



## ABSTRACT

Phonological and graphological analysis of Olu'Funmi Osato-Osawaye's Untangle was carried out. The objectives of the research are to identify the various phonological and graphological devices used, classify the devices into these two levels of language and explain the effect of the devices on the style of the content in the novel. The study follows the Hallidayan (1985) grammatical model as a theoretical framework. The data for the research was obtained from the first three chapters of each part (parts one – part three) of Untangle by Osawaye. The data collected from thirty-four (34) pages were, thus, presented. The

# PHONOLOGICAL AND GRAPHOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF OLU'FUNMI OSATO- OSAWAYE'S UNTANGLE

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## Introduction

Phonology is the study of sound patterns of a given language, rules of pronunciation, the rhyming scheme and utterance of the words in a sentence. Lodge (2009) is of the view that phonology is the study of linguistic systems, specifically the way in which sound represents differences of meaning in a language. Phonological devices are rhyme elements, alliteration, consonance and assonance. Graphology is the study of the pattern and shape of written language on paper. Crystal and Davy (1969) said that graphology is the analogous study of a language writing system or orthography as seen in various kinds of hand-writing or topography. Leech (1969) opined that graphology exceeds orthography which refers to the whole writing system: punctuation, paragraphing and spacing. In short, it deals with a sentence's systematic formation, structure and punctuation.

It is important at this point to relate these parts to the whole. Both phonological and graphological levels alongside Lexico-Syntax Level form the levels of Language. The levels of Language are the Linguistic tools generally used to differentiate one writer from another, otherwise called Style in Stylistics.

Lexico-syntax contains two words. The term lexis means the vocabulary used in a language or in any writing for any purpose. Syntax studies the rules that govern the combination of words to form phrases and sentences. Lexico-syntactic patterns may be obtained through various means which include unusual or inverted word order, omission of words and repetition. According to Tallerman (1998), Lexico-syntactic choices are obtained through devices such as piling of usual collocates, unusual collocates, archaic



study revealed that alliteration, assonance and rhymes were dissected at the phonological level to distinguish the articulating sounds. Lastly, the novelist used italicization so profoundly at the graphological level, some of which express thoughts, soliloquies, non-English words, and rhetorical questions. The employment of these tools in the analysis of literary text seems to enhance a better understanding of such text and the author.

**Key Words:** Phonological level, Graphological level, Language Levels, Style, Stylistics

words, particular part of speech, metaphor, simile, oxymoron and so on.

The term stylistics can be defined as the linguistic study of style in a language. It is the study and description of the choices of linguistic expressions that are characteristics of a group or an individual in specific communicative setting especially in literary works. Crystal and Davy (1980) sees linguistics as an academic discipline that studies language scientifically, and stylistics, as a part of this discipline, studies certain aspects of language variation. To Freeman (1971:1) "Stylistics is a sub-discipline which started in the second half of the 20th century". It can be seen as a logical extension of moves within literary criticism early in the 20th century to concentrate on studying texts, rather than authors. Leech and Short (1981:13) define stylistics as the study of style. It is rarely undertaken for its own sake, simply as an exercise in describing what use is made of language. Enkvist (1973) consistently refers to linguistic stylistics as 'stylo - linguistics' in his book titled Linguistic Stylistics. He observes that stylo-linguistics differs from literary criticism, 'where brilliant intuition and elegant often metaphoric verbalization of subjective responses are a premium. In the same vein, Crystal and Davy (1980) writing on "the concern of stylistics in Investigating English Style" say that the aim of stylistics is to analyse language habits so as to identify, from an array of linguistic features common in English, those features restricted to certain kinds of social context. Similarly, Short and Candlin (1989:183) are of the view that "Stylistics is a linguistic approach to the study of the literary texts. It thus embodies one essential part of the general course-philosophy; that of combining language and literary studies"

There are different perspectives to the definition of style. First, style as personality or individuality: this seeks to establish symmetry between a person and his expressions. Second, style as choice from variants -this perspective is backed by the fact that every phenomenon has many possible alternatives. Third, style as deviation from the norm -norm here means the accepted and normal usage within specific speech communities. A deviation would then mean a departure from the accepted norm. Fourth, style, as a temporal phenomenon-according to Babajide (2000), style changes, as nothing in life is static abreast of time. Fifth, style as situation or relationship between message and medium -Language use does not occur in a vacuum; the message and medium are always important. The medium can be formal or informal, spoken or written. Lastly, style as good writing -Here we are considering a text from the aesthetic perspective, that is, whether the text is well written. The aesthetic perspective of rating a text looks at the ability of a writer to arrange words beautifully to appreciate the thought in the mind of the writer.



The novel *Untangle* by Olu'Funmi'Osato-Osawaye tells the story of a young beautiful poor but intelligent girl with a bright future called Mabel who lives with her mother and siblings in abject poverty. They were happy until tragedy struck. Eloma, Mabel's friend equally beautiful suffers the stigma of carrying HIV. They were used and abandoned by opportunistic men. The secret of their past and present life haunts them as they seek revenge. They trade vengeance for love and got their life fully packed again. Their Deliverer rescues them in the battle for their soul.

Olu'Funmi' Osato - Osawaye was an undergraduate student at the University of Maiduguri, Faculty of Arts, Department of English from 1989-1992. She holds a Masters degree in International Law and Diplomacy. She has lived most of her life in the bustling commercial city of Lagos, Nigeria. Olu'Funmi, a Christian social worker with an avid interest in children and female gender development issues, represents her thoughts on issues of life. She is married and makes their home in Lagos, Nigeria, with their kids. The novel literarily and stylistically brings to light the recent deterioration of moral decency in our contemporary days.

There exists innumerable stylistic assessments by scholars, especially literary critics, on creative works by African writers. The volumes of *African Literature Today (ALT)* series and other critical works that are available attest to this. Renowned creative writers in Africa have received some level of attention by critics. Nevertheless, Olu'Funmi' Osato-Osawaye's *Untangle* (April, 2015) is a novel that recently stepped into the world of literature and is yet to gain the attention and appreciation of scholars. At present, no published critical work on it has been found. The study intends to examine the Phonological and Graphological devices employed by the author to present her view effectively. These inform the desire to work on the paper titled "A Phonological and Graphological Analysis of Olu'Funmi' Osato-Osawaye's *Untangle*".

Furthermore, this study can be a take off point for those who are interested in carrying out further research on Osawaye's *Untangle*. The result of the study will be significant to students of languages and literature as it will add to existing knowledge in Phonology, graphology and stylistic studies. In this research, Osawaye's *Untangle* will be studied. The book has one hundred and ninety-three (193) pages, sub-divided into three (3) parts. Part One, Two and Three. The first part has twenty-three (23) chapters, the penultimate part has eleven (11) chapters and the final part has nineteen (19) chapters making a total of fifty-three (53) chapters in all. Because of time and resources, the research will be limited to the first three chapters of each part making nine (9) chapters and thirty-four (34) pages in total.

There exist scores of scholarly works on this lane. In the work of Ohanedozi (2013) 'Stylistic Analysis of Chimamanda Adiche's *Half of a Yellow Sun*', she identifies the types of sentences used: compound sentence, compound-complex, parenthetical expression, italicized words, transliteration, and code-mixing. She analysed twenty-four (24) chapters out of thirty-seven chapters that make up the book. Her findings were presented in a tabular form and then statistically represented using a bar chart. She identified a thousand and fifty-two (1052) compound sentences, six hundred and ninety-five (695) compound-complex sentences, parenthetical expressions are three hundred and one (301), italicized words are four hundred and one (401), transliteration two hundred and twenty-six (226) and finally code-mixing are one hundred and seventy-one (171). However, this research is different as the sentences presented are further analysed into their phonological and graphological categories.



Also, in the work of Okoye (2014) 'Stylistic Analysis of Ngugi WaThiongo's 'Wizard of the Crow', she looks at the sentence and word used by Ngugi in his novel and the effect of the devices. She goes on to elicit these sentences as well as the predominant stylistics devices which Ngugi employs in his novel. While in this research, other branches of language levels such as graphological and phonological level were worked on.

Nnadi (2010) in the Linguistic Stylistic analysis of Ike Chukwuemeka's Novel, noted that in telling the stories, some of the author's texts are replete with Igbo words and expressions, with some of those Igbo words meaningless in the context they appear. It was also observed that there are morphologically deviant formations that demonstrate Ike's flair for neologisms. Instances of linguistic pieces of evidence of the writer's rejection of the racist undertone were also observed. Ike's network of lexical selections generally makes the text highly readable, comprehensible and enjoyable. For the punctuation pattern, heavy marks are employed where lots of coordinators and subordinators are needed. Again, this work is different from Nnadi's study as different frameworks was adopted in the analysis of the texts.

In Odeh's (2010) A Stylistic analysis of Isidore Okpewho's The Last Duty and Helon Habila's Waiting for An Angel, a comparative stylistic analysis of both works were made. He found out that, the two novels are indisputably related or similar in many respects and dissimilar in other minor perspectives. In the first place, they are similar because they are of similar ideological stances of maxims, historicism, structure, heroes of low mimetic mode, humour and multiple narrations. In spite of their similarities, The Last Duty and Waiting for an Angel are dissimilar in the area of syntax. They both employ parallelism, chiasmic, pidgin, simple and non-simple sentences. Habila employs staccato, disfigured, jerky, truncated and disjointed sentences of grammatic aphasics which were not used by Okpewho in The Last Duty. More so, on the aspect of morphology, Habila employs compounding, derivation morphology and borrowing more elaborately and more freely than Okpewho. Graphologically, both novelists used graphological devices such as the period, dash, italicization, and ellipsis, but Habila used them more elaborately than Okpewho. It can be gathered that Odeh's study is morphologically based while this research has little or nothing to do with morphology and its processes.

Hassan (2002), in A Linguistic and Stylistic Analysis of Darkness in Conrad's Heart of Darkness, identifies darkness in the presentation of the episodes, setting, lexical choice, grammatical choice, collocation hyponymy, word order, it-clefting, thematization, parenthesis, front-weight, end-weight, complex sentence and hypothetical or conditional sentences. Hassan says Conrad provides the essential that would capture the reader's attention. It has all the trappings of thematic conventional adventure, tales mystery, setting, suspense obscurity and then darkness. Nevertheless, O.O Osawaye's Untangle was analysed in this research using two of the three levels of language as stipulated by Halliday(1985).

#### **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

The study follows leech and Short 1976 summarize nine (9) types of linguistics deviation in poetry; Lexical, Semantic, phonological, morphological, graphological, historical and register. Graphology deviation is a type of linguistic deviation where rules of academic writing are neglected in a way where sentences are written without punctuation marks. It occurs when an author deviates from



the usual ways of writing linguistic deviation. According to these scholars, foregrounding is the breaking of norms of standard language. Leech shares the same view with Spencer. He notes that when style is discussed, the focus is always on “the language of a particular writer, a particular period, a particular genre, even of a particular poem. According to Leech and Short (1976), graphological variation is a relatively minor and specific part of style concerning such matters as speech capitalization, hyphenation, italicization and paragraphing.

### **PHONOLOGICAL LEVEL**

In phonological level, the literary text is dissected to distinguish the articulating sounds. The phonological level analysis includes alliteration, assonance, consonance and rhymes.

#### **Alliteration:**

The term, alliteration which means “letters of alphabet” was derived from a Latin word, “Latira”. It has a critical role in literature and, especially, in the genre of prose and poetry because it renders musical rhythms and thus makes reading more appealing and absorbing. The term is usually applied only to consonants, and only when the recurrent sound occurs in a conspicuous position at the beginning of a word or a stressed syllable within a word. Alliteration merely serves to correct the words together at the level of sounds. Instances of alliteration in ‘Untangle’ include:

- i. **H**er word convinced **h**er friend that **h**er message **h**as **h**it home.
- ii. Most of her **p**arent’s **p**eers.... the girl child
- iii. As a young girl, she had once overheard the comments of one of her **f**ather’s **f**riends, “**f**emale children don’t have brain
- iv. ..., after a while, she will get married and move to **h**er **h**usband’s **h**ouse and... your labour
- v. I **w**onder **w**hy people bother to live **w**hen they know that one day they **w**ill die
- v**i. **H**er **w**hole **w**orld was rumbling around **h**er
- vii. I must taste the **f**ruit **f**irst
- viii. Your brothers are in school and...to collect money **f**or **f**ood and **f**ees
- ix. It was a wonder she never got pregnant until after her **s**enior **s**econdary school examination.
- x. Koko made her way to the hospital, carefully **w**atching **w**here she **w**alked.
- x**i. **W**hen **w**e were starting this business...
- xii. By this time, she was sobbing baby as the enormity of what **h**e **h**ad shared with **h**er **h**it home.

#### **Assonance:**

Assonance is a stylistic device, defined as the repetition of a similar vowel in two or more words of a literary piece or poetic line. Often, most writers employ assonance in their works sparingly. ‘Untangle’ carry assonance in the following instances:

- i. It **r**ears its ugly head anywhere **th**ere are human beings
- ii. **W**hy did you have to **d**ie...
- iii. **T**he only daughter in a family of twelve



- iv. Sadly, Akunna was ill, equipped to handle the pressure of living, in the city and taking care of a family.

**Consonance:**

The stylistic device, consonance is explicated as the repetition of the same consonant sound found before and after the dissimilar vowel in two words of a line. In other words, consonance has a dissimilar vowel bound by two similar consonant sounds. Identifying consonance is quite challenging, although few of them were identified in Osawaye's 'Untangle':

- i. As a young girl, she **had** once over **heard**
- ii. After a **while** she **will** get married
- iii. Good morning, my dear, **what** do you **want** to do today
- iv. She could not bring herself to accept...and **made** up her **mind**...

**Rhymes:**

A rhyme is a repetition of a similar sound (usually exactly the same sound) in the final stressed syllables and any following syllables of two or more words. Instances of rhymes in Osato's 'Untangle' are very few. These include:

- i. **Preparing** meals, **taking** care of the home and **receiving** and **taking** care of visitors
- ii. I've been **thinking** of **doing** the right **thing**...ashamed
- iii. She watched her friend **talking** and **weeping**
- iv. From this first visit...whom you should trust
- v. Daniel described the process of occupying an office as "**selection**" and not "**election**".

**GRAPHOLOGICAL LEVEL**

According to Roman Jackson in Terry Eagleton (2), literature is "a kind of writing...which represents an organised violence committed on ordinary speech. It transforms and intensifies ordinary language, deviates systematically from everyday speech." This deliberate deviation or violation of the norm of the language for prominence is called foregrounding. Foregrounding makes linguistic features stand out for a second look. Graphology is also known as orthography. Every language has its own alphabet, spelling system, punctuation marks, spacing paragraphing, capitalization, italicization, underlining, bold print and so on and are generally used according to the norms of the language for the purpose of foregrounding. Osawaye-Osato flouted or deviated from the norm of these graphological devices. The novelist used italicization so profoundly some of which express thoughts, soliloquies, non-English words, mischievous characters, business names and rhetorical questions. For instance, when Mabel's mother died, she thought, *Will my suffering never end? My three brothers and I were still very young when Papa turned his back on us leaving Mama to for us... She worked seventeen hours a day to be able to feed her growing children.*

Again, Eloma had a strange feeling and found it difficult to relate to the kind of emotion and she thought, *No, I'm not involved. This is her problem. It's not mine.*

Koko and her husband arranged to see the doctor at 1pm but her husband did not keep to the time, so she thought, *"Nigerian time". I wonder how this coinage started. Wherever we are in the world, we have twenty-four hours in a day and strive to make the most of it.*



Instances of soliloquies: When Koko was stuck in traffic, she soliloquised, *The traffic today is very bad. Thank God, I'm on leave and I won't be resuming until Monday.* Secondly, when Mabel preached to a customer and felt she was doing wrong, she soliloquised, *I might have to be careful and not turn the office into a Church.*

Instances of non-English words: *Akara* and *Dodo*

Instances of mischievous characters and business names: the foregrounding is a two-edged sword. Firstly, to the foreground, and secondly, to depict the cunning nature of the character:

*Chief Kolokolo*

*Kolokolo's wife*

*What of Oga*

*Casket Homes*

Instances of Prayers" Mabel, thinking about her reunion with her father prayed, *Father in heaven please don't allow me to suffer another shock in Jesus' Name. Amen.* Also, she prayed silently, *Lord, I'm afraid. Help me to overcome my fears and move in faith trusting you about my relationship with Peter.*

Instances of Rhetorical question:

*What will I tell Mama?*

*How will I tell her?*

*Whose baby is it, father or son?*

The novelist also used inverted commas (" ") to foreground so much so that one can take it to be her style of writing. Instances of the use of inverted commas include:

*"You mean Chief Kokolokolo?"*

*"Yes" she replied*

*"He told me he has ...today"*

*"Mama, why can't you him?"*

*"He has too many wives....any moment"*

*"He wants to take you..."*

*"Do I have to work...?"*

Also, alliteration, assonance, consonance and rhymes were identified under the phonological level, which dissects the text to distinguish the articulated sounds, making language and words soothing to the ears of the readers. Lastly, the graphological level was looked into. Instances of foregrounding, which is a deliberate deviation or violation of the norm of the language to indicate prominence were obvious in the text.

## **CONCLUSION**

Alliteration, assonance, consonance and rhymes were under the phonological level, which dissect the text to distinguish the articulated sounds making language and words soothing to the ears of readers. Lastly, the graphological level was looked into. Instances of foregrounding, which are



deliberate deviation or violation of the norm of the language to indicate prominence were obvious in the text.

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