



A Linguistic Stylistic Analysis of President Goodluck Jonathan's My Transition Hour

Hannatu Kwasau¹, Aisha Abubakar Hamid²

Department of English and Drama, Faculty of Arts, Kaduna State University

¹hkwasa@gmail.com , ²ayshayola@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This study presents a thorough linguistic stylistic analysis of President Goodluck Jonathan's memoir "My Transition Hour" by applying the Lawal Model of analysis(2012). Employing a data-driven analytical approach, the research aims to extract direct linguistic insights and stylistic devices from the text. The Lawal model of Analysis, emphasizes the examination of linguistic elements such as graphology, phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics. The theory of Systemic Functional Grammar of Halliday serves as the analytical framework. The findings reveal the stylistic features that offer valuable contributions to understanding the linguistic aspects of political memoirs, thus enriching our comprehension of language use within political discourse.

Keywords: Linguistic features, Stylistic devices, Lexical and grammatical Categories

Introduction

The beauty of human language can be seen in its ability to not only tell or give information but also in its ability to perform actions by mere utterances. Language is the cement of society, in which human relationships will be impossible without it. It is with language that we think, share ideas, and establish and maintain relationships. Language is a purely human and non-instinctive method of communicating ideas, thoughts, and emotions by means of voluntarily produced symbols. This definition presents language primarily as human characteristics for communication. Writing is the way of representing language in a textual medium, through which writers such as poets or novelists use it as a medium to pass their message across to the readers or audience. They often use language to convey their message. In the field of stylistics, we refer to the analyst as a stylistician. The researcher figures out the features of writing and language used by different authors. This brings about stylistic analysis. The major reason for every stylistics analysis is to explore language and more specifically to explore creativity in language use.

This paper attempts to investigate the linguistic features and stylistic devices used by President Goodluck Jonathan when he recounts his experiences during a crucial time of political change. Specifically in the context of Nigeria.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Stylistic is a term that poses a challenge for scholars to pinpoint an exact definition due to the various interpretations attributed to it. Despite this complexity, Chapman (1973) offers a concise explanation, defining stylistics as the linguistic examination of diverse styles. Lodge(1966) further emphasizes that modern stylistics is concerned with multiple interconnected objectives, including elucidating the notion of style and establishing its central role in the literary study. These definitions, as noted by Khudhair (2018), highlight the significance of style in the realm of stylistics, restricting its scope to the analysis of literature. Conversely, some scholars, such as Kudhair (2018), prefer to define stylistics as the scrutiny and comprehension of texts from a linguistic standpoint. This perspective delves into the interaction between readers and the language of texts, elucidating how individuals comprehend and are impacted by written material during the reading process..

Widdowson (1992:3) acknowledges that stylistics involves the examination of literary discourse from a linguistic perspective. It focuses on the utilization of language in producing a text. Leech (2008:2) characterizes stylistics as a critical link between linguistics and literary studies, emphasizing that through linguistic analysis bridging both fields, we enable an interpretative fusion. Lawal (2012) states that stylistics aims to recognize, depict, and clarify whatever is notable and recurring in written or spoken texts".

According to Simpson (2004), stylistics focuses on language as the central element in textual interpretation. This is due to the significance of linguistic structures, forms, patterns, and levels in understanding the function of a text. Leech and Short (2007) describe stylistics as the examination of the connection between linguistic form and literary purpose, highlighting it as the link between linguistics and literature. Crystal and Davy (1969, 2008)

emphasize that stylistics offers a unique viewpoint on the analysis of both literary and non-literary texts, viewing it as a subfield of linguistics concentrating on style in language and its variations.

Goatly (1993) argues that stylistics primarily involves comparing linguistic features to establish norms and likelihood of occurrence. McArthur (1996) defines stylistics as the branch of linguistics specifically dedicated to studying style in literary works. Bullock et al (1988) define stylistics as focusing on how individuals and social groups use language distinctively in both literary and situational contexts.

Stubbs (1986) further defines stylistics as the examination and portrayal of unique stylistic features in literary texts. Stanley E. Fish's perspective in his article 'What is Stylistics and Why are they Saying Such Terrible Things about it' (1981) suggests that stylistics emerged as a response to subjectivity and lack of precision in literary studies. Stylisticians aim to provide accurate and rigorous linguistic descriptions that lead to interpretations claiming relative objectivity, thus attempting to establish criticism on a scientific foundation.

Wales (2001:372) asserts that the primary aim of most stylistic analyses is not solely to outline the formal aspects of texts but rather to illustrate their functional importance in interpreting the text or to link literary effects with linguistic factors where relevant. Simpson (2004:4) outlines the core principles underlying every stylistic inquiry: the analysis must be thorough, easily accessible, and reproducible. This is elaborated by Simpson (2004:4) as follows:

The stylistic method's rigor lies in its foundation on a structured analysis rather than random, vague observations. It relies on organized models of language and discourse to elucidate how we perceive and interpret language patterns. The retrievability of the stylistic method hinges on an explicit system of terms and criteria, recognized by fellow students of stylistics. Ensuring replicability in stylistic analysis demands a level of transparency that allows for verification by other scholars through testing on the same text or application to different texts. The validity of conclusions drawn from a stylistic analysis is rooted in the accessibility and reproducibility of the analytical process. Ultimately, a stylistic analysis is a scientific endeavor that requires testing and confirmation. Simply put, stylistic study delves into the examination of style

Theoretical Framework

Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG) was developed by MAK inHalliday. SFG examines language through a functional lens. Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) explain how human experience and relationships are translated into meanings, which are further expressed through language. They identify three key metafunctions within a clause: Ideational, Interpersonal, and Textual. Each metafunction serves a distinct purpose, contributing to a comprehensive understanding of the clause's meaning..

The Meta-Function of Language

The Ideational Function refers to the utilization of language to convey information and express content. When emphasizing content, the intention is to transfer information clearly and efficiently for easy comprehension. This function consists of two primary systems: transitivity and ergativity. The other functions of language include the textual and interpersonal aspects. The textual function involves the use of language for discourse representation, where language is linked to itself and its usage context, encompassing the preceding and succeeding text and situational context. Textual function can be categorized into two structures: Thematic structure (theme and rheme) and information structure (NEW and GIVEN). The interpersonal function, on the other hand, is the employment of language to establish and nurture social connections. It incorporates modalities related to the modal or mood system, which is represented by two key elements: mood and residue. In this particular investigation, the scholar concentrated primarily on the transitivity system, which will be elaborated further below..

Transitivity

Transitivity consists of three key components: process, participants, and. According to Santosa (2003: 78), transitivity "is a grammatical concept that explores the structure of a clause in depicting the representational or experiential meaning." Therefore, transitivity serves as a grammatical framework that explains real-life experiences conveyed through process, participants, and circumstances..

The operations (referring to the verbal group)

The individuals or entities (human/ non-human) engaged in these operations (referring to the noun group)

The conditions surrounding the occurrence of these operations, including the time, place, and manner in which they occur (referring to the prepositional phrase and adverbial group)

Processes play a central role in transitivity as they represent various activities. These different process types help us categorize our experiences of events into a few distinct categories. Halliday (1994:14) has classified six process types to aid in this sorting process.:

1. Material process,
2. Behavioural process
3. Mental process
4. Verbal process
5. Relational process
6. Existential process.

Method of data collection

This study focuses on the description of linguistic features of writing as a choice and style employed by an author. To examine former President Goodluck Jonathan's style of language usage in his text *My Transition Hour* is primarily used as the source of data for analysis, while the secondary sources include printed materials such as textbooks, journals, electronic books, theses, and articles.

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Graphological Stylistic Devices

This analysis of the text covers the areas of punctuation, paragraphing, capitalization, ellipses, acronyms, and abbreviations. Graphology is also known as orthography and according to Syal and Jindal (2008:21), it is the study of the writing system of a language. Goodluck used a wide array of graphological devices in his book. Such as Capitalization, Italicization, indentation, quotation marks, full stops, comma, question marks, exclamation marks, and the colon to figure out the stylistic meaning and to allow the reader to understand the text. They are the visual element in the text. They are the elements statisticians pick out in a text. The writer uses them to send a message.

Punctuation Marks

Some of the punctuations used in the text are :

The Comma(,) are used to signal a pause in speech or to separate ideas that belong together but are mutually exclusive

Example 1- In politics, I have yet to see such patriotism. (p20)

Example 2 - All is deployed, both fair and foul means. (p20)

Example 4 - In Lagos state, for instance, it was like a carnival. Musicians, comedians, and other celebrities were engaged by opposition elements to join the protests. (p22)

Example 5 The worst was the menace of the radical Islamic terror sect, Boko Haram, with their mindless destruction, insane killings, utter savagery, kidnapping of innocent children, women, and men, and other despicable acts of brutality. (p28)

Comma seems to be the speed bump of the punctuations. Most writers use commas to control the flow of a sentence, its rhythm, and its speed. The comma is the perfect mark to allow your readers to catch their breaths. The comma allows readers to pause and take information as it is being released by the writer. Jonathan therefore stylistically sees commas as connectors that smoothes out the choppiness of sentences in *My Transition Hour*.

Exclamation mark (!) It is used to arrest attention and point out something remarkable, sometimes it is used to show surprise, signify a shout, or express strong emotions.

Example 6 - This was the height of hypocrisy! (p65)

Example 7- My ambition is not worth the blood of any Nigeria! (p74)

Example 8- All I want to say is that I have come home! (p121)

Example 9- We belong to this place, we are part of you. We are back! (p122)

Example 10 - You belong nowhere else but home, and this is my place of birth! (P121)

Question mark (?) This punctuates questions. It is also used at the end of a sentence to show that the sentence is a question. Examples in the text include:

Example 11 -How does a parent lose everything like that? (p18)

Example 12 - How does a nation kill its youth and future in this manner? (p18)

Example 13 - Where were the school motions, security guards, teachers, and the principal?(p29)

Example 14 - So, who or what is Boko Haram? (p31)

Example 15 - Why did I lose the primary and general elections in Niger state in 2011? (p63)

The question mark is utilized to indicate an inquiry intended to gather information from the person addressed. Its use in the text is also artistically meaningful. Essentially, Jonathan's inclusion of question marks in this context holds essential value as it is purposefully employed to highlight key elements of significance and guide the readers' understanding..

Abbreviation: the use of abbreviation is widely employed in the text. It is when the first letter of a term is used to shorten a reference to the other term.

Example 16- TSA – Treasury Single Account (p46)

Example 17- IPPIS – Integrated Personnel and Payroll Information System (p46)

Example 18 - BVN – Bank Verification Number (p46)

Example 19 - CJN – Chief Justice of Nigeria (p44)

Example 20 - EFCC – Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (p44)

Example 21 - NPA – Nigerian Port Authority (p34)

Example 22 - PDP – People Democratic Party (p4)

Example 23- ACF – Arewa Consultative Forum(p18)

Example 24 - NYSC – National Youth Service Corps (p18)

Example 25 - APC – All Progressive Congress(p32)

Example 26 - NPC – National Population Commission (p52)

Example 27- PVC – Permanent Voters Card (p63)

Example 28- INEC – Independent National Electoral Commission (p66)

Ellipses: This is employed to strategically omit some part of a sentence or statement. In the text *My Transition Hour* the author uses ellipsis to achieve the economy of space create suspense, and heighten tension. The writer stylistically employs ellipsis as gaps that are left for the reader to fill in. Ellipsis signals discontinuity. Examples from the text include;

Example 29- In the hope that there would be a change, continued to suffer in silence...(p40)

Example 30 -Federal Republic of Nigeria and from a Federal Military Government...(p41)

Example 31 - It became increasingly clear that such expectations could not be fulfilled...(p43)

Example 32 -Indeed, it is doubtful that democracy is being practiced in the country, let alone being entrenched...(p49)

Example 33-Thank you very much your Excellency... (p77)

Example 34 - And just when we all know it was all over, and that there was no way of stopping this huge calamity from be falling us... (p129)

Example 35- Good bless you...(p129)

Foregrounding: This refers to elements in a text which are prominent so as to attract attention and which are not the usual style of writing. No doubt foregrounding is a relevant, even indispensable, strand of textual texture, particularly of literary text. In the text, the first alphabets of each chapter were written in very large capitals covering the first three lines of the chapter.

T

he circumstance of my family background, birth and childhood would not have led anyone to believe that I would ever assume office as President of Nigeria. It was completely unimaginable. I was from a poor family and a minority ethnic group in Nigeria. Example 36

T

he date was may29, 2001. I had just been sworn in. As the motorcade code into the villa, I had clear thought of the economy of the challenges facing Nigeria. The expectations of the citizenry a rising from our campaign promises which resonated very well amongst the Nigeria youth. Example 37

C

an average politician be patriotic? Most citizens of nations are patriotic under certain circumstance but may become unpatriotic in national teams and foreign terms, both Christians and Muslims sing and dance to the tune of the sane music. Example 38

O

ur ration and citizens faced a cascade of challenges between and 2015 most of which avoidable. The worst was the menace of the radical Islamic terror sect, Boko Haram, with their mindless destruction, insane mass killings, utter savagery, kidnapping of innocent children, women, men and other despicable acts of brutality. Example 39

Chapter one title ‘Reflections Begins with a very large capital letter T. This letter is an element of foregrounding, because it catches the attention of the reader to read through the chapter even if the reader have no intention of reading the chapter. By reading, the reader will understand that the chapter talks about Jonathan’s family background. Chapter two title My ‘Political Odyssey’ begins with a very large capital letter T. This also catches the attention of the reader. Chapter three title ‘Politics and Patriotism’ begins with large capital C. The author put forward this for stylistic effect. Many people do not have time to read the book, some only scan through the text, but foregrounding as a unique feature will draw the attention of different readers to read the whole chapter. In general, foregrounding as a stylistic feature adds flavor to the text *My Transition Hour*. For that foregrounding is one of the powerful stylistic devices used by the author to pass his message to the readers.

Phonological Features

At the phonological level, alliteration and assonance are deployed in abundance to produce stylistic effect in the texts.

Alliteration: This refers to the repetition of same consonants in a text. It is recognized by the repetition of the same sound, in My Transition Hour Jonathan employs the use of alliteration in several pages. Example in the text include:

|s|

Example 40- The people I swore to serve (p59)

Example 41 - The people we strive to serve are receiving much more injustice (p46)

Example 42- Something stands before me still (p88)

Example 43 - We do so on the strong conviction (p90)

Example 44- The delegation involved measures to secure the speedy restoration (p83)

Example 45- Primordial forces with the logos of violence (p35)

Example 46- Some gaps with information which a simple list (p33)

|p|

Example 47- Which addresses PowerPoint preferences (p36)

Example 48- Highly placed people would put innocent children (p43)

Example 49 - One's political, ideology and policy program (p46)

Example 50 - We created a pan Nigeria political party (p72)

Example 51 - Our enemies are the political profiteers (p107)

|t|

Example 52 - It will remain one of my treasured memories of my transition into private life (p114)

Example 53- Many who could afford transportation tickets already sent their families abroad (p65)

Example 54- Intrigues, intimidations, and betrayals (p67)

Example 55 -Which lifted my spirit greatly (p71)

Example 56-I have taken time to adjust to private life (p155)

/l|

Example 57- I began to question why these girls were abducted (p15)

Example 58 - To achieve their own personal and group goals (p31)

Example 59 - To form a parallel government if the elections were rigged (p72)

Example 60- I met a guard setting The dignitaries and other guests were all present (p114)

Example 61 - Struggle and commitment that is growing amongst our young people (p124)

Assonance: This refers to the similarity of vowel sounds in a text. The main goal of assonance is to impart melodic effect to an utterance. It is one of the important stylistic devices that play a role in phonological aspects Examples in the text include

|i|

Example 62 - I was now like (p115)

Example 63- Show his displeasure towards his colleagues To his credit (p22)

Example 64 - I desperately needed to find to find out what happened (p17)

Example 65- The moon slide and landslide (p64)

Example 66- They told me that if I continued with the deregulation I would be pushed out (p23)

Example 67- I was not going to pull back because if I did not deregulate (p28)

Example 68 - This is a woman who had ten live births (p24)

Example 69- I felt I was destined by God at that point in time to inject peace (p76)

|E|

Example 70 -Meeting with my wife, and my ministers in the tea room (p113)

Example 71 - I saw a cheering crowd lining the streets (p114)

Example 72- A time bomb that needs to be handled as an emergency. I knew that as leaders (p132)

Example 73 - Why would I need anyone to plead (p154)

Example 74 - I left office three years ago and the past seems to be repeating itself (p169)

Example 75 - That will not be job seekers but job creators (171)

Example 76 - We will seek to prevent conflicts and create a conducive environment (p176)

|a:|

Example 77- For my wife who was very emotional (p24)

Example 78 – My mind was ravaged (p29)

Example 79- It was time for me to leave (p115)

Example 80 - My wife and I came down (p116)

Example 81 - The last time Nigeria made progress was in 2014(p154)

Example 82 - I can hold my head high in my post-presidential life to say that under my watch(p175)

| ^ |

Example 83- I found out days later (p96)

Example 84 - After we lost the elections, he died but not before offering me words (p97)

Example 86 - They had come to welcome (115)

Example 87 - From all over the country met us on our arrival(p116)

Example 88 - a president who had just handed over power (p116)

Example 89- Waiting to greet us but as we got closer (p116)

Example 89- Ready to welcome us (p116)

Example 90- Who had also come to receive us (p117)

Example 62-90 shows a reasonable number of examples of assonance in the text. Assonance and alliteration are used in the text to demonstrate how sound can be manipulated to convey stylistic meaning. The author has demonstrated that vowels and consonant sounds can also be used by a politician to achieve different aspects of meaning as well as create aesthetic effects.

Morphological Features

Morphology is the study of words and their constituent units as well as the processes involved in their formation. These include prefixes, compound words, and coinages.

Prefixation: This is a process of adding a letter or a group of letters to the beginning of a base word to make a new word.

Example91-Un+fortunately=Unfortunately (p14)

Example 92- Re+ election=Re election (p16)

Example 93- Un +patriotic=Unpatriotic (p20)

Example94- De+regulation=Deregulation (p21)

Example 95- In+ evitable=Inevitable (p24)

Example 96- Re+united=Reunited (p36)

Example 97- Mis+ management=Mismanagement (p42)

Example 98- Anti+corruption=Anti corruption (p44)

Example 99- Re+build=Rebuild (p56)

Example 100- Re+scheduling=Rescheduling(P66)

Suffixation: This is the process of adding a letter or group of letters at the end of the root word. Examples from the text are:

Example 101 - Large+st=largest (p6)

Example 102- President+ial=Presidential (p7)

Example 103- Neighbor+hood =Neighborhood (p18)

Example 104- Meaning+less=Meaningless (p64)

Example 105- Avoid+able=Avoidable (p70)

Example 106- Air+line=Airline (p73)

Example 107- false+hood=falsehood (p79)

Example 108- Force+fully=Forcefully (p91)

Example 109- Peace+fully=Peacefully (p155)

Example 110- Presiden+cy=Presidency(p155)

The author employs the use of suffixation from example 101 to example 110. A group of letters were added at the end of the roots of the word to make a new word.

Compounding: This is the combination of two words to form a new one for a new meaning. Examples from the text are:

Example 111- Anti-corruption (p44)

Example 112- Aircraft (p34)

Example 113- Home – ward (p116)

Example 114- Oath – taking (p113)

Example 115- Extraordinary (p124)

The writer makes use of compounding as a stylistic device to achieve meaning in the text. From example 111 to example 115.

Coinages: This has to do with the creation of totally new words or expressions that do not have any connection with any pre-existing word in English or the language being used. Examples from the text include:

Example 116- Super – rigging (p73)

Example 117- Do or die politics (p120)

Example 118- Mama Peace (p127)

Lexico-Semantic Features

The lexico-semantic level is the level at which a stylistic analyst looks at the author's deployment of words and their meaning in a text. These include synonyms, antonyms, semantic fields, and collocation.

Synonymy: It is used to identify words that have the same or nearly the same meaning as another in the same language. Examples in the text are:

Example 119- Our constant discord and disquiet are always traceable to the foundation of Nigeria (p16)

Example 120 - One Nigeria, where there is equity, fairness, and justice (p17)

Example 121- Insurgents – terrorists (p28)

Antonyms: These are words that are opposite in meaning and may differ in form or pronunciation.

Example 122 Degrade and Upgrade, depending on the trend (p17)

Example 123- Those who feigned support for me in public worked against me behind... (p17)

Example 124 - All is deployed, both fair and foul means (p20).

Semantic Field

Semantic fields can be viewed as the vocabulary of a language as a system of interrelated lexical networks, and not an inventory of independent terms (Crystal 1992 P346). The semantic field is also called the lexical field. A word is meaningful only in its semantic field. Examples in the text are: Field of Education: Students (p28) School (p28) dormitories (p28) Examination (p29) Secondary schools(p29) Unity Schools (p29) Physics paper(p28)

Field of Occupation: Ministers (p112) Commissioners(p117) Traditional Rulers (p117) Governor (p117) Chairman(p97)

Field of Transportation : aircraft(p116) Plane(p134) Train(p134) Car(p113)

Collocation: in a typical conversation, some words appear to move very closely together in discourse. This follows therefore that the mentioning of one word readily brings to mind the occurrence of the other word. Examples of collective words in the text are:

Example 125-Boko Haram-Islamic terror sect, mass Killing, kidnapping, insurgency (p28)

Example 126- Military-Parade (p115)

Example 127- corruption – stealing, indiscipline, fraud, Embezzlement. (p42)

Idiomatic Expressions:

Idioms are statements whose meanings cannot be understood from the words that make them. Examples from the text include:

Example 128- African must turn its begging bowl to a basket of opportunities. (this means that Africa has gotten into the habit of asking for help which makes it look helpless and incapacitated. It should therefore use its vast resources to turn the situation around) (p139)

Example 129- Obama Urged Nigerians to open the next chapter by their voting. (This expression means that Obama is prodding the electorates to vote for the opposition to form a new government). (p65)

Example 130- When two brothers fight to death, it is a neighbor who inherits their father's wealth. (This means that when people who should out look out for one another keep having disagreements, their enemies easily defeat them. (p173)

Syntactic Features

Syntax is the study of the grammatical structure of sentences as built-up words. It is concerned with the stringing up of words together in particular patterns to form meaningful sentences thereby ensuring grammaticality and implication, correctness, and acceptability. In this case, the researcher looks at combination of words to form clauses and sentences. This can be achieved through the application of systematic functional grammar, that is the ideational metafunction and interpersonal function.

Ideational Metafunction

This function is concerned with the relationship between the external world and the internal world and our experience of the world. It reflects the speaker's experience of both the inner and outer world through language use. It is the content function of language through which language encodes the cultural experience and the individual's experience as a member of the culture (Halliday 1978:112).

Material process: the material process is the process of 'doing'. In the material processes, there are two participants' roles, namely: actor and goal. Examples of material processes in the text include:

Example 321 I thanked them (p. 23)

Actor = I

Process = Thanked

Goal = them

Example 322 I accepted the PDP nomination (p. 59)

Actor = I

Process = accepted

Goal = the PDP nomination

In the above examples of material processes, Jonathan shows that action has to be carried out by the actor who serves as the subject of the clause.

Mental Processes: processes of sensing

The participants in mental process clauses are the sensor and the phenomenon. The sensor role is always assigned to a participant who is endowed with consciousness or can be considered to be in the context.

1. Perception (seeing, hearing, etc.)
2. Affection (liking, fearing, etc.)

3. Cognition (thinking, knowing, understanding, etc.) Some examples in the text include:

Example 325 I believe one day (p. 36)

Senser = I

Process = cognition = believe

Phenomeno = one day

Example 326 I hope the rest of the girls (p. 36)

Senser = I

Process = hope

Phenomeno = the rest of the girls

Example 327 I believe that is not what a president should do (p. 50)

Senser = I

Process: cognition= believe

Phenomenon: that is not what a president should do

Example 328 I believe that politics should be pursued (p. 62)

Senser = I

Process: cognition = believe

Phenomeno: it is the political structure that must change

Example 329 I could sense his relief too (p. 77)

Senser = I

Process : perception = could sense

Phenomeno: his relief too

Phenomeno = ready for whatever emotion comes my way

The action of the mental processes is perception, affection, or cognition. This shows that Jonathan consciously uses these types of clauses in the text to express the analysis of transitivity at whatever level.

Relational Process

Relational processes construe being and having. The relational process can be divided into two sub-categories. They are identifying processes and Attributive processes. The attributive process has two participants, they are carrier and Attribute.

Some examples from the text include:

Example 332 I was still the vice president (p. 14)

Carrier = I

Process = was

Attribute = Still the vice president

Behavioral Process

Behavioral processes can be thought of as 'active' or material versions of mental and verbal processes. Behavioral processes form an intermediate category between mental and verbal processes on one hand, and material processes on the other. The behavior has similar characteristics to the sensor in mental processes, that is it is a participant that has consciousness. Typically in behavioral processes, there is only one participant, namely: behavior (the agent who behaves).

Some examples in the text include:

Example 333 I hugged my thoughts (p. 76)

Behaver = I

Process= Hugged my thoughts

Example 334 I excused myself and left the sitting room (p. 76)

Behaver = I

Process = excused myself and left the sitting room.

The behavioral process portrays Jonathan's uniqueness in writing, showing diversities in the use of clauses.

Verbal Processes

These are processes of saying. The participants of the processes are the sayer (a participant who speaks), receiver (the one to whom the verbalization is addressed), and, verbiage (a name for the verbalization itself). There is however one other type of verbal process, in which the sayer is in a sense acting verbally on another direct participant with verbs such as insult, praise, slander, abuse, and flatter. This other participant is referred to as the target.

Some examples in the text include:

Example 336 I apologised to those families (p. 48)

Sayer = I

Process = verbal = apologised

Verbiage = to those families

Example 337 He said the commission would never forget my contributions (p. 83)

Sayer = He

Process = said

Verbiage = The commission would never forget my contributions

Example 338 He said the action was rare in Africa (p. 90)

Sayer = He

Process = said

Verbiage = the action was rare in Africa

Existential Process

Existential processes represent that something exists or happens. Typically, existential clauses are introduced by the 'existential' there. Note that 'existential' there does not represent or refer to anything in or of itself so in analyzing the transitivity structure of existential clauses, existential there is not assigned any participant role. Some examples in the text include:

Example 339 There is nothing wrong with being ambitious (p1)

There

Process: existential=is

Existent:nothing wrong with being ambitious

Example 340 There are two options before us as a nation (p50)

There

Process: existential=are

Existence: two options before us as a nation.

Example 342 There is no such thing as probe in a democratic setting like ours. (p154)

There

Process: existential=is

Existent: no such thing as probe in a democratic setting.

From the examples above, the author employs the use of the existential process in the text to reveal the existence of some phenomena in Nigerian politics.

Interpersonal Metafunction

The Interpersonal Metafunction is concerned with the relationship between the speaker and the hearer. It represents the component through which the speaker introduces himself into the context of the situation, both expressing his attitudes and judgments and looking to influence the attitudes and behavior of others. (Halliday 1978: 112). This function is concerned mainly with clauses as exchange. In analyzing a clause as exchange of events, Halliday specifies two components: the mood and the residue. The mood carries the syntactic burden of the exchange and carries the argument forward (Halliday 1994: 71). Morley (2010) states that the interpersonal meta-function includes instrumental interaction and information interaction.

Instrumental interaction accounts for the fact that through the use of their chosen illocutionary force people issue commands, make requests, and put forward suggestions to direct people's actions/behavior.

The Imperative Sentences

Imperative Sentence: A sentence is said to be an imperative sentence if it commands, to make request. In other words, an imperative sentence makes people carry out an action or instruction. (Iyiola 2013:175) Examples from the text include

Example 345 The INEC was then directed to hold meetings with political parties. (p66)

Example 346 The commander sought my permission for the parade to begin. (p115)

Example 347 After giving permission, I went to take my seat. (115)

Example 348 I urge Nigerians and Africans to join me in the effort to create fresh thinking and enlightenment for the people of this great country. (p176)

Example 349 We have to rebuild our nations but we must start by rebuilding ourselves. (p176)

So let us roll up our sleeves and go to work. (p177)

The above-listed imperative sentences are used by the author to show where commands, orders, and requests occur in the text. In some instances, Jonathan shows where actions are carried out.

By using informational interaction people give or seek (content/factual) information. They make statements to pass across information and ask questions or seek information, they utter exclamations by way of reactive comment (Morley 2010:13). Examples of informational interaction in the text include.

Declarative Sentences

Declarative sentence: A sentence is said to be declarative when it expresses a statement or declaration. Examples from the text include:

Example 350 It was not about Nigeria (p16)

Example 351 It was a defining moment for our complex nation (p16)

Example 353 I could imagine her trauma (p24)

Example 355 The foreign pressure on the issue of election rescheduling was intense (p67)

The declarative sentences listed above are predominantly used in the text by President Goodluck Jonathan to express himself.

Interrogative Sentence: A sentence is said to be an interrogative sentence if it asks a question and usually ends with a question mark. Examples from the text include:

Example 358 Where were the school matrons, security guards, teachers, and principals? (p29)

Example 359 Why didn't the state Governor make arrangements to protect the children? (p29)

Example 360 Was it worth it? (p71)

Example 362 How would I discuss Nigeria's stability with my colleagues from ECOWAS? (p71)

Example 364 Can I tell the world that the same INEC had changed because of some interest? (P74)

The sentences listed above expose the text as one full of interrogations. President Goodluck Jonathan expresses a lot of ideas through interrogations. Some of the questions require answers while others are rhetorical.

Exclamatory Sentence: A sentence is said to be an exclamatory sentence if it expresses emotional feelings like sorrow, surprise, shore, wonder, gratitude, etc In most cases, an exclamatory ends with an exclamation mark Examples from the text include

Example 366 This was the height of hypocrisy! (p65)

Example 367 Too many things were bound to go wrong! (p70)

Example 368 And this is my place of birth! (p121)

Example 370 My ambition is not worth the blood of any Nigerian! (p74)

Exclamatory Sentences in the text are used to express pain and surprise by President Goodluck Jonathan. The use of informational interaction in the text behaves the flow of the text. The use of declarative, interrogative, and exclamatory sentences in the text reveals the authors ability to express his feelings.

Rhetorical Questions: These are questions poised only for dramatic or persuasive effect. They do not require answers. The rhetorical question is deployed for the aesthetic effects. The writer uses rhetorical questions in the text not to request information or seek a reply, but to achieve a greater expressive force than a direct assertion. Jonathan asks questions expecting no answers, responses, or replies from anyone in particular. Although the reader understands it. Examples from the text include:

Example 371-Can an average politician be patriotic? (p20)

Example 372 -Does it then mean that politicians cannot be patriotic? (p25)

Example 373 - Could we ever play politics without bitterness in this country? (p73)

Example 374 -Did I want history to repeat itself? (p72)

Example 375 -Could I partake in the reincarnation of that war that sent hundreds of thousands of Nigerians to an early grave? (p72)

Example 376-Must we play politics with issues of national development? (p25)

Jonathan uses rhetorical questions in order to convey meaning in the text and to express his emotions. There are very few in the text.

Repetition: This is a syntactic stylistic device that indicates continuous repetition of words, phrases, clauses, or sentences in literacy text. It emphasizes the meaning of the expressions repeated. This compels the attention of the reader and ultimately aids understanding.

Example 378 - My ambition is not worth the blood of any Nigerian. This is repeated in pg 18, 74, 76

Example 379- The dog and the baboon shall be soaked in blood. (p 18, 74, 76)

Example 380- Soaked in blood (p18, 74,76)

Rhetorical Schemes and Tropes: A rhetorical figure is a word or phrase that entails an intentional deviation from ordinary language use to produce a rhetorical effect figures of speech are traditionally classified into schemes, which vary the ordinary sequence or pattern of words to carry a meaning other than what they ordinarily signify. The rhetorical schemes and tropes used in My Transition Hour are: Simile, metaphor, personification

Simile:This refers to a comparison..

between two dissimilar things, usually

connected by the use of 'as' or 'like'

Examples from the text include

Example 381 -Riots were raging like wildfire despite the fact that there was no genuine dispute about my victory (p64)

Example 382 - The victory still ended up like ash in the mouth (p64)

Metaphor:Metaphor equates those two things not because they are the same but for the sake of comparison or symbolism. Examples from the text include:

Example 383- A place where short people are giants and tall men are dwarfs (p21)

Personification:Obafemi et al (2002, p13) define personification as a figure of speech in which human qualities are attributed to inanimate objects. There are four examples from the text. These are:

Example 384-Nigeria was at the sharp tip of a huge explosion (p113)

Example 385- Today, the PDP should be celebrating rather than mourning (p72)

Example 386- Hunger has no religion (p102)

Example 387 - And poverty has no tribe (p102)

Conclusion

The main objectives were achieved as all the linguistic devices used by Jonathan in expressing his message were explored and analyzed at various linguistic levels. The results obtained from this study clearly show a reasonable number of examples of different stylistic devices used by the author. This study revealed that stylistic features are used for specific or personal reasons depending on the writer's choice. Therefore, this work concludes that writers are unique because they have different ways of sending messages. Uniqueness in writing is what brings about stylistics. President Goodluck Jonathan's My Transition Hour also revealed the use of such different functional sentence types. Interrogative and exclamatory sentences are frequently used. Imperative and declarative sentences also manifest in the text. In addition, figures of speech such as personification and simile are also employed by the

writer to show creativity in language use. The study reveals that stylistic features are not only contained in literary texts but they can also be found in non-literary texts written by politicians.