataphoric in reference while 'that', 'the foregoing' are examples of words usually used anaphorically. 'This', 'here' are used both anaphorically and cataphorically.

'This' in 'this land' refers to Kutuje, the land Odewale helped to deliver from the hands of the Ikolus. The text starts with short sentences where the speaker, Odewale,uses cataphoric expressions coupled with suspense because he does not tell his audience immediately who he refers to as 'their' and 'them'. There is relation of meaning as written above in the semantic choice of words. Words that are used by the speaker to connote war, are 'wailings', 'suffering', 'struggle'.

The mood of the speech is narrative because in the text, Odewale, the King of Kutuje, is narrating how he came to become the King of Kutuje. Since the text is from a dramatic piece, Odewale 'tones up' his narrative with imperative mood to bring to life an event which took place eleven years before.

On the phonological level, there is the repeated use of 'suffering', wailing, we see vowel harmony in 'pelts and pebbles'; in 'rocks and returns', we see alliteration or the repetition of 'r' and 's' sounds.

### 3.5.4 Analysis at the extra-linguistic level

As illustrated in figure 2, the extra-linguistic level of analysis of the sample text involves the examination of the issue of topicality/shared experience and the inferential techniques

adopted by the speaker.

Odewale considers it relevant to remind his subjects how he came to be the king. This is because the land is now plagued with an unusual epidemic which defies the efficacy of the remedy or concoction put together by the most powerful medicine men in the land. In this situation, the people may have forgotten that Odewale came to 'help' the Kutujes in their 'hour of stress' because he had heard rumours of their 'wailings and suffering' and when he came down to Kutuje, he found the 'rumours' to be true and led the people to war against their neighbours who took advantage of them because of the sudden death of their king. The shared experience of this text is that both Odewale and the Kutuje people (his audience) are familiar with this story and the fact that Odewale was a 'saviour' of the people of Kutuje some eleven years back is not new. Odewale and his audience know the Ikolu people who had raided them, they know that Odewale fought for them and they (Kutujes) made him their king even though he is from 'another tribe'.

King Odewale carefully chooses his words for the correct interpretation of his speech. Cataphoric pronouns, 'their' and 'them used to create suspense and 'far, far' is used to infer that the story of the problems the Kutujes faced when they were incessantly raided by the Ikolus spread all over the towns and the villages afar and his audience, which, fortunately are the Kutujes may infer that, although the news spread far and wide, no

other village or people rose up to deliver them. It was only 'this' Ijekun man.

Odewale repeatedly uses the words 'suffering' and 'wailings' as inferential cues to bring back to his audience's minds, in a forceful fashion, how much they suffered before he (Odewale) came around to lead them to war.

Odewale makes use of proverb 'he who pelts another with pebbles asks for rocks in return'. The proverb is to build an image of how the Ikolus were massively slaughtered and raided by the Kutujes under the leadership of Odewale. The blow the Ikolus 'dished out' to the Kutujes was returned in many folds by the Kutujes with Odewale's help. Odewale further states:

> In their joy, the people made me KING, me from Ijekun tribe. They broke tradition and made me, unasked, king of Kutuje.

The speaker uses short sentences further broken by the use of commas to produce a dramatic effect in the minds of his audience who are the chiefs and common people of Kutuje. If we are to create a schema, for the verb 'broke' as used by Odewale, the agent (as in figure 1) is Kutuje who he has fought for, the method of 'breaking' in this sense is not instrumental rather it is by their act, the act of making Odewale king. The cause of the action is because he has delivered the people from their enemies - the Ikolus. He also built confidence in the minds of the people by declaring that he would lead them to war because they had no king to lead them. A default is built to specify the

correct interpretation of 'broke' in this expression. Because the object is not concrete, the audience infers that the result of the 'breaking' or effect will not be concrete. The effect is that Kutuje now has a king to lead them. The word 'tradition' that was 'broken' does not undergo any change in the light of the text. So the entire sections into which 'broke' would have been examined, if it were used on a concrete object, are not applicable here.

Ikolu is no more ɲow,

but Kutuje prospered

'Now' is used to specify the time of writing, but Kutuje 'prospered' at some time in the past. The inference here is that Ikolu has been fought, defeated and totally wiped out. It is now non-existent but the village of Kutuje, at the time when Ikolu was fought and wiped out, prospered because of all the booties carried from Ikolu. As it were, though Kutuje had 'eaten' all their booties and forgotten all about it hence Odewale's need to remind his audience of the fact that they once prospered with the assistance of the same king Odewale.

The tone of the text is a mixture of self-defence and elevation. In his attempt to remind the people of how much he had laboured for them in the past, though they are passing through a difficult time 'now', he uses the personal pronoun 'I' incessantly. He concludes his speech with a sorrowful tone:

But joy has a slender body that breaks too

> soon. There is trouble now in the land. Joy has broken and scattered. Peace, too, is no more ....

He personifies 'joy' to present to his audience something that is fragile, and, true to its nature, it has 'broken' and not only that, it has 'scattered' i.e. it cannot be gathered again. This image symbolizes the futility of the effort of Odewale and his team of chiefs and medicine men to bring a lasting solution to the spread of the epidemic in Kutuje.

The text has looked at a topical issue in this land and there is an adequate shared world of experience both at the topical level and in the use of the tools of communication. Although his speech is punctuated with pauses, the effect has been very positive because his intention to bring back to the minds of his audience what he had done for them in the past was realized. Odewale uses figures of speech, images and proverbs to assist his audience to infer his intention correctly.

### 3.6 Inference in Yoruba language

Human beings are known not to speak in the same manner, they adopt different styles depending on their audience, even though the same language is used. This practice is evident in the use of Yoruba language by the proficient users of the language. A Yoruba native speaker often adopts a rather 'careless' style of speaking which is very fast when he is addressing his friends but adopts a solemn style and speaks rather slowly when he wants to

address some distinguished guests. These styles differ not only in the speed with which words are spoken, but in other features such as word choice. Phonologically, there are ways of pronouncing words that belong to rapid speech and others which are characteristic of careful speech. Assimilation [13] in Yoruba language is commonly associated with very rapid speech and sparingly used in slow speech. Elision[14] is also associated with rapid speech in Yoruba language. For example, Yoruba - Gbe omo pon - in rapid speech becomes Gb'omo pon. The 'e' sound is assimilated and the stress on 'e' transferred to the first 'o'. The same process takes place in -

Gbe oju si ohun - Yoruba - turn your face to that side. (English) In rapid speech the speaker says: Gb'oju s'ohun.

'e' and 'I' are both assimilated by the vowel occurring after them.

Yoruba language which is a tonal language is one of the major languages in Nigeria. It is spoken beyond the Nigerian borders with slight tonal variations. The ability to 'conceal' information in a written piece and leave the audience to draw an inference is considered a mark of excellence by the users of Yoruba language. Also, in speech, a person who makes the information explicit is considered to lack the tact and of lower intelligence than one who presents his speech in such a way as to put his audience into the task of making an inference from what

they have heard. In effect, the ability to use the inferential techniques with cues provided is considered an asset in the use of Yoruba language. Virtually all the inferential techniques examined earlier in this work are used to the extent that an amateur in the language, though he understands the language when used and can speak it, will not be able to decipher what is being said unless he goes to make a study of the words that are used, the way they are used and then examine the association between the words. For example:

Yoruba: Eye igún ti ńgbé òjò ó bò ọ̀.

The literal translation is 'the vulture is bringing the rain'. From the literal translation, this expression will not be meaningful. This is at the surface level. For correct interpretation, we need to look at the deep structural level. The question that the audience will answer first is 'who or what does 'the vulture' symbolize?'. The second is, 'who' does 'rain' symbolize? What is the relationship between the two?

The statement is a metaphoric expression and for correct interpretation, the cultural belief of the Yoruba people comes into play. The 'vulture' is a bird of bad omen in Yoruba culture. But 'rain' is associated with increase, fertility, harvest and production. This statement means that something evil is bringing joy or blessing. This implies that for inference to be made when Yoruba language is used, the event surrounding the use of the utterance must be considered.

Yoruba language also makes use of proverbs profusely. The ability to make information implicit is an asset and the more inferential techniques (like proverbs, figures of speech and images) are used in language the more the language user is commended for bringing out the 'beauty of the language'.

Because of the tonal nature of the language, the use of tone marks are very necessary. For example, in the use of 'iya' below, there could be ambiguity if the word is not accented, 'iya' could mean 'mother' but in the sentence below, it is used to signify 'punishment' or 'suffering''

Bí ìyà ìlú bá dé, àwọn kan ni yóò jẹ é.

### 3.6.1 The use of Proverbs in Yoruba Language

There is a saying in Yoruba, it says 'owe lesin oro bi oro ba sonu owe lafin waa'

This is literally interpreted as 'a proverb is the horse on which speech rides, when the right word to use in speech eludes us, we use a proverb to find it'. This saying sums up the general attitude of the native speaker of the language to proverbs. All the language users are encouraged to learn the Yoruba proverbs by heart and use them as the need arises. This means that the audience must be familiar with the writer or speaker's intention, share the same world of experience with him before a clear conceptual interpretation of an utterance can be made. For example,

Àjẹ́ ké lana ọmọ kú loni i . The surface meaning is 'the witch cried yesterday and the child dies today'. For inference to be made correctly, the audience must share the same world of experience with the speaker and will have understood that it is the traditional belief of the Yoruba people that witches have uncontrollable appetite for children and so, no child is believed to die naturally in Yoruba land, the death is usually associated with some witch or the other. When this proverb is used, 'witch' and 'child' can be mere symbols.

### 3.6.2 Metaphors in Yoruba language

The use of metaphors in Yoruba language is very prevalent and if the audience is not informed, he may end up making a wrong inference. In the naming of a child, this figure of speech comes to play. A child's name may reflect the way the child is born and in doing this, an allusion may be made to something else, which exhibits that particular attitude. For example, in some parts of Yoruba land, where the people believe in reincarnation, when a baby dies, before it is buried a mark is made on its body. This is because at times, according to their belief, the next child born by the mother will come out of the mother's womb bearing the same mark. So the parents name such a child 'Ewúrẹ́' (goat) or 'Aja' (dog). Such names depict the restless nature of the child; neither wanting to stay on this side of the universe nor where he came from.

An elderly person may be called 'Adiye funfun', that is, a white fowl. This depicts that even though this person is old, he still mixes with young people and engages in immature escapades which soil his personality.

Other figures of speech like irony are also widely used in Yoruba language. In the case of the use of irony, the use is closely associated with pedagogy. The child being corrected may misinterpret the message and if not for the tone in which the message is given, he may do the exact opposite of what he is expected to infer. For example: A mother who is preparing to go to the market to pick a few things tells the son, 'ṣe ni ko ṣi l'ekun ile s'ilẹ yakata bi mo ba ti jade o, ko ṣ'ere lọ'. Literal translation is, 'Immediately I leave the house, open the door of the house wide and leave it and go out to play'. The child will make a correct inference because, before now, he may have been taught a lesson or two on security with their particular home in mind.

Yoruba language newspaper columnists, dramatic artists and singers use irony to present their concept in an intriguing style that their audience immediately capture the essence of their presentation. Yoruba dramatists like Okondo, Moses Olaiya, late Duro Ladipo and the late Isola Ogunsola have used ironic expressions to call people to order and characters that depict what they wish the situation should be like.

In conclusion, this chapter has presented the model of the

framework to be used in the analysis and has also presented how far this model will be adopted for this research.

This chapter has also used a sample from Rotimi's **The gods are not to blame**. The sample is one of king Odewale's speeches to his subjects, the people of Kutuje. The sample was examined at the conceptual, linguistic and extra-linguistic levels. This chapter also takes a look at inference in Yoruba language and it is the opinion of this researcher that all the linguistic elements examined in the earlier chapters on inference are applicable in Yoruba language as well. Also, all the extra-linguistic features like tone and inferential techniques are relevant to Yoruba language for 'correct' inference to be made.

The sample analysis presented in this chapter prepares us for the analysis proper which will be done in chapter four.

## Notes on chapter 3

1. Frase L.T. in a paper presented in Proceedings of the 77th Annual Convention of American Psychological Association in 1969. Pgs 617 - 18 titled 'Depth of processing text: application of graph theory to recall changes induced by the logical analysis text'.

   Also in 1972, he presented same analysis in the paper titled 'Maintenance and control in the acquisition of knowledge from written materials.

2. Dooling, D.J. and Lachman, R. in 1971 presented in the journal, Journal of experimental psychology, a paper titled 'Effects of comprehension and retention prose'.

3. In 1972, Bransford, J.D. and McCarrel, N.S. presented the papers titled. 'A sketch of cognitive approach to comprehesion, some thoughts about understanding what it means to comprehend' at the conference on cognition and the symbolic processes in Pennsylvania state university.

4. Katz, J.J. and Fodor, J.A. in the journal Language vol.39 Pgs 170 - 210 presented a paper titled: The structure of a semantic theory.

5. Winograd, T. Presented a paper titled 'Frame representations and the declarative/procedural controversy' in 1975, in Representation and Understanding: studies in cognitive science Pg 421.

6. The Illocutionary meaning or force is the meaning and effect

the text or speech has on the reader or listener. This is one of the two kinds of meaning in Speech Act. Austin in 1962 proposed the concept of Speech Act.

7. M. Minsky, in a paper which originally appeared in 'Theoretical issues in Natural Language processing' edited by R. Shank and B.L. Webber was represented in June 1975 for the conference at MIT.

8. M.A.K. Halliday in Explorations in functions of language published in London by Edward Arnold, 1973.

9. 'Processes' or 'Types, this according to Halliday, signifies clause types, classified according to their similarities in the sense that each of these clause types contains a particular element or some elements which we structurally use to classify them.

10. Transitivity choices are first mentioned by Halliday. Berry, however, explained in detail all the choices involved in the system.

11. Illocutionary - op.cit

12. O. Rotimi wrote the play The Gods are not to blame. The play was produced on stage in 1968 and later published by University Press Ltd in 1971.

13. Assimilation is one of the influences exerted by adjacent sounds, it is a tendency for a sound to be made more like the surrounding sounds.

14. Elision is another influence of adjacent sounds. It is a

situation where a sound is completely omitted in certain circumstances.

15. Grice in 1975 proposed the principles of conversation in which he specified the cooperative principle and four specific conversational maxims.

16. R. Shank and P. Abelson in 1975 presented a paper which appeared in the Proceedings of the Fourth International Joint Conference on Artificial Intelligence. In it, they formally refer to their central constructs as scripts. Minsky (1974) had earlier described their work as fitting into the notion of 'Frames'.

## CHAPTER 4

### DATA ANALYSIS

In this chapter, the analysis of four articles which are relevant to inferencing are presented. Two of the articles are written in English and culled from a magazine and a daily newspaper. The other two articles are written in Yoruba and taken from a weekly Yoruba newspaper. The newspapers and magazine from which these articles are taken are all printed in Nigeria. Each of the articles is analysed at the conceptual level, writer's intention level, linguistic and extra-linguistic levels.

The conceptual interpretation is the surface or literal meaning of the text. The writer's intention is the semantic, secondary meaning the text has. The linguistic level examines the semantic, syntactic and phonological aspect of language use while the extra-linguistic level identifies the extra-textual factors that are used in the text to create effective communication. It is at this level that the issue of topicality, the level of shared experience, inferential techniques and speech figures are discussed.

Also here in this chapter, inferencing in English is compared with what operates in Yoruba language. The chapter ends with a discussion of the observation of the researcher based on

her findings on the analyses of the articles. The comparison made in this chapter is done at linguistic and extra-linguistic levels in order to establish if there are some similarities or differences in what gives rise to inferential posibilities in the two languages.

## 4.1 ENGLISH TEXT 1: Wailing for Wilmot

Nigerians are an incurably lachrymose lot. Indeed, my hunch tells me that our national tearduct is located somewhere perilously close to the surface of the eye. Or how else does one explain all the sighs, groans, malefactions, vilification, statements, counter-statements, et cetera, et cetera, which have taken control of our national discourse since our government peacefully showed Patrick Wilmot the way out of this country? And it was a most befitting, most humane event, a very gentle kidnap in Zaria, then a 12-hour drive down to Lagos in extremely friendly hand-cuffs, followed by a guided trans-Atlantic flight to London. All this, most graciously, at government enxpense!

Tell me, what is there to wail about in all this? After all, this is not the first of Wilmot's deportation experience. In 1981, the Shagari government attempts to bundle him out of this country. But just like every major thing that the accursed regime laid it's hands on, the deportation attempt miscarried, and Wilmot escaped through the needle's eye to tell the story. But that was long ago and far away. Now we have a regime which

plans without failing, with a military muscle and patriotism unsurpassed in the history of any country in the world. They have carried out our long-suspended national assignment and brought us honour from all over the globe. If Nigerians weren't already too cynical to know their interest, they would be out right now with bugles and banners, instead of all these snivelling protests against a move whose sole aim is the enhancement of our national honour and the salvaging of the crumbling economy.

Who says Wilmot is not a spy, an agent provocateur, an accomplished snoop, etc? Everybody, everything, in Nigeria knows this, including every grass of the savannah, every tree of the forest, even the birds of the air who saw it all when Mr. Botha decorated Wilmot in Pretoria, urging him to 'go therefore and squeal on them'. You can see now that Wilmot was not only a 'spy', he was also ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary. So, the real enemies of this country and the black world are not the commercial mercenaries who sell Nigerian oil to South Africa, not even the multinational octopuses who plant one limb in South Africa and another one here. No, these are friends of the nation, partners in progress. The Wilmots of this world who shake us from our millennial slumber, who show us the hidden tracks of the plunderer are indeed our adversaries.

Soon after the news of the deportation trickled most reluctantly from the Nigerian press, I told a friend that from

the unwavering intellect and passion of Wilmot's writings, from his absolute commitment to the liberation of the black destiny, it is not just possible to glimpse even the shadow of a 'double agent.' In particular, I whipped up Wilmot's Poems for the Liberation of Africa where he sees the spirit of Africa

> in the tormented smiles of black men bowing before Europeans...in the blood of martyrs cut down by the machine guns of Europe and the treachery of Africa, but ends by envisioning a time when 'this endless sorrow will cease,' when our mighty warriors will strike for the joy and glory of Africa.

I confess that each time I read Wilmot, what I hear is the voice of a courageous patriot, not that of a perfidious scribbler. But my interlocutor gave me a truth that I never knew; some governments are like God, they work in mysterious ways their wonders to perform.

Mystery or no mystery, aren't there a thousand other reasons why Wilmot deserved to go? Consider a man who, after ten books and several articles, was belatedly promoted professor, and had the temerity to say No. How can anybody treat with such criminal disdain a godly status which uncountable Nigerian dons have tried all kinds of feats, including brazen plagiarism, book-cooking, ethnic and religious blackmail, cultivated prostration, etc, to attain?

Wilmot threw sand in the salt of our respectability. And for demonstrating that the title does not make the scholar any more than the hood its monk, he obviously deserves to go.

Flowing directly from the above is Wilmot's 'radicality.' Imagine a lecturer whose doors were open to students, a work-horse who laboured himself grey marking scripts, correcting countless dissertations, taking a personal interest in the welfare of students. Imagine a lecturer who made teaching and research such a sacred undertaking when he had every opportunity of 'stabbing' his lectures, running one or two businesses on the side, and growing rich and powerful like the others. Whoever thus fails to make a sinecure out of a serious job deserves nothing but violent opprobrium.

Wilmot was also unfortunate enough to be counted among those radicals who still foolishly fight for justice in our st eamy jungle. And we all know that these radicals are the alpha and omega of our national head-ache, the cause of all our woes. These radicals it was who squandered the nation's wealth. They it was who opened our doors to the IMF, the World Bank and their various clubs. The radicals it was who gave birth to SFEM, FEM, SAP and other mangling acronyms which have fostered our various hardships. These radicals, without doubt, are responsible for all the coups and counter-coups which plague the power game in the turbulent theater of Nigerian politics. These radicals complain that there is hunger in the country whereas everyone knows that what we have is a mildly lethal kind of starvation, not hunger. They affirm that this country has enough resources to give every Nigerian decent education, shelter, medicare, given

a more equitable distribution of the nation's wealth.

Wilmot was one of the 'radicals.' And now that he has gone, it's goodbye to double agentship, goodbye to 'student riots.' We can now sit back and enjoy the peace for which we have always longed.

## 4.2 Analysis

### 4.2.1 Conceptual Interpretation

In this article, Niyi Osundare comments on the deportation of Patrick Wilmot, a one time lecturer at Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. Because he has read some of the literary works of Wilmot, Osundare is of the opinion that he can accurately present to his audience the Wilmot most Nigerians were not privileged to meet either personally or through his books. Osundare in this article, also comments on the government. At the surface level, which is what conceptual interpretation is all about, he justifies the action of Wilmot's deportation. He writes the reasons why he feels Wilmot deserves deportation.

### 4.2.2 Writer's Perceived Intention

In this article, Osundare intends to inform his audience about the deportation of Wilmot. He probably intends to convince them that the deportation order was justice perverted. He is of the opinion that Wilmot's deportation is an over-blown issue or an orchestrated one considering the other dilemmas that face the

nation. He wants his audience to be educated on some of the issues he feels the government should address. He mentions the enhancement of our national honour and salvaging of the crumbling economy. He also highlights the activities of those he describes as 'commercial mercenaries who sell Nigerian oil to South Africa.'

Osundare may also intend to enlighten his audience about the activities of some University academics who he complains could go to any extent in their desire for promotion. He writes:

'How can anybody treat with such criminal disdain a godly status which uncountable Nigerian dons have tried all kinds of feats, including brazen plagiarism, book-cooking, ethnic and religious blackmail, cultivated prostration to attain.'

He justifies Wilmot as not belonging to this category because he works very hard. Osundare writes that Wilmot had written ten books and several articles before he was considered for professorship status ('godly status'). Osundare considers him (Wilmot) as a 'work horse who laboured himself grey marking scripts, correcting countless dissertations ...' According to Osundare, when some of Wilmot's colleagues were busy 'stabbing' their lectures, he was always 'taking a personal interest in the welfare of his students' The intention of the author of this article includes lampooning the government of the day, that even though it has got rid of one of the 'radicals' who Nigerian leaders think stir up the waters in the

nation, there are still other complex problems which defy solution. For example he writes sarcastically in the last sentence:

'We can now sit back and enjoy the peace for which we have always longed'

In other words, even superficial peace is not here yet, the battle is still on. This is his message.

### 4.2.3 Analysis at the Linguistic Level

#### 4.2.3.1 Language use

The style of the article is narrative and sarcastic. The writer of the piece is here narrating the ordeal that a colleague of his went through because he is sympathetic towards the lot of Wilmot. He uses a good number of linguistic techniques to convince his audience that he is of the opinion that the government's action was uncalled for. Because the style of the article is narrative , long sentences are employed. The article does not only aim at arousing the emotion of his audience, but at presenting them with facts. The writer makes use of rhetorical questions to make strong assertations. For example, in the third sentence:

> Or how else does one explain all the sighs, groans, malefactions, vilification, statements, counterstatements, et cetera, et cetera which have taken control of our national discourse since our government peacefully showed Patrick Wilmot the way out of this country?

The audience is faced with a situation where his only choice is to agree with the author. Through the question 'who says Wilmot is not a spy, an agent provocateur, an accomplished snoop, etc?' Osundare sarcastically emphasises the point that Wilmot deserved the treatment he got. Osundare employs anaphoric expression in the use of 'it' in the fourth sentence. 'It' here refers to the deportation experience mentioned in the third sentence. For emphasis, the writer used the structure. Subject + it + auxiliary vb in such expressions as:'These radicals it was who ...''They it was who ...' 'The radicals it was who ...'

The relative adjective clauses that come immediately after the auxiliary 'was', qualify the subjects of these sentences which are 'these radicals', 'they', 'the radicals'.

'They' in 'they have carried out our long-suspended national assignment and brought us honour from all over the globe' is anaphoric, it refers to 'regime' mentioned in the sentence preceding this.

The topic sentences in paragraphs two, three and six are questions instead of sentences. This is to produce a special forceful effect on the audience. The audience's attention is captured as he read with the intention of getting an answer to the questions. The author makes use of adjectives incessantly, at word level, phrase and clause levels. Examples are 'guided' in 'guided trans-Atlantic flight', 'most gracious's in 'most graciously at government expenses'. At clause level, 'who was

in 'guided trans-Atlantic flight', 'most gracious' in 'most graciously at government expense '. At clause level, 'who was belatedly promoted professor', 'whose doors are opened to students ' and 'who squandered the nation's wealth.' The unusually long sentences of the writer make for the use of these subordinate clauses. The noun clause in

'Each time I read Wilmot, what I hear is the voice ...'

is 'what I hear'; it functions as subject of 'is' . 'Why Wilmot deserved to go' is an adverbial clause of reason. The noun phrases 'the alpha and omega of our national head-ache, the cause of all our woes' function as object complement to 'these radicals' Osundare perfectly reverses the normal structural word order of some sentences to produce dramatic and emphatic impact.

This is evident in the example:

'They it was who opened our door to IMF'. The sentence can be written as 'it was these radicals who opened our door to IMF.' This pattern is also known as 'fronting' (Allerton, 1979). Austin's Speech Act Theory[2] comes to play in 'go therefore and squeal on them!'. The writer uses this imperative effectively and most dramatically, that the reader can easily construct a script or frame of a faithful servant on his master's errand.

At the semantic level, there is semantic relation in terms of lexical cohesion. For instance there is an exhibition of relationship of meaning in the first few sentences. 'Sighs' and

'groans'. Both are sounds made to indicate discomfort. 'Statements' and 'counter-statements', 'friendly and humane' are all bi-polar semantic selections.

At the syntactic level, there is relationship of meanings as the sentence flows into the next. A link is established between the sentences. The conjunction 'and' that begins sentence four specifies that the sentence is linked to the third sentence.

Similar effect is created in the eighth and ninth sentences which begin with 'but'. There is no sign of syntactic economy in this text. Osundare seems to possess the urge to 'say it all' in this article. He appears to be directly involved with the event in this article because of his use of the personal pronoun 'I' about five times. He also makes reference to individuals and government. He mentions Patrick Wilmot, Mr. Botha and Shagari.

His sentences are, however, too long and so, the dramatic effect of the piece has been reduced. Some of the words have been too elaborate and his audience may require a dictionary to understand them and some, with the use of the dictionary may not have been able to grasp the point he is making. Readership cuts across social class in any society. Because of this, it is the opinion of this researcher that Osundare could have used simpler, easier vocabulary for more effective communication. This is not to say, however, that he has not communicated effectively. The suggestion here is that he may have inadvertently narrowed his own target audience. An example of a particularly long sentence

is below:-

'If Nigerians weren't already too cynical to know their interest, they would be out right now with bugles and banners, instead of all these snivelling protest against a move whose sole aim is the enhancement of our national honour and the salvaging of the crumbling economy'

This complex sentence begins with an adverbial clause of condition (from 'if' to 'interest'). Immediately after 'interest', 'they' presupposes Nigerians, 'now has deictic reference and specifies time. The adverbial phrase that starts with 'instead' and ends with 'a move' has a covert meaning: it refers to the deportation of Wilmot. The long relative clause that begins with 'whose' and ends with 'economy' is the qualifier of 'a move'.

At the phonological level, the writer repeats the 'b' sound in 'bugles and banners' to signify celebrations. There is a recurrence of 'o' sound in 'thousand other reasons' and of course in the sentence.

'Wilmot threw sand in the salt of our respectability' Alliteration comes to play in the re currence of the 's' sound. The use of repetition has also been observed in 'It's goodbye to double agentship, goodbye to student riots'. Also, the repeated use of the word 'radicals' is to play down and ridicule the meaning of the word, it is used eight times in the text.

#### 4.2.3.2 Transitivity choices

The participants in the processes specified in this text include 'our government', Wilmot', 'they' (Nigerian government) in 'they have carried out our long-suspended national assignment ...', 'they' (the Nigerian masses) in 'they would be out right now with bugles and banners, instead of all these snivelling protests against a move'. 'A man' (Wilmot) in 'consider a man who after ten books and several articles, was ...' 'He (Wilmot) is the participant in 'he committed so many unpardonable crimes...', while 'these radicals' is the participant in 'these radicals it was who squandered the nation's wealth'.

The processes that occurred in this text are numerous. Since Osundare wants to convince his audience about his opinion, he uses many action verbs. His audience can vividly visualize the 'salvaging' of the 'crumbling' economy. Other processes employed include 'showed' in 'our government peacefully showed Patrick Wilmot out', 'escaped', 'carried', 'shake', 'made', 'complain', 'running' and 'growing'.

The circumstances in which these processes take place in this text are marked by adverbial and deictic references. The place where the process or event referred to in this passage took place is Nigeria. A Nigerian University don has been deported and various comments are made by the Nigerian masses about the deportation sentence passed on him. Niyi Osundare is one of such

commentators and his article is what is being analysed here. 'Thus' is a cataphoric lexeme, 'then' is deictic referring to the time of the action (used in the third sentence of the text). 'Now', also deictic, refers to specific time and in the second paragraph, 'now' is qualified by the word 'right' for emphasis. 'This' in the sentence 'and he committed so many unpardonable crimes in this regard', is used anaphorically i.e. referring backward to mean the crimes he committed as a radical. The author makes use of the adverb 'now' a great deal possibly to bring to the attention of the audience the fact that his point of view is very relevant and that the 'evil' highlighted is still with us today.

### 4.2.4 Analysis at the extra-linguistic level

Analysis at this level involves the discussion of the level of shared world experience the writer of the text has with his audience, topicality and inferential techniques adopted by the author.

#### 4.2.4.1 Topicality and the level of shared experience

The Nigerian people read about the deportation order passed on Patrick Wilmot in the newspapers and it has been on the radio and television news. At the time of writing of this article by Osundare, the Nigerian government has been complaining about the 'radicals' whom they accused of instigating

the students, (particularly undergraduates), the market women and the Nigerian workers against the government. The government has also been of the opinion that the base of 'these radicals' is Nigerian Universities. Prior to his deportation, Patrick Wilmot had trod on many toes within the University environment and outside of it because of his identification with the poor and down-trodden. 'African Concord' of January 9, 1989 Page 2 quotes Wilmot:

> represented in purely class terms, bourgeois rule is technical, material, structural. One can observe the property of the bourgeoisie although much of it is ringed round with security men.

The issue of deportation order was topical and Osundare's audience can easily identify with it.

Osundare's article under analysis mentions such topical issues as 'salvaging' of Nigeria's economy, the 'World Bank and their various clubs' (for example the Paris Club). Of particular interest is the IMF (International Monetary Fund) which was introduced to Nigerians when the then military regime encouraged Nigerians to discuss on the media if it was wise for the country to accept the IMF loan. The newspapers and magazines in the country, including radio and television stations, engaged in the debate whether Nigeria should put her neck on the stake (because of 'conditionalities') and take the loan.

The author's audience also shared the experience of SFEM (Second-tier Foreign Exchange Market), FEM (Foreign Exchange Market), SAP (Structural Adjustment Programme) with him. These

have been government programmes which were usually discussed in the media. The text was topical and because there was a high level of shared experience, the writer has carried his audience along with him. His examples and illustrations are both universally and locally contextualised.

#### 4.2.4.2 Inferential tools adopted by the author

In this article under study, the writer makes use of many cues which indicate that the reader should examine the article at a secondary level. His choice of words cannot be classified as elaborate nor simple, he shifts from the use of one to the other. For example, in the first and second sentences, he uses 'incurably' and 'perilously' respectively, the two words, apart from being elaborate, are negative and the reader's mind is probably prepared for comments and criticism which are straight to the point. He uses such elaborate words as 'sinecure', 'opprobrium' and simple ones the Nigerian university communities are very familiar with. For example, 'miscarried' 'stabbing' and 'friendly'. 'Miscarried' and 'stabbing' are slangs used in Nigerian Universities and other higher institutions to mean 'make a fool of oneself' and 'deliberate absenting of oneself from a lecture' respectively.

The writer also sarcastically describes Wilmot's deportation as his being 'peacefully' shown the way out. The deportation event, he also describes as 'humane', his kidnap he describes as

'gentle' and the handcuffs on him 'extremely friendly'. In this piece, Osundare appears to enjoy his role as a commentator and, to some extent, he appears to feel duty bound to enlighten his audience. Thus, he alludes to things and events the readers are familiar with to bring out his point. 'Grass' and 'trees' are inanimate and their being personified in the text is to exaggerate the extent to which Osundare believes the allegations against Wilmot have been baseless. He sneers at the government that issued the deportation order as he ironically puts it:

'Now we have a regime which plans without failing, with military muscle and patriotism unsurpassed in the history of any country in the world'.

He sarcastically describes the deportation of Wilmot as 'our long suspended national assignment'. He therefore, through sarcasm, enlightens the ordinary people of the country on how baseless and unwarranted the deportation order has been. Along this line, he highlights those he believes are the real enemies of the country. He states almost too obviously:

'So, the real enemies of this country and the black world are not the commercial mercenaries who sell Nigerian oil to South Africa, not even the multinational octopuses ..'

Twice in the text, he alludes to the Christian religion. 'Some governments are like God', he writes 'they work in mysterious ways their wonders to perform'. The writer makes use of adjectives incessantly. These he uses at word, phrase and clause

levels to paint exact pictures for his audience. The incessant use of adjectives is a pointer to inferential possibility so that as a reader comes across them he is silently considering an interpretation of the text at another level. At some occasions, these adjectives may be regarded as extraneous if not for the fact that they function as inferential cues. For example:

'First, a very gentle kidnap in Zaria, then a 12-hour drive down to Lagos in extremely friendly handcuffs, followed by a guided trans-Atlantic Flight to London'.

Without all the above qualifications, the information would have been understood:

'First, a kidnap in Zaria, a 12-hour drive down to Lagos in handcuffs, followed by a trans-Atlantic flight to London'.

The tone of this article is critical and sarcastic. Its language is confrontational. Even though irony, exaggerations, ridicule and contempt are used extensively, the audience may expect the government to come out to defend its action because of the tone. Finally, Osundare does not appear to make virtue out of compactness, he seems to 'say it all' inspite of the careful style of written prose he has adopted.

### 4.3 Yoruba Text 1

1) Ìyàwó oníwàyó lẹ́ fẹ́ sílé

2) Aya to báti n sapepe kò ṣeé finú tàn

3) Àròká wọn j'oògùn

4) Béèyàn bá mú wọn lọ́lọ́rọ̀

5) Irú u wọn ní fọ́kọ níwo jẹ

6) Ìyàwó tó bá ti láṣejù, ká rí wọn sá kò léèwò

7) Gbogbo ọ̀rọ̀ ní dìbínú alájàngbulà, aya a ké ṣaapọn

8) Oníbóronbótò ìyàwó, ohun tá à fi lọ wọ́n

9) Ni wọn dáa sí, ìyàwó sàròyé títí...

10) Ògédé àròyé bí ẹyẹ ìbáakà

11) Jìbìtì tí ń bẹ lọ́wọ́
àwọn obìnrin ìwòyí ju ẹgbàágbèje lọ

12) Ọgbọ́n èwé kún ọwọ́ ọ wọn
Àwọn ọgbọ́n alùmọ́kọ̀rọ̀yí ká rẹ́ni ní ìfásè

13) Ká dágbére Ìságámù ká bá ni ní Mokwa
Ká dágbére Ayẹ́yẹ ká bá wọn ní Yemetu

14) Pèlú àwọn olúgboùn tó dájú ṣáká
táṣẹ táṣẹ lókù tí wọ́ n rìn káàkiri

15) Tẹ́ẹ bá rí tí wọ́n gbé báàgì lọ́wọ́
àṣe ló wà níbẹ jaburata

16) Olójúú 'kò-mu-òlo', o jẹ́ yáa ṣọ́ra

17) Ọkùnrin tó bá kó sínú pàkúté àwọn ẹni wọ̀nyí Ìgbàtí wọ́n
bẹ jẹ́ tùẹtuẹ tán, wọn a padà lẹ́hìn alákọra

18) Ẹ jẹ́ ká ṣọ́ra Jànmọ̀ọ̀ mi ayéfélé ó jetí lọ

19) Àwọn aláparútu Ìyàwó n bẹ tó pọ̀ gbáà
ká gbowó lọ́wọ́ Gbada ka gba lọwọ Lambe

20) Ọ̀tọ̀ l'ọkùnrin tó sanwó gèlè,
Ọ̀tọ̀ lèyíi tó sanwó ìró àti bùbá

ọtọ lèyíi tó sanwó télọ ọtọ lèyíi tó sanwó nnkan ìpara

21) E wèèyàn tó ń ṣabiamọ lọ́ọ̀dẹ tó tún lẹ́ni mẹ́ta ní kọ̀rọ̀

22) Sìgá rèé, obì rèé, ìdí ọmọlúàbí rèé o

23) Wọn a gbé gbá ìrégbè lérí
wọn ń kiri ojà náà nù un lójú wọn

24) Gbogbo èèyàn ń ṣiṣẹ́ láágùn kó tó rówó
ìdí lẹyin fi njẹun tẹ́ tún fi ńkó dúkìá jọ

25) A kì huwa èpè ká retí adúrà

26) Kí làbùrò máa gbowó lọ́wọ́ ọkùrin tẹ́ẹ mọ pé o níí fẹ́?

27) Ara ń tí wọn fi ya wẹ́re náà nu un

28) Ohun tí kò dáa, kò dára, ẹ jẹ́ ká ṣayé e r e

29) Kò sí n tí ò ní padà wá dìtàn

30) Inú ẹgbẹ́ tí wọn n ṣe ọkọ lakápò, ale lakòwe, wọn mọ
kiní òhún ṣe tó pẹ̀ù

## 4.3 Translation into English.

1) You have married a dubious wife

2) A forward (over pushful) wife can not be trusted

3) Their busy body is worse than charms

4) If one confides in them, one is doomed

5) Such (a woman) poisons the husband

6) It is not bad to avoid an extrovert wife

7) She gets angry over every little matter, she causes trouble with her scream

8) A wife with an unbridled tongue voices her opinion when

not asked.

9) A wife who is so talkative that she becomes emaciated (or dry as chip)

10) She is as talkative as a canary bird

11) The dubious activities of present day women are uncountable

12) They are full of cunning ways, such cunningness that can cause the downfall of another person

13) If they indicate that they are going to Isagamu, you find them in Mokwa,
if they say they are going to Ayeye you find them in Yemetu (Ayeye and Yemetu are different areas in Ibadan). They employ deceit or force to
dupe men of their money

14) They move about authoritatively with tested charms

15) Whenever you see them carry bags, the bags are full of incantations

16) You, a covetous man with catchy adulterous eyes, you'd better be careful

17) When a man enters into their traps, after they must have 'eaten him soft
and useless' they will jettison the fool

18) My people, let us be careful, life is delicate

19) Worthless wives are numerous, they collect money from different men

20) One man pays for her head tie, another man pays for her wrapper and blouse, another pays the tailor and another man pays for her body cream

21) Look at a housewife and mother who still keeps six clandestine lovers

22) Cigarette is for sale, Kolanut is for sale, the private part of a 'decent' Person is also for sale

23) Carrying a tray of useless gossip, she claims to be selling wares

24) People survive by hard work, but you live and amass wealth with your
private part.

25) Anybody who does what attracts a curse should not expect a blessing

26) That is the reason some women become insane

27) What is not good is not good, let us behave well

28) There is nothing we do today that will not become history

30) In their club, the husband is the treasurer, her concubine is the secretary
she is an expert in the game.

### 4.3.1 Conceptual, Level of Analysis

Abdullahi in this Yoruba poem admonishes men to be wary in their choice of wives and on women in general, especially

extortioners, the adulterous and wayward. At this level, he highlights some of the danger signals an individual may notice in these women who may turn out to be wives. He writes that they are cunning, they talk endlessly and they are unpredictable. He appeals passionately to men to be cautious. Abdullahi also appeals to married women who are engaged in adulterous relationships and greed to stop. He does not spare words to tell them the end of all such vices. He advises them to work hard and 'sweat' for it is foolish to receive gifts or money from men one does not intend to marry. Such money, he opines, can not be put into any fruitful venture.

### 4.3.2 Writer's Perceived Intention.

Abdullahi in this piece probably intends to expose some of the vices a few married women in Nigeria practice. He does not state, however, why he feels these women are this decadent. He may have intended that by exposing these vices, more men will be cautious before they 'pop the marriage question'. To further stress his intention, the writer of the poem describes dramatically the way these women operate. He writes:

Yoruba: Oníbórónbòtò Ìyàwó, ohun táà fi lọ wọ́n ni wọ́n n dáá sí.

Translation: A wife with an unbridled tongue pokes nose into an affair to which she is not concerned,

Yoruba: Pèlú àwon olúgboùn tó dájú sáká, tàsẹ̀tàsẹ̀ lókù tí wọn ńrìn káàkiri.

Translation: They move about authoritatively with tested charms.

He describes vividly how these women collect money from several men to meet their needs. One man pays for 'head tie', another for wrapper and blouse, another man pays the tailor while yet another man buys the body cream. He stresses his point by employing the professional language of these women in inviting their unwary customers.

### 4.3.3 Linguistic Level of Analysis

The poem opens with a cataphora coupled with suspense for language beauty.

#### 4.3.3.1 Language Use

The piece is a poem and the poetic language of rhythm is adopted. The first line as written earlier in 4.3.3 is written for language beauty. The linguistic referent is not specified and thus, the audience may assume that it will be mentioned later. But the next line does not relate in terms of meaning to the first line, this device is probably used to create more suspense.

First line: Aya tó bá ti nṣ́ápepe, kò ṣe e finú tàn

Translation: A wife who is over pushful cannot be trusted

From the two lines, it is obvious that there is cohesion and ideational unity between the theme of the poem and its context.

Context is a very important element in Yoruba language. All the words and expressions in the poem, point to theme or concept as stated in 4.3.1. There is therefore intra-textual unity. The sentences are short and most of them are emotive. For example:

Iyawo oniwayo le fe sile

Aroka won ja j'oogun

Gbogbo oro nii dibinu

Order of words in some of them are altered for greater emphasis and to produce special effect on the audience. Since the aim of the text is to correct, expose and teach its audience, the writer makes use of the third person a great deal. For example:

1) Yoruba: Oto lokunrin to sanwo gele

Translation: A different man paid for the head tie.

2) Yoruba: Ka gbowo lowo Gbada, ka gba lowo Lambe

Translation: Receiving money from different men.

In sentence (1) above, 'Okunrin' is any man and in (2), 'Gbada' and 'Lambe' are Yoruba names for men, thus specifying two different men. Yoruba is a language that makes use of qualifiers which are meant, in some cases, to signify some extra linguistic features such as the mood of the writer or speaker. Pluralization is also a regular linguistic feature in Yoruba. Pluralization of pronouns does not indicate number in all cases. pluralization is used as a sign of respect and when an individual is writing formally, he does not want to appear rude, so he pluralizes words like 'you' (O) it becomes 'e', 'he' (O), becomes

(won) for example:

English: He said it is his

Translation: Won sope ti awon ni.

'Wọn' and 'awọn' are plural forms of 'O' and 'ohun'.

Syntactic economy is observed in the piece, some words which could have been more conveniently written as sentences are used for example:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Yoruba: | Olóju Kò-mú, ò lo | (b) Onígbáakílẹ̀ ntà |
| English: | A person | One who pretends to sell |
| | with catchy, | things |
| | blinking adulterous eyes. | |

Added to complex words, the writer makes use of excessive adjectives perhaps, also, to economize the use of expressions. Where elaboration may have been needed, he uses a word to describe what he has in mind. Instead of explaining how slender a talkative wife looks, he uses the image of plantain chips. Also in order to describe her (the talkative wife) stock-in-trade, the writer presents the image of a 'trader' who has an empty tray, with no intention of selling any ware but her body to men.

At the semantic level, Abdullahi has established semantic relations in his poem. Abdullahi's choice of words exhibits a semantic link, 'aroka' (busybodying), 'oniboronboto' (talkative), 'alajangbula' (a regular fighter who cannot be pacified), and 'alumokoroyi' (cunningness) are all used to effectively convey

the negative image they are meant to build. The lines of the poem are related semantically. The first line introduces us to 'Iyawo oniwayo' (a cunning or dishonest wife), line two describes a wife we can categorize as 'cunning' and this description continues to line twenty.

On the phonological level, because of the poetic style adopted in the piece, there is abundant use of words and sentences to produce a musical effect. The repetition of some consonants are used to suggest the meaning such words are meant to convey.

For example:

Yoruba: Fọ́kọ nǐwọ jẹ

Translation: Poison the husband

Words like 'Ìpékeré' (which signifies 'dryness'), 'jaburata' (very many), 'alápárútu' (worthless, unprofitable, evil) depict the presence of alliteration in the text. There is evidence of vowel harmony in the text, 'ọkọ lakápọ̀', 'àlè lakọ̀wé', there is the harmony of the rounded lip vowels 'O' and 'O' in the former while the repetition of the vowel 'e' is observed in the latter.

#### 4.3.3.1 Transitivity choices

The processes signified in this text are numerous and perhaps because of the intention of the writer to educate, he makes use of many action verbs. The processes include 'fẹ' (married) in 'fẹ sile', 'dagbere', (indicate intention to go to

a place) in 'ka dagbere Isagamu, ka ba ni ni Mokwa', 'gbowo' (take money) in 'ka gbowo lowo Gbada ... ', 'je' (eat) in 'idi lẹyin fi njẹun, lẹ tun fi nko dukia jọ'

The circumstances in which these processes take place in this piece are as follows: Abdullahi merges cataphora with suspense in the first line because the referent of 'e' the husband of the woman described in the first line is not specified in the line. In the line:

Yoruba: Igbati won ba je tueue tan, won a wapada leyin alakora

Translation: After they must have 'eaten him soft and useless' they will jettison the fool

'Wọn' is used anaphorically to specify the 'woman' being described, 'now' is deictic indicating the time the woman will consider the man she has 'used' worthy of his freedom from her claws. 'Weyan' is also deictic and aims at drawing the attention of the audience to an important point. 'Weeyan to n ṣábíamọ.'

Translation: Look at (a woman) who is still giving birth to children.

It is linguistically intriguing the way the writer shifts from third person singular to second person singular in his piece. In line twenty four, he is not addressing an innocent audience perhaps, but one who is part of the vices described in the piece:

'Idí lẹ̀yin fi njẹun... '

Translation: You sell your body in order to eat...'

The deictic introduction of line twenty one is effective, with the use of the word 'look', the audience's attention is captured and in his mind he is encouraged to visualize a woman, a mother of six who still keeps lovers. This special attempt to describe her continues in the next line where her 'supposed' method of advertising her 'wares' is described:

Yoruba: 'Siga ree, obi ree, idi ọmọluwabi ree O'

Translation: 'Here is cigarette, here is kolanut, the body of a decent person is here!' (for sale).

However, the writer appears to have assumed and expected too much from his audience. He expects, for example, his audience to decipher the meaning of such words as 'alumokoroyi' (cunningness) and 'alaparutu' (unprofitable or worthless). Syntactically, the writer does not appear to aim at correct sentence structures, his sentences are short, emotive and at some instances, to be able to discover where a sentence ends, the audience will have to dig into his experience at reading literary pieces that belong to this category. At this syntactic level, Abdullahi also juxtaposed sentence constructions and ideas to bring out his message. In lines thirteen and twenty-five, for example:

Yoruba: kò jọ wàyó, kò jọ kèéta

Translation: They employ deceit and force to dupe men

Yoruba: A kìí hùwà èpè ka retí àdúrà

Translation: Anybody who does what attracts a curse should not

expect a blessing.

The writer also makes use of rhetorical question in the line below:

Yoruba: kí làbùrọ̀ máa gbowó lọ́wọ́ ọkùnrin tẹ́ẹ̀ mọ̀ pe ẹ ní́ fẹ́

Translation: What is the essence of always collecting money from the man you know that you won't marry?

It is probably the intention of the writer not only to present this social ill in his community to an entirely innocent audience but rather, with the persistent use of 'you', some of the audience is assumed to belong to the category of such women whose vices are highlighted.

### 4.3.4 Extra-linguistic level of Analysis

At this level, the researcher aims to examine all the extra-textual factors that contribute to correct interpretation of this piece being analyzed.

The writer has chosen a poetic style and so the lines are rhythmical.

#### 4.3.4.1 Topicality and the Level of Shared Experience

The Nigerian economy has been going the downward trend in recent times and as a result, the people have devised so many means of earning more income to sustain themselves and families. Some people engage in more than one job to realize this. Although some people use positive means to 'fight' the dwindling

economy, to the disgust of Abdullahi, some people have decided to employ anti-social means like what are highlighted in this piece. The article is thus very topical. The Yoruba culture frowns at the issue of immorality in women. The culture permits a man to marry more than one woman if he is able to cater for their needs. But a woman who 'sells' her virtue for money is to be despised. It is even worse if such a woman is already married and has children. The writer thus shares a lot of experience with his audience. All the women who engage in this disgusting behaviour display the same attributes according to the writer. They are lousy 'oníbóronbótò' (talkative), 'alájàngbulà' (a fighter that refuses to be pacified), and they possess an insatiable desire for intimacy with the opposite sex. The writer probably lists all these attributes as cues which his audience should look for to be able to avoid being ensnared by such women. A man who is ensnared by them is referred to as a fool ('alakora' line 17). The Yoruba people believe that a man is wiser than a woman and, in fact, when a boy attains a certain age, his father starts to teach him about his superiority over the female sex. A man who now brings himself 'so low' as to allow himself to be 'charmed' by a woman is a 'fool' indeed.

The Yoruba also believe a great deal in the idea of people 'reaping' what they sow. In stories written in Yoruba, the central message is usually someone or the other receiving the repercussion for their behaviour. Abdullahi's audience will not

have any difficulty perhaps, in inferring what the poet aims to communicate. For example in line twenty-five, 'A kii huwa epe ka reti adura'.

Translation: Anybody who does what attracts a curse must not expect a blessing.

Another issue the writer shares with his audience is the belief the Yoruba people have in 'charms' or 'voodoo'. The writer states that the women who are described in his piece use 'voodoo', or charm the men and thus hypnotize them to get what they wish to take from them. The writer of this piece uses a lot of allusion to man-woman relationship. He shares this with his audience because in the Yoruba culture, particularly among those Yoruba people who have not been exposed to formal education, what the English language speaker considers vulgar is funny. In order to capture their audience's interest and 'excite' them, Yoruba writers often make incessant allusions to sex. For example, in line thirty:

'Ọkọ lakápò àlè lakòwé, wọ́n mọ kini òhún ṣe tó pẹu'

Translation: Husband is the treasurer, lover is the financial secretary, she is a master at the game. 'Kini' (thing) is an allusion to sexual intercourse. Both Ọlatunji (1984:57ff) and Matẹmilọla (1996) analyzed the word 'ki ni' as euphemism.

**4.3.4.3 <u>Inferential tools observed in the Text</u>**

The writer of the text has made use of many inferential cues or signals that indicate his line of thought as well as bring out

the substance of his text. Like this researcher observed in 4.3.3.1 above, the words of the text are carefully chosen. Many of them can be said to belong to strong connotative family. Because of the similarity in terms of negative connotation, the audience is forced to be more attentive, more interested and be able to infer correctly the message of the text. Words with negative connotation are very much in use when a moral lesson is given. The 'teacher' sort of aims at presenting the true picture of two extremes and expects his audience to make a choice. However, the extreme that employs the use of negative connotative words is supposed to reflect a 'danger' or 'no-go' sign. He also uses symbols as a cue to aid inferencing in the use of the word 'Kini' in line thirty (he alludes to sex).

The writer also makes use of tonal features. The fifth and sixth lines bear falling tones at the end of the word that ends each line. This is meant, in this case, not to specify finality but rather that more is still to be said. Tone, as it is written earlier, is a crucial feature in Yoruba language. Because of the poetic style in which the text is written, as it is read, the audience, with the aid of the tone marks, is able to make correct inference as he acknowledges the tones. For example, in line five: 'Irú wọn níí fọ́kọ niwọ jẹ' and in line six: 'Iyawo to ba laṣeju ka ri won sa o lee wo'. In line five, the emphasis is on the fact that the writer, though has made a weighty comment, is only pausing and he expects his audience to still be attentive

for there is more to be said. In line six, however, there is an element of finality in the sharp fall. But because of the element of pedagogy, the writer may still have more points he may wish to make and six lines may not have been enough to exhaust the lesson he wants to put across to his audience.

The writer also makes use of figures of speech to aid correct interpretation of his piece by the audience. There is the element of simile in line ten where the ability of the 'wife' to talk is compared to the canary bird. There is the comparison of the two opposite words in the sense of a curse and a blessing in line twenty-five to bring out the sharp difference. Abdullahi also makes use of the element of exaggeration as a signal to inference. This he has done in line twenty-one where he symbolically uses the letter six (as the number of 'her' secret lovers). In line twenty-seven, the casual reader of the language may not make the connection between receiving money from men one does not intend to marry and going crazy. This is an element of exaggeration, though didactic in nature. Perhaps, it is used in order to 'scare' his audience from behaving in the same way. He also generalises in line twenty-four by writing that everybody works hard before they get money. The point he intends to make can be easily inferred by his audience. The writer, along this line, makes use of adverbs, in a very symbolic way, to present an accurate picture of what he has in mind. In line seventeen, he describes the act of taking advantage of a man as 'je e tuetue'

that is 'eat him up' to the extent that he will look like a piece of rag which has been destroyed by acid.

The writer also makes use of metaphors. 'Gbada' and 'Lambe' as writtetn earlier only signify any man. The writer also compares the wiles of the women to a trap and the situation of a man being 'hooked' by such women as 'trapped:.

Abdullahi has, to a great extent, made use of both linguistic and extra-textual elements to facilitate the correct interpretation of the text by his audience. He however, seems to expect too much from his audience and also assumes too much. And like this researcher has written earlier, an audience usually cuts across the various social and educational levels that are present in the society in which the newspaper or magazine is being circulated. The writer not only makes use of elaborate words, he also condescends to the use of slangs that are peculiar to some particular society. For example line twelve, '...ka ba ni ni Mokwa', 'won nkiri oja na a nu un ...' He also perhaps assumes that his audience will all know his physical location at the time of writing and the direction of both 'Isagamu' and 'Mokwa', and also where 'Ayeye' and 'Yemetu' (which are areas in Ibadan metropolis) are situated.

## 4.4 English Text II

THE GUARDIAN, Tuesday, August 27, 1991

ONLY TIME WILL TELL

The only thought on my mind as I set out for the airport that evening was how I would get my guest through departure formalities with the minimum pain. I certainly did not reckon on meeting my chance acquaintance of two years, a banned and discredited politician. But there he sat on a bench, at the far end of the hall, sombre, even despondent.

As soon as he saw me, his eyes lit up and simultaneously grew wider and rounder. I knew I was in for a noisy argument if I did not manage somehow to avoid him altogether. But before I could figure out how to do so, he was right in front of me, the very picture of hysteria.

'How is your transition programme?' he said in a tone that reeked of the utmost contempt.

'Excuse me,' I said, 'there must be a mistake.I am not from the Presidency or from the National Electoral Commission, the NRC or SDP or from any agency of the Executive Branch, I am only a journalist'.

'What's the difference?' he said. 'You press boys have become acolytes to the gods and goddesses of the status quo'.

'Just because you are banned and discredited, must you also be bitter?' I asked. 'After all, it was not the press that banned and discredited you. Why don't you direct your bitterness

to the right quarters? At any rate, to get back to the transition ...'

'Yes, the so-called transition. They are so busy tinkering with it that it's a wonder anything else gets done. They have knocked it out of whatever shape it had and they are not even done yet. At this later hour they are even talking of creating new States. Nobody understands what is happening anymore'.

'Speak for yourself only'. I said. 'The transition programme is on course. The two mass grassroots democratic parties created by the government have won great popular approval. Election rigging is now an impossibility, thanks to the open ballot. Don't forget that this is a responsive administration, one that listens. That is why they are creating new States. And everything they have done and are doing flows from very good intentions'.

There you go again'. I said. 'The trouble with you banned and discredited politicians is that you believe no good thing can happen without you. You never give credit to whom it is due. Whether you like it or not, some real progress has occurred in many fronts in the last six years and you should have the honesty to acknowledge it.

Take the economy first. No more import license, no allocation papers, foreign exchange is easily obtained. Everything is now a matter of cash. Capacity utilization is on the rise. Wheat is being grown locally, for domestic consumption

and export. All those inefficient parastatals are marked for commercialization or privatization. There is an irresistible drive down towards efficiency. The banking sector is booming. In short, everything is looking good'. 'Looking good for whom. I ask you? He rejoined.

'For a great many of our country men and women. Look at all those elegant cars on the streets. Look at those architectural masterpieces springing up in the better neighbourhoods. Look at the satellite dishes that are to be found these days even in some modest homes. And, by the way, have you been to the countryside lately? You'll be amazed at the transformation that has taken place'. 'My village and the environs have not changed one bit', he said. 'Let's not flog the issue', said the banned and discredited one. 'You have said nothing about the foreign debts that are being rescheduled to fall due from 1992'.

'There you go again. Instead of praising the negotiation skills of the authorities, you are complaining. At any rate, the government has said that by the time it surrenders powers, the national debt will be no greater than it was when it took power, what more do you want?'

'What's scandalous about it? There are 136 yen to the dollar and the Japanese aren't complaining. On the contrary, they are doing very well. The exchange rate doesn't matter really. On the home front the naira is okay. It buys less than before. But there is more of it around for most people. Even

the minimum wage has doubled. And there is the People's Bank. So, things are indeed looking good'.

'The new pay structure for medical personnel will change all that'. I cut in. 'And in the educational sector, there are more universities and polytechnics, students enjoy bursaries and the libraries and laboratories will soon be flooded with books, journals and equipment. The lecturers are no longer emigrating in droves. In the social sector, the mass transit programme, the National Directorate for Employment, DFFRI, etc. are improving the quality of life. This is what I call progress.

But what you don't realise is that if these laudable programmes had not been set up, the country would have collapsed long ago. Besides, you must take a long-term view of the matter, if you do not profit now from the programmes, your children will, if they do not, their children will. You banned and discredited politicians must learn to acknowledge the efforts ot those who have given their today for your tomorrow'.

'Time will tell. 'he said, wagging a finger at me. 'Only time will tell'.

### 4.4.1 Conceptual Level of Interpretation

In this text, Dare highlights the prevailing problems of the Nigerian community under the pretext that he is explaining some issues to a 'disgruntled', 'banned' and 'discredited' politician.

### 4.4.2 The Perceived Intention of the Writer

The writer of this piece perhaps wants to state the kind of insensitivity the government of the country (at that time) displays. He ironically lists some of the 'achievements' of that government and the fact that even though people do criticise them, whatever they have done flows from 'good intentions'. He portrays the government as one who leaves the real issues to chase shadows. He writes about the country to the extent that 'even in some modest homes', satellite dishes are in use. The abolition of import licenses and allocation papers though accomplished, gave rise to a new set of problems in the country. Foreign exchange became very difficult to purchase and even the central bank did not help matters in that limited foreign exchange was released to the commercial banks. Prospective buyers are forced to make unlimited shuttles between one commercial bank and the other. The banks also sell at different rates. Dare sarcastically puts it 'the banking sector is booming', 'everything is looking good'.

### 4.4.3 Linguistic Level of Analysis

The tone of the article is clearly sarcastic and ironical. While the audience reads Dare at the surface level, he (the audience) can not help interpreting the piece at the deep structural level. He employs dialogue to bring out his point and his audience can virtually 'read' his cynical smile in almost

every sentence. The mood of the article is declarative.

#### 4.4.3.1 Language Use

Syntactically, most of the sentences are of average length. They are factual. There are some short sentences. The paragraphs are linked, which leads to a 'smooth flow' of the ideas discussed by the writer. There are topic sentences which introduce the audience to the ideas discussed in the paragraphs. There is therefore, unity of thought in terms of cohesiveness observed in the paragraphs. There is causal relations in terms of the dependence of the sentences on each other. 'That is why they are creating new states' is the reason or effect while the former sentence, 'Don't forget that this is a responsive administration, one that listens' is the causal statement. In this sentence, 'this is what I call progress', 'what I call' is of linguistic relevance in that it specifies emphasis. At the semantic level, there is cohesive chain in terms of collocation. In Nigeria, 'election' collocates with 'rigging', 'banned' collocates with 'politicians'; 'import' collocates with 'license' and 'wage' with 'minimum'. Anaphora which presupposes a previous point is observed in the use of pronouns such as 'they' in 'And everything they have done and are doing...' and 'it' in '....and you should have the honesty to acknowledge it' and in '....the national debt will be no greater than it was when it took power'. 'This' in 'this is what I call progress' is deictic in reference.

Phonologically, there is the repetition of 'look' and 'looking' in the text. There is also the repetition of the 'b' sound in 'banned' and 'bitter' in the sentence. 'Just because you are banned ... , must you also be bitter? and in 'banking' and 'booming'. Repetition of 'p' sound is also observed in 'great popular approval'. The recurrence of 'oo' sound is observed in 'booming', 'looking' and 'good' in 'the banking sector is booming, in short, everything is looking good'. The repetition in the statements below are also of phonological value:

> If you do not profit now ...
> Your children will, if they do not
> their children will and if they don't
> their own children will.

Because of the dialogue style in which the text is written, there is abundant use of the first and second persons. Also, there are many deictic forms in use, perhaps because of same reason. For example, 'look' and 'now'. 'Now' specifies time while 'look' is active and demonstrative.

#### 4.4.3.2 Transitivity Choices

The processes involved in this text are many because the text is a fairly long one. Some of them will be examined. The first and major process is that of commenting on the government policy on several matters ranging from politics to economy and rural development. The writer comments on all these issues in

defense of the stand of the government. Other processes identified in the text include 'creating' as we read in 'creating of new states', 'give' in 'give credit to whom it is due', 'praising' in 'praising the negotiation skills of the authorities', 'remonstrated' in 'I remonstrated'. The participants in the processes include the writer - Olatunji Dare as the commentator and represented by the use of 'I' in the text. The government of Nigeria who 'banned and discredited' the politicians, is the referent of 'they' in 'they are creating new states'. The government is also the referent of 'it' in 'it surrenders powers'. 'They' in 'they are doing very well' refers to the Japanese. 'You' refers to the writer's 'chance acquaintance' with whom he has reluctantly gone into dialogue.

The circumstances described in the text, as we have in the analyses of the two previous texts are marked by adverbial and deictic references. All the processes that took place in the text happened in the country, they all have a common setting. 'Now' in the sentence 'election rigging is now an impossibility' is deictic and specifies a particular time. Dare writes this article in present tense perhaps to 'convince' his audience of the fact that the changes are right here and not hidden. He adopts the imperative on some occasions commanding his listener to 'look'. He also makes use of the adverbial clause of concession plus a negative for dramatic effect and to create emphasis. For example:

'Whether you like it or not ...' Because of the role of 'defending' the government which Dare plays in this article, his use of demonstrative both in the singular and plural forms is almost boring to a cursory reader. 'All those' in the sentence 'all those inefficient parastatals are marked for commercialization...' and in 'look at all those elegant cars on the streets'. 'Those' in 'look' at those architectural masterpieces springing up ...' and 'look: are deictic in references.

Finally, Dare makes use of rhetorical question in 'what else do you want?' because the question is not meant to be answered aloud but for the listener to examine all what Dare has discussed and possibly agree with him.

### 4.4.4 Extra-linguistic Level of Analysis

At this level, the article is examined at the deep structural level.

#### 4.4.4.1 Topicality and Level of Shared Experience

This article is very relevant to the Nigerian situation. All the issues Dare examines in the article are topical. At the time of his writing, the issue of the banned presidential aspirants was very fresh in the minds of all Nigerians. Some of the illustrious men of integrity who wanted to contest the presidential post had just been disqualified and are thrown into

confusion for their not being able to detect where exactly they went wrong.

The issues of the election rigging, foreign exchange problems, wheat ban, devaluation of the naira and emigration of the University lecturers to greener pastures are all topical issues which the audience of Dare shares with him.

#### 4.4.4.2 Inferential techniques adopted by the writer

Dare makes use of exaggeration to a great extent because of the role he plays to 'convince' his audience about the then government policies. His audience may see his blind optimisms over such issues as 'election rigging' when he writes:

'Election rigging is now an impossibility' as a cue to the fact that he is probably writing at another level, definitely not at the surface level. He also writes with such 'certainty' about the growing of wheat for domestic consumption and export. He defends with fervour government policy on privatization, describing the parastatals marked for such an exercise as 'inefficient'. But his audience may perceive a sarcastic note behind that defense.

He also begs the issue by declaring that things are looking good for 'a great many of our country men and women'. His audience may be able to interpret this as an irony since Nigerians know that 'things look good' only for a few who have access to the people in power. This ironical tone can also be observed further

down where he exclaims:

> Look at those architectural masterpieces: springing up in the better neighbourhoods. Look at the satellite dishes that are to be found these days even in some modest homes.

He gives his audience a cue with the use of the word 'better', communication system is therefore for the 'better' people in the community and not for commoners. Also with the use of 'even', Dare gives himself away. The 'modest homes' are not supposed to have satellite dishes and the fact that some have it these days, according to the tone of the text, is an aberration.

The writer makes many allusions to government pronouncements as he mimics their past utterances. For example, 'the transition programme is on course' while Nigerians are fidgety about the disqualification of men who have been tried and found disciplined and capable, the government maintains that 'the transition programme is on course'. The writer also alludes to such government statements as 'everything they have done ... is from very good intentions', 'the national debt will be no greater than it was when it took power', (a governor once said this when he was leaving office that he left the state treasury the way he met it (empty). 'You must take a long-term view of the matter. If you do not profit now from the programme your children will...'

All the allusions are cues meant to stir his (Dare's) audience to interpret the piece at another level rather than at the surface

level. His piece satirizes the government and its policies. He seems to want to present the government of the country as lacking foresight when they 'appear' to work towards solving a problem, they create an avenue for another problem. A new pay structure was made for the medical personnel, the nurses went on strike. The University lecturers were advised to remain in the country to work but because they know what their counterparts are being paid in other countries which are not as economically strong as Nigeria, they embark on incessant strike actions.

Finally, with the use of such extra-textual techniques as allusion, exaggeration and irony, the writer has been able to provoke his audience to make correct inference on the text.

## 4.5 Yoruba Text II

Ìjàmbá ṣè lú, olórí ọlọ́ṣà nṣọ́de. Àbí kí ni kí á ti gbọ́ pé àwọn agbófinró tò wá fún àlàáfíà ará ìlú tún n jẹ́jọ́ olè jíjà? Bí ọ̀rọ̀ bá rí báyìí, níbo ni ààbò ará ìlú wà, nígbà tí ẹni tí a bá fẹ̀yìntì kí á mu dídùn ọ̀sàn bá n fún ni ní kíkan mu?

Translation:

Disaster has befallen the land, the leader of an armed bandit gang is on guard. Or how do we describe a situation where the members of the law enforcement squad who are for peace-keeping are answering to robbery charges? When the (story) situation is like this, where is the security of the people when the person who we expect to give us sweet orange now gives us a

sour one?

### 4.5.1 Conceptual Interpretation

In this short text, the writer wonders at the involvement of law enforcement agents in armed robbery in the Nigerian society.

### 4.5.2 Perceived writer's intention

The writer perhaps wants to alert the audience to this social ill, that is, the involvement of law enforcement agents in armed robbery. He probably does not only want to alert his audience but to instigate them to fight against the ill so that all the men that are involved can be brought to book. As he cries,

Bí ọ̀rọ̀ bá rí báyì, níbo ni à à bò ará ìlú wà?

Translation: When the situation is like this, are the people secure?

His audience, most likely, will infer that he is requesting that the situation be looked into and solutions be proferred by the people themselves since the law enforcement agents have failed in their duty.

### 4.5.3 Analysis at the Linguistic Level

The text comprises three sentences. The first is a statement while the remaining two are interrogative. Because of the length of the text, all the analyses at this level are

written in this section 4.5.3. The first sentence is the topic sentence, it is short and emotive and perhaps, the writer writes it this way to provide a dramatic effect which it effectively does. He chooses the rhetorical questions for the next two sentences. The answers to the questions are not expected to be verbatim but active. There is an element of cataphora in the first sentence and added to this is suspense. The audience is provoked to ask questions after reading the first sentence. The expression. 'Olori ọlọ́ṣà' (leader of armed bandits) is explained in the second sentence as 'awon agbofinro' (the law enforcement agents).

There are elements of causal relations observed in the relation between the three sentences. Sentence two throws light on sentence one as it tells us who is being referred to as 'head of armed bandits'. Sentence three is linked to sentences one and two because it provides the effect of what sentences one and two have highlighted. The subordinate adverbial clause 'nibo ni aabo ara ilu wa? (Where is the security of the people?) particularly functions in this area. It points to the fact that, though in a question form, there is nothing like security in the land. This subordinate adverbial clause of place is immediately followed by another adverbial clause which is of time.

Semantically, there is relation in the choice of words the writer has used. The word 'ijamba' (disaster) collocates with Olori olosa (Leader of armed robbers) since they both bear

negative connotation. They are also related in terms of meaning sense because when armed robbers strike, it is usually disastrous. 'Agbofinro' (law enforcement agents) is semantically related to 'àlááfíà' (peace).

At the phonetic level, there is recurrence of consonants. This brings about prosodic harmony and overall language beauty. For example in 'Ọlọ́ṣà nṣóde' there is the repetition of the sound 's'. There are some vowel sounds which are repeated. For example, there is the recurrence of 'o' sound in 'olosa nsode'. In the last sentence, there is the recurrence of the nasalised 'un' sound. This is obvious in 'mu didun osan ba n fun ni ni kikan mu'

### 4.5.4 Analysis at the Extra-linguistic Level

The text opens with a cry of alarm about the new trend in armed robbery in the land where law enforcement agents are alleged to take active part in crime. The Nigerian government has been waging a war against the case of armed robbery in the country. The menace of armed robbery gangs is a nationwide problem because state governments, local governments, community leaders and the common man have been alerted to be on guard for people with suspicious means of livelihood. The text is therefore, topical and the writer shares the same world of experience with his audience.

The writer makes use of some inferential tools to guide his

audience to make a correct interpretation of his piece. He opens his text with a sudden cry of alarm 'Ijamba se'lu' (disaster befalls the land). This perhaps is to create a captivating arrest. The audience becomes inquisitive after reading this opening, he naturally will want to know what kind of 'disaster' it is and which 'land' is being referred to. To further create suspense and perhaps to whet the appetite of his audience, he uses a symbol to 'cover' the identity of those he believes to be the cause of the disaster. He calls them 'olori olosa' (leader of armed bandits). He now chooses to make sentence one explicit in sentence two by 'shedding light' on the identity of 'olori olosa:. He now uses exaggeration as he exclaims 'Abi ki ni ka ti gbo ...', i.e. it is an aberration, it is an abomination, a total sacrilege.

He also juxtaposes the idea of peace with the act of robbery 'alaafia ara ilu .. Ole jija?. Peace of the land ... robbery, (translation).

This, he does, probably to stir up the people to take a positive step towards the extermination of such an abominable act. He paints the picture of peace and places it beside the prevailing problem he has highlighted. The writer also uses the images of 'a sour orange' and 'a sweet' one to express what he and his audience of course, expect from the law enforcement agents and what they (law enforcement agents) are giving the people.

The use of rhetorical questions is deliberate, he perhaps

aims at instigating his audience to take an action. For example, '...nibo ni aabo ara ilu wa ...? (Where is the safety (security) of the people of the land?)

In conclusion, this article, though very short, is loaded with inferential possibilities. The reader is provided with enough cues to make correct inference. The sentences are short, emotive and pungent. They are meant to stir up the reader to take an action about the situation.

## 4.6 A comparison of the English and Yoruba texts used in this study

In this section, the issue of whether there are similarities or differences in inferencing in the two languages with reference to the texts analysed is examined. The significance of such similarities or differences are also highlighted. In concluding this section, the researcher, from observation, presents her opinion on whether the parameters or elements that make inferencing possible in English tally with those that make it possible in Yoruba language.

### 4.6.1 Comparison at Linguistic Level

In Yoruba language, context and setting play very important roles in interpretation. The way the language is used and interpreted is dictated by these two elements.

**Syntactic level** Anaphora which is a grammatical element that presupposes a previous point is observed in both languages. Cataphora, that is, which presupposes a subsequent point or idea is also common to both. For example we see an anaphoric reference in 'the cause' in English Text I (4.1) in the sentence '...these radicals are the alpha and omega of our national headaches, the cause of all our woes'

In 4.3, Yoruba Text I line 9, 'o' in 'o gbe laya bii ipekere' is anaphoric because it refers backwards to 'Iyawo' in the sentence:

'Iyawo saroye titi o gbẹ laya bii ipekere' (The wife is so talkative that she (becomes) dry as chips). Anaphoric and cataphoric representations are made by both nouns and pronouns in both languages. In Yoruba Text II (4.5) 'Ilu' and olori olosa' are both cataphoric in reference even though they are nouns. 'The cause' in 4.1 quoted above is also a noun though it is anaphoric. 'Ilu' and olori olosa' signify the community the writer resides and the law enforcement agents in the said community respectively.

The use of rhetorical questions is common to both languages and the significance almost similar. In 4.1, Osundare uses it to make strong assertion though in an indirect and sarcastic manner because of his intention. For example,

'Mystery or no mystery, aren't there
a thousand other reasons why Wilmot deserved to go?'

His point really is that there are very many reasons why the man in question should be allowed to stay on in Nigeria. In the Yoruba texts, the writers use rhetorical questions to 'drive home' moral rules, as we have in 4.3 and to instigate a response from the audience as in 4.5.

In 4.3 for example:

'ki laburọ gbowo lọwọ ọkunrin tẹẹ mọ pe o ni fẹ?

Translation: Why do you receive money from a man you don't intend to marry?

The writer of the text in 4.5 calls his people to be alert and 'fight' a 'dangerous development' among them by the use of two rhetorical questions:

Àbí kí ni kí a tí gbọ́ pé àwọn agbófinró tó wà fún àlàáfíà ará ìlú tún njẹ́ jọ́ olè jíjà?

Translation: How can we expect to see those who are employed to maintain peace questioned for robbery?

Deictic references are similar in both languages. They are used to specify time, place and manner as earlier discussed under circumstances in which processes take place in the texts. Some Deictic verbs like 'look' are observed in some of the texts for example in 4.4, Dare writes:

'Look at the satellite dishes that are to be found these days even in some modest homes'.

Abdullahi in 4.3 line 21 writes, 'Ẹ wèèyàn tó ń ṣabiamọ lọ́ọ̀dẹ̀ ...'

Translation: Look at somebody who has children and married. The use of 'look' in the texts is significant in that the attention of the audience is immediately captured. However, where the deictic lexeme is usually a word in English, in Yoruba language, it may be a word:

'Wò' - Look

two words:

'Ẹ wo' - Look

or a combination of two or more words:

'Wèèyàn - look at somebody.

There are some words that are deictic in reference in English but can not be translated into the Yoruba language. However, both languages make use of other grammatical elements as juxtaposition both at the conceptual and word levels. It has been observed by the researcher that both pre- and post modification of words occur in both languages. For example in 4.3 line 19:

'Awon alaparutu iyawo ...'

'Awon' which is translated 'they' at times, in the above example functions as an article that indicates the number of the noun 'iyawo' since in the Yoruba language, pluralization is not realized by alteration in the form of the noun but signified by the use of another word. Thus, two modifiers are used before the 'head word' 'Iyawo' in the example above. Also the same 'awon' is used in sentence seventeen of the same 4.3 as a premodifier and 'wonyi' (these) as a post modifier of the head word 'eni'

(person).

'Okunrin to ba ko si pakute awon eni wonyi'

Translation: A man who enters into (the) trap of these people.

In English Text I (4.1), the head word 'assignment' is premodified by the pronoun 'our', and adjectives 'long suspended', 'national'. The word 'peace' in the last sentence of the text is post-modified by a prepositional phrase 'for which we have always longed'.

The writers of both languages adopt similar moods that are relevant to their concept and intention. The mood may be narrative like 4.1, declarative and sarcastic like 4.4, it may be critical, descriptive and didactic like the text in 4.3 or declarative, and instigating like the text in 4.5

Similar styles of writing are available in the two languages. The writers may choose from any of the available styles, formal or informal, objective, subjective or persuasive. The styles are chosen depending on the subject of discussion and the writer's intention. This researcher will however, like to observe that the choice of the style by the user of the language is closely related to his understanding or perception of his audience. His choice of linguistic and extralinguistic elements (elements that express his attitude towards the issue he wishes to discuss) usually tallies with the level of exposure of his audience to such elements.

Finally, opportunity for syntactic economy is available in

both languages. Osundare and Dare in 4.1 and 4.4 respectively do not aim at economy at the level of syntax. They adopt the method of 'saying it all'. This however, is not the case with Abdullahi and the writer of 4.5, they deliberately use compressed sentences to some extent. Syntactic economy is illustrated in the examples below:

Sentence two of 4.3:

Aya to ba ti nṣapepe ko ṣee finu han

Translation: A forward wife cannot be trusted

Also in sentence one of 4.5:

Ijamba selu olori olosa nsode

Translation: Disaster befalls the land, the leader of an armed robbery gang is on guard.

It is quite possible to expand each of the Yoruba sentences in the two Yoruba texts further but the writers have chosen to economize, perhaps for inferential significance.

**Semantic level** 'Words' according to Oguntuase 'are tools we use. They are vehicles used for relating views, and they are the sometimes delicate and sometimes violent weapons employed in exchange and conflicts of opinion'.[5] Words are very important in the art of making inference. Proficient writers explore them extensively to convince, convert or even confound their audience depending on their (writers') intention. From the texts analyzed in this study, Osundare and the other writers use words denotatively, symbolically, connotatively and persuasively, all

of them (the writers) have the intention of passing across to their audience some message. Lexical cohesion is common in both Yoruba and English texts. In terms of meaningfulness, the words the writer of each of the four texts used agree with the subject of his discourse and they (the words) also agree with one another in terms of connotation. For example 4.1 is titled 'Wailing for Wilmot' and in its first sentence Osundare uses the word 'lachrymose' and in the fourth sentence he uses the words 'sighs' and 'groans' 'wailing'; 'lachrymose', 'sighs' and 'groans' are related since they all characterize a mournful act.

Lexical cohesion or agreement is observed in Abdullahi's 'Iyawo Alaparutu'. All the adjectives and verbs used to describe the woman and depict her activities are related in terms of meaning. In sentence one, he uses 'sapepe' (forward), in three he uses 'aroka' (busybodying), and in eight he uses 'oniboronboto' (a talkative). The three words are related and their relation is a cue to inferencing. Even a cursory reader will easily perceive the picture the writer is 'painting' as he (reader) reads the text and associates the words in terms of inter-connections in meaning.

Both languages also make use of words whose sounds bear close references to their meanings. For example, the word 'oniboronboto' (a talkative) sounds like ceaseless talking. 'Bugles and banners' reflects 'celebrations'.

In the Yoruba texts, particularly, Abdullahi's text 4.3, the

researcher observes that the second person singular number is often pluralized. This is a reflection of the Yoruba culture where an elderly person is addressed as 'eyin' (plural form of 'you' in Yoruba) and 'awon' or 'won' (they) as a sign of respect. This is not the case with English language, the first, second or third person singular remains fixed and in the plural number, there is no alteration on the basis of the personality being referred to.

In most English language texts, inferences are drawn from the fact that some things the readers expect writers to write are omitted and from that, they make inferences. But in Yoruba writing, there are usually extraneous materials which are meant to 'cover up' the point of reference. This phenomenon is considered as a 'test' to determine how proficient a Yoruba writer is. Some English language writers also use this method to make covert what they mean to reveal. In both languages, when this method is adopted, (fortunately or unfortunately) a good reader is able to make inference based on the extraneous or irrelevant materials provided, though they are meant to act as 'covers' they become cues.

For example sentence thirty of 4.3:

'Inu ẹgbẹ ti wọn n ṣe ... oko lakapo, ale lọkọwe, wọn mọ kini oun ṣe to peu'.

Translation: In their club, the husband is the treasurer, her concubine is the secretary, she is an expert in the game.

Literal translation of the last line 'she is an expert at the 'thing'. 'Thing' is a word used to 'cover' the word the writer avoids to use in order not to have his writing labeled indecent.

Phonological Level The phonological element is a very common inferential feature in Yoruba. It is relevant for inference in English to some extent but not at the written level. Written words in Yoruba carry tone marks to guide the reader to make correct pronunciation of the words. Many words in Yoruba have similar written forms but the tone marks on them provide the reader with the necessary pointer to correct inference. For example, 'ogun' in 1.1 where the same word means six different things depending on the marks. In actual sense, apart from some common words that can be easily understood when read in context, most Yoruba words are of no inferential effect or value until they bear the relevant tone marks.

In both languages, some words when pronounced sound like what they mean. Example of such is seen in 'crumbling economy' (4.1), where an image of an economy which is making a crumbling or disintegrating or breaking sound is 'painted'. A scenario of many vices of the 'woman' described in 4.3 is presented by the use of the word that sounds like 'uncountable', that is 'ẹgbaagbeje' (sentence eleven). Also in sentence sixteen, the writer gives a scenario to illustrate the covetous tendencies of a typical adulterous male with the expression 'olojukokoro, oloju ko-mu-o-lo' the repetition of the sound (letter) 'o' is meant to

produce a special effect, that is an excessive exhibition of covetousness. Also in 4.5, the severity of the 'disaster' mentioned in sentence one is emphasized in the repetition of 'o' and 's' sounds in 'olori olosa nsode'.

### 4.6.2 Comparison at the Extra-linguistic Level

Extra-textual or extra-linguistic features in both Yoruba and English languages are related to expressive language. Expressive language is the use of a language in a way that it possesses elements of the linguistic code that are endowed with an emotive function. This means that they (these elements) serve to express the writer or speaker's attitude or feelings towards the subject being discussed.

This is to say that it is not all written pieces in both languages that lend themselves to inferential possibilities and thus possess extra-linguistic features. All the texts used in this research are prone to inference, although the degree of inference varies from one text to the other. Virtually all the texts employ the use of figures of speech. Both English and Yoruba writers delight themselves in the use of irony, exaggeration and simile. Metaphors are also used.

In 4.3, the writer uses simile in the comparison of the talkativeness of the women being discussed with that of canary bird. He also juxtaposes 'epe' (curse) with blessing (adura). In 4.4, Dare compares the attitude of the Nigerians with the Japanese when he tells his interlocutor sarcastically,

'There are 136 yen to the dollar and the Japanese aren't complaining'.

In 4.1, we see the use of comparison in the metaphoric expression of Osundare,

'Imagine a lecturer ...

A work horse who laboured ...'

The writers make use of the elements of comparison to create or form more vivid images of the qualities they aim to describe. This they do in form of juxtaposing opposite things, the use of simile and metaphors. Metaphoric expressions are not as commonly used in Yoruba language as they are in English even though Yoruba uses quite a lot of simile and other comparative tools to make points explicit. The use of exaggeration as extra-textual inferential tool is common to both languages. Of particular significance is the use of sustained metaphors in both Yoruba and English texts. In the use of this figure of speech, the objects being compared are 'sustained' over a longer period in the piece of writing rather than being presented in a sentence. For example, even though the sentence below is sarcastic, Osundare paints for us a scenario of a spy in the person of Wilmot and this he 'sustains' over a long stretch in the text:

> Who says Wilmot is not a spy, an agent provocateur, an accomplished snoop, etc? Everybody, everything in Nigeria knows this, including every grass of the Savannah, every tree of the forest even the birds of the air who saw it all when Mr. Botha decorated Wilmot in Pretoria, urging him to 'go

therefore and squeal on them'.

The use of ironical expressions is another inferential tool which the writers of both languages adopt. An example is 'extremely friendly handcuffs' and 'they have carried out our long-suspended national assignment and brought us honour from all over the globe'.

Both examples are from Osundare's Wailing for Wilmot (4.1). Irony is more frequently used in spoken Yoruba language rather than in written Yoruba. Other figurative elements that function as inferential tools are images and symbols which are quite related because when they are in use, elements are used to represent some other elements. Both of them (the items) may not be related in terms of qualities. This is very much in use in English poems. In 4.3, Abdullahi makes use of the image of a street hawker in sentence twenty two,

'Siga ree, obi ree'

Translation: Here is cigarette, here is kolanut.

He uses this image to illustrate how freely the woman being referred to advertises her virtue to willing customers.

Satires are also used to induce inferential possibilities. This has not been discovered to be in use in Yoruba language. Like it is discussed in 2.1, satires are used in prose to highlight social ills. It is of relevance to inference because the writer who employs satirical means aims to 'task' the ability

of his audience to make inference even though the subject of discussion is made covert by satirical elements such as irony, ridicule, contempt and trivialities. An example is observed in 4.4 where Dare writes:

> Don't forget that this is a responsive administration, one that listens. That is why they are creating new states. And everything they have done and are doing flows from very good intentions... Even the minimum wage has doubled and there is the People's Bank. So things are indeed looking good.

Both English and Yoruba writers make use of allusions in their writings. This means that they write briefly indirectly on some items which may not be directly related to the subject of discussion. Allusion, as an inferential technique, lends tremendous help to correct interpretation of the message the writer aims to put across. It is one of the elements employed by satirists. In 4.4, Dare makes allusion to the claim of the regime at the time of his writing the piece, that whatever they did was done out of good intention. He also alludes to the then President of the country's constant defense of his policies that they are for the benefit of future generations.

'Besides, you must take a long-term view of the matter if you do not profit now from the programmes, your children will'. Finally, Dare alludes to the statement of a state governor during the same regime mentioned above who announced that he was leaving the state treasury as he found it, that is empty. This allusion

Dare makes when he writes:

At any rate, the government has said that by the time it surrenders powers, the national debt will be no greater than it was when it took power.

In 4.1, Abdullahi makes allusion in sentence twenty-seven. The allusion is to an oral tradition about a woman who became insane because she was unfaithful to her partner.

Ara n ti won fi ya were naa nu un

Translation: That is one of the reasons they go mad.

Allusion to man-woman relationship is very common in Yoruba writings as earlier discussed. Instead of such allusions to function as means of making covert the ideas of sex, they act as inferential tools which guide the audience to make correct inference. Also, in 4.1, Osundare makes quite a number of allusions to bring to light his points. To hint on who he considers the real enemies of Nigeria, he opines sarcastically:

> So the real enemies of this country and the black world are not the commercial mercenaries who sell Nigerian oil to South Africa, not even the multinational octopuses who plant one limb in South Africa and another one here.

He thus indirectly informs us who our real enemies are as a nation. He also makes religious allusion as he sees the ways the government goes about its business as mysterious.

'Some governments are like God, they work in mysterious ways, their wonders to perform'.

The government is expected to enlighten the people about their programmes and 'carry along' the people of the country. But with this scenario of God and his ways built by Osundare, the audience is able to infer the particular flaw of the government the writer intends to describe.

Other inferential tools common to both languages are recurrence of vowel or consonant sounds to produce some significant effects. This has been discussed in 4.5.1 . However, it is only in Yoruba that vowel sounds are repeated at the end of a word to signify exclamation. For example,

Siga re e, obi re e.

The repetition of 'e' shows that the writer expects it to be read with force and exclamation. Recurrence of vowel sound at the end of a sentence or phrase can also be a means of signifying emphasis. Finally, as discussed in 4.6.1, tone is of particular relevance in written and spoken Yoruba language while it is only relevant in spoken English. The high, low and medium tone marks are indicated on words to signify their pronunciation and hence their meanings, since homographs are common in Yoruba language.

## 4.7 Discussion

Based on the analyses of the four selected articles used as the corpus of this study, the findings are as follows:

1. The conceptual interpretation and the writers' intentions in all the texts are clear and cannot be misunderstood.

2. At the linguistic level, the language use and transitivity choices were acceptable.
3. The extralinguistic level for each of the texts was well presented. The writers wrote at the level of the understanding of their audience. To a large extent, the writers shared the same experience with their audience and all the issues discussed in the articles are very topical.
4. All the inferential techniques used for proper development of the articles are adequate.

Also, some of the words used in 4.1 could have been simplified to facilitate quicker understanding. This is because the sole objective of any written piece is to communicate and where this is not done effectively, the aim is partially defeated. There are also some words in 4.3 which the researcher observed as dialectal, e.g. 'Laburo' standard Yoruba is laboro). It is therefore the opinion of this researcher that when words and expressions are written in such a language that has a wide variety like Yoruba, the writer should stick to the accepted form and avoid a mixture of the accepted form with their own particular dialect.

At the linguistic level of analysis, the texts succeed in specifying the participants, processes and circumstances under which the processes take place. The language use of the writers

semantically, syntactically and phonologically are quite satisfactory.

The extra-textual elements in all the texts analysed contribute to bringing out effectively the subjects of discussion of the writers.

## Notes to chapter 4

1. International Monetary Fund. In 1985 the Federal Military Government encouraged Nigerians to debate openly whether the country should take the IMF loan. There were many conditions attached to the acceptance of the loan and the government was unwilling to take a unilateral decision on the matter.
2. Op cit. Check Notes on chapter two, number 6.
3. Mr. Botha was a one-time Prime Minister of (former apartheid) South Africa.
4. Alhaji Shehu Shagari is the first executive democratically elected President of Nigeria (1979-1984).
5. Oguntuase, B. Wrote in his column 'Mind Your Language' in Sunday Concord of July 22, 1990.

CHAPTER 5

# SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

## 5.1 Summary

This study has been predominantly concerned with the process of inferencing in language with particular reference to English and Yoruba languages where a comparison was drawn. Because of the key role the spoken and written language play in inference, language and the art of communication had been examined in the early part of this work. Difficulty with inferencing arises where the writer or speaker fails to take into account the level of exposure of his audience to the language in use, the nature of the subject(s) under discussion and the audience's perception of the linguistic and extra-textual techniques the writer or speaker intends to use.

Reading a text or listening to speech is an interactive process and the audience must be equipped to construct meaning from what they read or listen to. The audience must also be ready to monitor their thinking in order to ensure comprehension. This is the idea endorsed by Paris, Lipson and Wixson (1983)[1]. Reading in particular, is thinking about ideas one is reading about and using a variety of information (previous and those being provided in the text) to understand the text. Since not all the information necessary to make a correct interpretation of the text is available in the text, it is imperative for the

audience to make use of information from their background knowledge.

### 5.1.1 Questions raised and tackled in the study

This study has raised and attempted to answer the following questions:

1. What is inferencing?
2. What is the background to the problem of inferencing?
3. What features characterize inferencing at both spoken and written levels?
4. Are there differences or similarities between English and Yoruba in the area of inferencing? If so, how significant are such differences and (or) similarities?
5. How far have the signals to inferencing aided correct interpretation in both languages?

### 5.1.2 The model adapted for this study

The study has examined perspectives to the study of language and interpretation in relation to making inference. The study highlighted Halliday's work as well as Minsky's frame-system theory. This researcher came up with a model in which the functional theory of language and the frame-system theory were merged. The two theories were merged because Halliday's functional theory of language does not fully examine all the elements that are necessary in language before a correct

inference can take place. For example, Berry (1975) has expantiated on Halliday's theory and stressed that the choices we make in terms of 'types', 'participants' and 'circumstances' are collectively known as the transitivity choices. Neither Halliday nor Berry mentioned anything about either the prosodic or extra-linguistic features of language both of which are very relevant to the process of inferencing.

The frame theory, an intriguing model put forward by Minsky (1974) and supported by Schank and Abelson who labelled their model 'script', fails to consider in depth the linguistic features of language, particularly in the area of language use and grammar. These limitations of the two theories make it unwise to adapt either of them for the analyses of the texts examined in this study. The combination of the two models with some modifications has provided a model which is adequate for the analysis of the texts examined in this research.

The theoretical framework adapted for this study consisted of the general discussion of the sample text which is done at the surface or literal level where the conceptual, ideational or illocutionary meaning of the text was expressed. When the intention of the writer was known, the researcher then went on to consider the linguistic and extra-linguistic tools he (writer) has employed to aid his audience to make correct inference from what has been written.

The linguistic level of analysis consisted of the highlight

of the transitivity choices the author had made and his use of language. It was at this level that the semantic, syntactic and phonological use of language was discussed. At the extra-linguistic level, the element of topicality, shared world of experience (between the author or speaker and the audience) and the inferential tools adopted by the author or speaker were examined.

### 5.1.3 Justification of the model used in this study

The model adapted for this research was preferred above others because it has been shown to aid the understanding of what the author or speaker was talking about. It also brought out how language was used in a special way to perform different functions depending on the situation under which it was used, the people that were involved and their level of experience in the use of language in that way.

This model also took into consideration the use of language with particular reference to the reason the writer had for writing the piece. And finally, the model was credible and quite adequate for this study being a modification of combined ideas from studies conducted previously by renowned linguists.

### 5.1.4 Observations from the analyses

There are some observations arising from the analyses of the texts examined in this study. This researcher has observed that,

the proficiency of a speaker or writer in any language is not enough for correct inference to take place. The audience must identify the purpose of the text or utterance. It was also observed that the author or speaker stimulates the process of inferencing by initially providing his audience with some clues which may be from their prior knowledge of the subject under discussion or some information he deliberately provides in the text to aid inferencing. The reader of any piece therefore, becomes accustomed to looking at texts carefully while keeping his prior knowledge about the topic under discussion in mind and searching for additional information provided in the text. This researcher has also observed that certain questions (e.g. rhetorical) are used in all the texts in both languages examined in this study with versatility. They are used either to castigate, instigate, inform or introduce subjects of discussion.

In 4.1 (Wailing for Wilmot), they were used extra-textually to arrest the audience and direct attention and elicit response to the subject in question.

> How can anybody treat with such criminal disdain a godly status which uncountable Nigerian dons have tried all kinds of feats, including brazen plagiarism, book cooking, ethnic and religious blackmail, cultivated prostration, etc. to attain?[2]

Furthermore, the study has observed that inferential tools in both English and Yoruba are similar to a large extent. It is

only in the use of tone marks in the written form in Yoruba language that a dissimilarity is observed. While Yoruba employs tonal marks to aid inferencing in written (and spoken) forms, English language does not. Also, the question of misinterpretation of messages in English by Yoruba speakers was attributed to the fact that English is a second language to the native Yoruba language speakers whereas the subjects in question had Yoruba as their first language and mother tongue.

## 5.2 Conclusion

This research study has attempted to mirror the various perspectives from which we can carry out an effective language analysis. The researcher has presented only a brief description of the various dimensions of analysis using her data. The observations presented above in 5.1 clearly show that with a model of analysis as the one proposed in this study, any language researcher can go on to analyze a text or speech depending on the set objectives.

The study has thrown more light on the concept of inferencing, the relevance of which to the art of effective communication, cannot be overemphasized. This is because the writer and audience's consciousness of the existence of the communicative techniques discussed in this study will surely influence the strategies they will choose to employ in their future use of the language. Inferential process involves

basically the combination of text clues and prior knowledge to justify the writer's message. The knowledge of all these elements examined in both languages will aid language users to choose their words and expressions with greater tact to reflect their intention.

Due to the awareness this study is meant to create for both writers (or speakers) and their audience, it is the opinion of the researcher that misinterpretation and confusion which had occurred in the past because of wrong assessment of the level of shared experience (by the author), and wrong notion about the writer's intention, could be reduced. But such a fact can only be accomplished when such precaution is taken, for according to Frank (1989)[4]:

> If participants are aware of the importance of their utterances, not only in ensuring continuity of the interaction but also in achieving the aim and maintaining the interest of other interactants, and the audience, then they will consciously and carefully choose their words.

In conclusion therefore, inferencing may be word based, that is semantic. This can be noticed in subjective writings where the writers deliberately choose and use words connotatively. In the sample passage in 2.7.2, the author of the text sees abortion as murder. Consequently, such words as 'taking life' and 'killing of another human-being' are employed in place of 'mere expulsion of a foetus'. Inferencing may also be determined principally by syntactic clues. Examples of this abound in

figurative use of language. In chapter two of this study, such figurative expressions as the 'heart of the matter' (matters do not have hearts), 'deadly and epidemic diseases' (the writer's description of communism as a system of government) and 'techniques of subversion and disinformation' (communist propaganda as seen by writer of the text), are used as syntactic clues which are meant to aid inferencing.

Another example of inferencing examined in this study is experiential background which is revealed through shared experiences. These are perhaps the most common because writers always take the level of experience of their audience into consideration. A writer who overlooks this fact will fail to communicate. In Dare's article in 4.4., the points raised were shared by most (if not all) Nigerians. The problems of 'election rigging' 'banned politicians', 'devaluation of the naira', 'ban on importation of wheat' were discussed in the media, churches, mosques, offices and schools.

The researcher observed that almost all the clues, linguistic and non-linguistic which trigger inferencing in English language do so in Yoruba language. The Yoruba language user chooses his words carefully in order to communicate his message effectively. He may choose to play on words by repeating the same word, syllable or a particular alphabet. For example

Iyawo alaṣeju lẹ fẹ sile

oniboronboto Iyawo ... Iyawo

saroye titi ogbẹ laya bii ipekere

Also, from this researcher's observation, the importance the Yoruba language users attach to tone and tone marks has been the only area of notable difference between inferencing in Yoruba and English. While the prosodic features are relevant chiefly to spoken English, in Yoruba, they play key roles. The literate Yoruba language cannot pronounce and interpret a word correctly in Yoruba without knowing the correct tone mark. This researcher has also observed that there are occasions when extra-textual focusing is demanded because of semantic sophistication which only the native language users can effectively interpret.

A bilingual, from this researcher's observation may face the difficulty of inference because of inadequate exposure to a language. For example, a Yoruba boy was born into an English speaking community, the parents speak Yoruba language to him at home but in the compound where he lives, at school and occasionally at home, the English language is used. He thus speaks both languages fluently. But when it comes to interpreting the Yoruba language at the secondary or metaphoric level, he runs into difficulty. Finally, this researcher will like to proffer that intuitive judgement emanating from experience or exposure plays a key role in the art of inferencing and correct interpretation.

## 5.3 Areas of further study

This study has been limited because the texts and articles examined have been from newspapers, magazine and a written play. They are all written materials. Thus, a stage is set for interested linguists to formulate a more suitable model that can be used to more effectively analyze the everyday language used in conversation in both languages under study in this research. Other researchers can help to make the conclusions of this research acceptable by examining other areas of language use and how they affect the process of inferencing in both English and Yoruba. The parameters examined and compared in both languages in this study are mainly based on the observation of the researcher. There are more likely some other parameters which may be discovered by other researchers. The significance of such parameters to the process of inferencing could also be examined.

## 5.4 Limitations

This study is limited in that only four articles (two from each of the languages under study) are exhaustively analysed. Therefore, the generalization drawn are particularly related to the two languages that formed the reference point for this study. This is because the study is a comparative description of the process of inferencing in both languages.

Another limitation is that this study is not specifically about the process of inferencing in the classroom. Inference

here has been examined generally and how the process operates in the classrooms is highlighted in Chapter Three, as an example only. To dwell more on the operation of inference in the classroom would have led to a cumbersome digression into another wide area of study.

The data used in this work were drawn from newspapers and magazines. There might have been printer's error and the problem of clarity in those texts which would have imparted on the precision of our data.

## Notes to Chapter 5

1. P. Scott, Y. Lipson and K. Wixson wrote the article 'Becoming A Strategic Reader' in , Vol.8 No. 3 (1983) pp. 293-316.
2. Osundare, Niyi op.cit.
3. This is one of the views of the combination of Dewitz, M. Carr and P. Pathberg in their article 'Effects of Inference Training in Comprehension and Comprehension Monitoring' in Reading Research Quarterly, Vol. 22 No. 1 (1987).
4. Frank in her M.A. thesis titled 'Analysis of feature Radio Interview Shifts in Interactants Manipulation in Language' (1989).

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