Sapientia Global Journal of Arts, Humanities and Development Studies (SGOJAHDS), Vol.5 No.1 March, 2022; p.g. 267 – 279; ISSN: 2695-2319 (Print); ISSN: 2695-2327 (Online)

LANGUAGE AND STYLE IN HELON HABILA'S *WAITING FOR AN ANGEL* AND NGÓZI CHUMA-UDEH'S *FORLORN FATE*

MADU BRIDGET NGOZI
Department of English, Faculty of Arts
Chukwemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University
Igbariam Campus, Nigeria
Email: madubridget@gmail.com

NJOKU INNOCENTIA KECHINYERE
Department of English, Faculty of Arts
Chukwemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University
Igbariam Campus, Nigeria

UDOYE IFY
Department of English, Faculty of Arts
Chukwemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University
Igbariam Campus, Nigeria

&
AKABIKE, IFY
Department of English, Faculty of Arts
Chukwemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University
Igbariam Campus, Nigeria

Abstract

This study examines the use of language and style in Helon Habila's Waiting for an Angel and Ngozi Chuma-Udeh's Forlorn Fate. This research is a textual analysis with particular emphasis on the language features of the extracted sentences which form the data and their stylistic significance. The theoretical framework that guided this study is Halliday's Systemic Functional Theory of Grammar (SFG) propounded in the 1960s which lays emphasis on the functions of language in context of situation. The research design for this study is descriptive qualitative method of analysis based on some principal approaches to stylistic analysis of a text. The tool of analysis is syntax. The findings of the research show that Habila made use of varieties of sentences with appropriate clause structures to highlight the political and economic pains of the citizens as a result of exploitation and oppression experienced from leadership styles of the ruling class as portrayed in the work. Chuma-Udeh as a descriptive writer also used various sentences to capture vividly, the grave condition of the people and ecological issues in the Niger Delta. The writers are able to communicate their message powerfully and creditably to the audience through the use of the linguistic, nominal and verbal groups, SPC, SPCA, ASP etc. sentence patterns and structures in the various texts. Hence, literary texts could be explored and understood through linguistic analysis.

Keywords: Language, Style, Helon Habila's Waiting for an Angel, Ngózi Chuma-Udeh's Forlorn Fate.

Introduction

This study is a stylistic analysis of Helon Habila's *Waiting for an Angel* (2002) and Ngozi Chuma-Udeh's *Forlon Fate* (2019) from the point of view of language and style. Language is man and man is language, because it is an indispensable aspect of human existence. Language has been perceived by some linguists as much more than words which involves our ability to use words and sentences. It is a dynamic system, a medium through which members of a speech community carry out their communicative activities. Ngugi (2008) asserts that language is the primary means of communication of culture and knowledge which serves as a key link between all the realms that make up a community. Communication cannot be separated from man. Therefore, most linguists, explain language as a means of communication by means of certain arbitrary vocal symbols used by speakers of one speech community (Onwukwe, 2012). They view language as a system of sounds, letters, words, phrases, sentences that have meaning assigned to them arbitrarily by its users.

From the foregoing, we have reasons to assert that communication is an essential part of being human. In the effort to express the importance and indispensability of language in human existence, language has been defined by many scholars. Uwadiegwu (2017) defines language as a system of arbitrary speech symbols used by a given community to communicate. To Crystal (2008), it is an institution whereby humans communicate and interact with one another by means of habitually oral symbols. This portrays language as a vehicle of thought and communication; whereby every human thought is communicated through language. For Umera-Okeke (2012), language is a coding system and a means by which information may be transmitted or shared between two or more communicators for purposes of command, instruction or play. As a means of socialization, it helps us to express our ideas, feelings and desires in a way that is easily understood by others. Language unites people based on linguistic affiliation and cultural identity which is displayed in its aesthetic function in creative works like poetry, prose and drama. Consequently, in its meta-lingual function, language is used to discuss or describe itself. Thus, through the creative use of language, communication in literature is achieved. Language gives man the ability to persuade and convince others to his line of reasoning and action and portrays the submissions of a literary writer. A writer, through consistent use of certain linguistic features creates a style pattern peculiar to him.

Style is a particular manner of expression with regard to creating or presenting something both in writing and speech; one regarded as skillful or fashionable way in which an individual uses a language. It focuses on how the role of the linguistic codes of a text contributes to the development of literary criticism. Adagbonyin (2017) describes style as "the meeting ground between linguistics and literacy criticism." Onwukwe (2012) defines style as the way a speaker or a writer selects and employs his words, phrases, and sentences to achieve his desired effect in any given context. As Varshney (n.d) points out, style refers to those components or features of a literary composition which gives to it individual stamp, marking it as a work of a particular author or person and producing a certain effect (s) on the reader. For Wales (2001), style refers to the perceived manner of expression in writing and speaking. But the process of using language to do an analysis on literary works is known as stylistics.

Stylistics is a branch of linguistics that employs linguistic methods to analyse written or spoken text. It is the study of styles and can be approached from different angles. Stylistics aims at investigating a text with respect to the expressions used in the text in order to discover their functional significance with regard to the interpretation of the text. In her work, Onwukwe (2012) believes that most linguists generally accept the definition of stylistics as a branch of linguistics which studies the features of the distinctive uses or varieties of language in different situations. It tries to establish principles capable of accounting for the particular choices made by individuals and social groups in their use of language. In his submission, Lawal (2003) asserts that stylistics is concerned with analysis and description of the linguistic features of texts in relation to their meaning. Again, Syal and Vindal (2015) see stylistics as the branch of linguistics which takes the language of literary texts as its object of study. In his own suggestion, Mcintyre (2012) believes that stylistic analysis can bridge the divide between the linguist and the literary critic. In the application of systemic linguistics, Butler (1985) submits that the stylistic features of a text or body of texts may involve any or all of the levels of language such as semantics, syntax, morphology and phonology depending on the text being analysed and the interest of the analyst, implying that systemic linguistics deals with grammatical analysis of any text at any level.

Language embodies literature. Creative writers make use of syntactic patterns, lexical choices and collocations to create awareness of issues within the society. Some researchers have already written on the literary techniques, thematic structures and stylistic features in Helon Habila's *Waiting for an Angel*, though not as it is done in this study; and to the best of the researcher's knowledge, the study of language use in Chuma-Udeh's *Forlorn Fate* has not been carried out.These are the gaps the study hopes to fill in scholarship.

This study examines the linguistic features in Helon Habila's *Waiting for an Angel* and Ngozi Chuma-Udeh's *Forlorn Fate.* The researcher embarks on this linguistic stylistics analysis to examine how these African creative writers employ the elements of language peculiar to them. The work is restricted only to the group types, their choice of sentence patterns and the effect such linguistic features exhibit in projecting their messages to the target audience.

Chomsky (1957) sees syntax as the study of the principles and processes by which sentences are constructed in particular language. For Agbedo, (2003; O'Grady, and Archibald 2009; and Anagbogu *et al* (2010), syntax stipulates a set of rules users of a given language must follow. The above submissions lead us to the conclusion that syntax is the branch of language that studies the combination of words to produce grammatical structures and ranks among the various levels of stylistic analysis.

Theoretical Framework

The theory used for this study is Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG) propounded by Michael A. K. Halliday in the 1960s. The adoption of this framework stems from the fact that it is very relevant in stylistic analysis because it emphasizes context, function and choice. It provides a network of systems which enables the analyst to make choices that are both syntactically and semantically inclined. This is in line with the submission of Matthews (2005), "the basic idea of Systemic Functional Grammar is that any act of communication realizes a set of choices. In this same line of thought, Finch (2000), maintains that the context within which these choices are made, consists of three meta-functional roles which language is believed to achieve, and

they include the ideational function which is seen in the use of language to conceptualise the world; the interpersonal function which is associated with the use we make of language as an instrument of transaction by which we represent ourselves to others; and the textual function which involves the use we make of language in forming text, whether spoken or written. Systemic functional linguistics views language as a complex adaptive system for meaning. "The adaptive system is "elastic," constantly reshaping and extending itself." (Halliday, 2000). The textual meta-function creates cohesion by organizing the usage and manner of expression. It is a resource for presenting interpersonal and ideational meanings as information organized into a text unfolding in context (Patpong, 2009). The Systemic Functional Grammar makes stylistic analysis come alive.

Lamidi (2013) asserts that systemic functional grammar recognizes four theoretical categories of grammar: unit, structure, class and system; and they account for grammatical structures that are basic to all languages. In the words of Eka, (1994), the unit carries grammatical patterns, and in the incidence of grammatical choice, there must exist a unit that carries the choice. Unit accounts for structures of different shapes that carry recurrently grammatical patterns. The grammatical scale of English recognizes five units as posited by Afolayan (2004). These units are sentence, clause, group, word and morpheme. In relation to the English clause, four primary elements are generally recognized: Subject, Predicator, Complement and Adjunct, abbreviated as (S)(P)(C)(A). It is generally accepted that the predicator is a compulsory/obligatory element of the English clause. Alabi in Lawal (2003) see scale and category grammar as a basis for rigorous structural analysis in stylistic study because texts are approached on network of interrelated systems. The researcher finds this aspect of systemic functional grammar appropriate for the purpose of this study because of the configuration and its suitability for stylistic analysis of texts.

In a prose work, when a writer tries to capture grave occurrences and events with foreboding consequences, the tendency is for the writer to use preponderance of main clauses and subordinate clause sequences in such prose work. The purpose of such sequences of clause occurrence is the need to keep the story focused and to capture the gravity of the narration. The writer also uses these clause sequences to express coordinate ideas.

Method

Since this work focuses on the linguistic analysis of selected literary texts, with the aim of finding out the effectiveness of linguistic choices in achieving communicative effects, the methodology of this research is textual analysis, and this consists of extracting specific aspects of each of the texts and discussing their linguistic functions. The research design for this study is descriptive qualitative method of analysis. The research design was based on some principal approaches to stylistic analysis of a text as given by Leech and Short in Nnadi (2010) which posits that every stylistic analysis involves selecting some features, and ignoring others. It is a highly selective and rigorous exercise, which may be one feature or a number of features. The stylistic selection involves the relation between significances of the text and the linguistic characteristics in which the significances are manifest.

In line with the approach the researcher decided to carry out the analysis of the data in such a way as to highlight the group types, sentence patterns and clause structures. The choice of linguistic model is in line with the systemic grammar as exhibited by Muir (1972) because the

clause can be combined with SPC A structure to produce as many clauses as possible in language analysis.

Language and Style in Helon Habila's *Waiting for an Angel*

Synopsis of the Novel

Helon Habila's *Waiting for an Angel* has an episodic structure contained in seven interconnected episodes named after a narrator or a major character or incident. The novel dwelt on the themes of poverty, suffering, dejection, pain, and oppression from the activities of bad governance in Nigeria. The story revolves around the sufferings, pains and disappointments of the citizens as signified in Lomba, a young brilliant journalist who dropped out of school. The incidents captured in the story include Lomba's years in the university; his joblessness and wretchedness, his first love Alice who was forced to marry Ngai, (an army general), the agitations of the university students which led to the closure of the school, road traffic accidents resulting from bad roads that claimed the lives of the parents and sister of Bola (Lomba's friend), James, the humiliated and traumatized editor of *Dial* magazine.

Data Presentation and Analysis

Syntactic Analysis of *Waiting for an Angel*

The analysis of the data was done under Syntax which constitutes one of the various levels of stylistic analysis and attention was focused on the group types, sentence types, and the structures of the clauses; with the application of linguistic tools in each of the selected texts.

The Group Types in *Waiting for an Angel*

Tomori (2004) observes that "a group is one or more words that occupy a distinctive grammatical slot in a stretch of linguistics signals" The researcher focuses attention on the nominal and verbal groups in this paper because they assisted in bringing out the message in the text.

The Nominal Group

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

All the ten houses on the river side (19).
M MM H Q
The finest old houses on the river side (19).
M MM H Q

In their submission, Halliday and Hasan (1976), further note that the nominal group "consists of a head and a modifier, with modification constituting its logical structure: The modifier is optional and it includes elements, some of which precede the head and some of which follow it." The elements that come before the head are pre-modifiers while the ones that come after it are post-modifiers. The nominal group features prominently in *Waiting for an Angel* and they represent human beings and some basic concepts. They function as, subjects, objects, and complements. A major message of the novel is life of the citizens under autocracy in Nigeria.

With the aid of the nominal group, Habila demonstrates the fact that there was military and police brutalization, insurgency across the nation and abuse of human rights.

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

i. 'They hold uscowed with guns //so that they will steal our money …// (132)SPCA
   M H M Q
ii. Everything is politics//in this country. (118). SPCA
   M H Q
iii. Their very presence on our streets **//…//is an** act of aggression (122). SPCA
   M M H Q
iv. We are dying from a lack of hope. (132). SPCA
   M M Q
v. Look, we are living under siege' (122). PSPC
   M M Q

Looking at sentence one above, the novelist is able to make the readers get into the fearful living condition of the citizens of Morgan street later to be known as Poverty Street. They function as subjects, objects, and complements. For instance, in sentence 'ii' above, the nominal group is 'everything is politics' it is inanimate and it functions as the subject in our model of analysis. The subject in the above sentence is animate while the object is also animate. Similarly in sentence (iii) 'Their very presence'… is the subject while 'an act of aggression' is the complement. 'Their very presence' refers to the 'army who stay on the streets and government house instead of the barracks where they belong'. The two nominal groups in this example are in animate. In sentence 'iv', 'We' refers to the citizens which is animate subject while …from a lack of hope is a nominal group which stands for the object, subsumed as a complement in our model. Sentences ii to iv commented on above, portray the military and police as very fearsome and brutal, and therefore, take actions that affect man negatively represented by Lomba and other victims. This is the stylistic significance of the sentences and other sentences. The poor masses receive the brutality of the actions of the autocratic leaders, hence it is said that the masses live under the constant threat of the military forces.

The Verbal Group

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

i. They hold us cowed with guns //so that they will steal our money …// (132) (simple present tense) SPCA
ii. Everything is politics//in this country (118). (Simple present tense). S P C
iii. Their very presence on our streets **//…//**is an act of aggression (122). (simple present tense) SPCA
iv. We are dying from a lack of hope. (132) (present continuous tense). SPC
v. Look, we are living under siege.' (122) (present continuous tense) PSPC

Habila has used mostly the present tense and the present continuous tense. His frequent use of the present tense and continuous tense is stylistically significant because it makes his readers feel that they are involved in the discussion of the characters. Besides, the present tense makes his presentation real, his aim is to present what occurs often in the present time.

Sentence Types in *Waiting for an Angel*

There are various types of sentences in *Waiting for an Angel* that we can base our stylistic analysis on, but we shall restrict our analysis to only the sentences that have contributed towards the message that Habila has in the text. Crystal (2008) notes that a sentence is "the largest structural unit in terms of which the grammar of a language is organized." A sentence is important because it is the basic unit of expression. The proper use of sentences gives every language user a linguistic universe which reveals the nature of the user through the utterances of such language. Little wonder style could as well be seen as a signature.

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

'Clause structure' has been used in a synonymous sense with 'sentence' since an independent clause is a simple sentence. The sentences are analyzed according to their types and structures.

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

Simple sentences in the novel are as follows.

1. It is an angel. (38) SPC
2. We are dying from lack of hope. (174) SPCA
3. Look, we are living under siege. (122) PSPA
4. Everything is politics in this country. (118) SPCA
5. I am bleeding from the chest. (44) SPA

The stylistic significance of the above declarative sentences lies in the fact that through their usage, Habila succeeds in giving the reader very clear information on the circumstances surrounding the inhabitants of Morgan Street. The above sentences also reveal that the angel was used to expose the military dictatorship in Nigeria. The angel of death comes in the form of soldiers who shot the narrator as he sat in a bar one evening. The sentences also reveal that

the military dictators ruthlessly crushed any form of disloyalty found among the suffering masses.

Compound Sentence: Crystal and Davy (2009) define a compound sentence as "a sentence that is made up of two or more simple sentences joined by a conjunction or conjunctions." Some compound sentences used in the novel to reveal the message of the novel include the following:

1. This insect will be taken to solitary and he will be properly dealt with. (20) SPA, SPC
2. That is how I have been dealing with miserable rats like you. (20) A, SPCA
3. Don't think because you are political detainee you are untouchable (14) PSCC, SPC
4. If you can't do that, then forget you ever knew me (30) SPC, PSC
5. But out of Muftau's selfishness, he refused to help him. (30) PSC, SPC
6. We are like crabs in a basket, we pull down whosoever dares to stand up for what is right. (186) SPCA;SPCC

The above compound sentences reveal human right abuses, especially detentions without trials. The author adds reality as he depicts the life in Nigeria during this regime. He uses Muftau the superintendent at the prison to reveal the selfishness and self-centredness inherent in human beings out of wickedness.

Complex sentence

A complex sentence is one which consists of one principal clause and one or more subordinate clauses (Okeke and Chukwu 2013). Osimen (2019) notes that "a complex sentence could be defined as a sentence that contains one or more main clauses and one or more dependent clauses. The sense expressed by the subordinate or dependent clause is usually not complete until it is joined to the main clause with the aid of subordinating conjunctions like 'if', 'when', 'as' etc. Instances of complex sentences in the novel are as follow.

1. We came to tell you Sir, that our clinic is run-down and abandoned. (131) SPC, SPCA
2. We came to tell you that we do not have a single bore-hole in Morgan street. (131) SP, SPCCA
3. We are here to protest this neglect. (131) SPA, PC
4. And this is the way we feel we ought to express our displeasure. (131). ASP, SPC
5. The unarmed protesters are suddenly attacked by 50 armed riot police, teargas is exploded, the women and children killed by cars speeding on the adjacent highway. (174)
   SPC, SP, SPCA

These complex sentences portray the careless deaths, chaotic situations, sufferings, pains and disappointments as portrayed in the novel. They also reveal the demonstrations and protests organized by Shankara and teacher Joshua on behalf of the students and the members of Poverty street respectively.

Language and Style in Ngozi Chuma-Udeh's *Forlorn Fate*

Synopsis of the Novel

Ngozi Chuma-Udeh's *Forlorn Fate* is a novel that portrays ecological issues in the Niger Delta of Nigeria. This work of art looks at man's inhumanity to man; covering the horrors and evils of slavery as well as the wicked efforts made by the white man to de-stabilise the inhabitants

of Odua Ancient Kingdom from their ancestral home. Colonel Nina Sortorne, a major character in the book, came to the Niger Delta as an American soldier on rescue mission of Sir Bois (Snr) together with his team; and then discovered she came home to her roots. There was a myth around her family that her great great grandfather (Timi Sotonye), was carried away to slavery. Providence and her timely intervention saved the community from going into extinction because the Whiteman wanted to build an oil empire in that community at all costs. This book also revealed that it was indeed the white man that engineered militancy in the Niger Delta.

Syntactic Analysis of *Forlorn Fate*
Under this level, the group types, sentence types as they feature in the text as well as the structure of the clauses were examined.
Group types in '*Forlorn Fate'*

Nominal group

1. It is wrong //to sell people like // they were domestic animals. (126) SPC
   M MH Q
2. Timi //attacked //with the fury of an aggrieved soul, //mowing men down like// they were
   H M H H
   seaweeds. (164) SPPC
   Q
3. He had never// seen// him fight like that…not even //in the fiercest of battles. (165) SPCA
   H M M Q
4. *Olokun*//is //against //such abominable acts. (126) SPCC
   H M M Q
5. That single punch from Timi //seemed //to carry the retribution for his atrocities to
   M M H H Q
   humankind. (233)SPCC

From sentence one above, the novelist is able to make the readers get to know the inhuman treatment meted out to the inhabitants of this kingdom where humans are sold into slavery. For instance, in sentence 'ii' above, the nominal group is 'the fury of an aggrieved soul' it is inanimate and it functions as the object in our model of analysis. The subject in the above sentence is animate while the object is inanimate. Similarly, in sentence (iii) 'He had never'… is the subject while 'in the fiercest of battles' is the object. 'He had never' refers to the 'Teye Odua' who came with his guards and slave raiders to capture Timi and members of his household. The two nominal groups in this example are animate and inanimate. In sentence 'iv', 'Olokun' refers to the goddess of the river which is inanimate subject while …'such abominable acts' is a nominal group which stands for the object, subsumed as a complement in our model. Again, in sentence 'v' 'that single punch…' was received by the captain of the slave ship in revenge for his atrocities to humankind. Sentences ii, iii, v commented on above portray the heroic actions of Timi against enslavement of his people. This is the stylistic significance of the sentences and other sentences. The poor inhabitants of this kingdom received the cruel and inhuman treatment from Teye and the slave raiders.

Verbal group

1. It //is wrong to sell //people like // they were domestic animals. (126) SPC (simple present tense)
2. Timi //attacked with// the fury of an aggrieved soul, //mowing men down like// they were
   seaweeds. (164) SPPC (simple past tense)
3. He had never seen// him fight like that…not even //in the fiercest of battles. (165) SPCA (past perfect tense)
4. *Olokun*//is against //such abominable acts. (126) SPCC (simple present tense)
5. That single punch from Timi //seemed to carry// the retribution for his atrocities to humankind. (233) SPCC (simple past tense)

Chuma-Udeh has used the present tense, the past tense and the past perfect tense in this text. Her use of the present tense is stylistically significant because it makes her readers feel that they are involved in the discussion of the characters. Besides, the present tense makes her presentation real, her aim is to present what occurs often in the present time. The past tense and past perfect tense enable her to use the literary device called 'flash-back'.

Sentence types in *Forlorn Fate*

There are various types of sentences in *Forlorn Fate* that we can base our stylistic analysis on, but we shall restrict our analysis to only the sentences that have contributed towards the message that Ngozi Chuma-Udeh has in the novel.

Simple sentence

1. These men are traders. (122) SPC
2. I think they are evil, they spell doom. (121) SPC
3. Then let us stop them at once. (121) ASPA
4. Wait, Timi, let us hear them out. (122) PSC
5. That was the beginning of the negotiations. (122) SPC
6. He must kiss my foot before I sell him to the Whiteman. (163).SPC
7. Timi was numb with shock. (193) SPCC
8. It is wrong to sell people like they were domestic animals. (126) SPCA
9. *Olokun* is against such abominable acts. (126) SPCC

The stylistic significance of the above declarative sentences lies in the fact that through their usage Chuma-Udeh succeeds in giving the reader very clear and vivid information on the circumstances surrounding the plight of the people of Odua Ancient Kingdom in the Niger Delta. It brings to light the argument that ensued between Timi, Preye, Teye and the Okiri men with the white men who came to negotiate for slaves to buy. The above sentences also reveal that the negotiations totally transformed Prince Teye of Odua from a human to a ravaging beast who ate up even his parents, relatives, friends and his subjects without reservations. Again, the sentences demonstrated the legendry and heroic deeds of Timi Sotonye, the great warrior Chief Priest of Olokun, in his combats with the Amanyanabo, his guards and slave captors on one hand; and the revered Captain, the Master Seadog of the famous Hispaniola slave ship on the other hand, in his efforts to save his people, avenge the atrocities against his kinsmen and their death caused by the European slavers.

Compound sentence

Some compound sentences used in the novel to reveal the message of the novel include the following:

1. That was the very first seismic explosives fired in Odua Ancient kingdom, announcing audaciously the onset of oil explorations! (1) SAPC, PCSA
2. They mourned the loss of their ancestral lands; they mourned the loss of many whose hearts could not bear the great loss. (288) SPC, SPC
3. Fourteen-year-old Birinyo became one of the very first victims of oil explorations in Odua Ancient kingdom of the Niger Delta. (9) SPA, PSA
4. He signed and sealed the fate of the villagers on that paper. (283) SP, PCSC
5. They will ravage even the hidden of the gods and leave our descendants with a forlorn fate. (129) SPA, PSCC

The above sentences help to portray the dangerous and deadly situation of the inhabitants of Odua Ancient Kingdom. This state of emergency set everyone on edge. The Kingdom recorded deaths, bombings, massive destruction in the creeks and their homes forcing them to abandon their ancestral lands, but the villagers refused to move rather bore everything with fortitude. The stylistic significance of the above sentences lies in the fact that the author has been able to capture the grave condition of this people Alabi (2003) avers that the AA (main + main) clause structure would show a frequency of coordinate ideas and concepts.

Complex sentences

1. The CO was sending her to the war front like the Biblical Uriah … to die (43) SPC, P
2. You have come back just as it was predicted by the oracles. (85) SP, SPC
3. Welcome home, Priestess of the most revered mermaid who has dominion of serpents under her control. (356). PC, SPCC
4. You have come to fulfil your destiny. (263) SPC, PC
5. You have performed the primary one as predestined by the fate. (256) SPC, PA
6. Go and fulfil your secondary mission. (256) SP, PCC
7. I have been sent to stop your atrocities in Nigeria, save the good name of our dear country …and to save Odua Kingdom from the chemical warfare and genocide you planned against them. (364) SPCA, PSC, PSCC
8. Sir Bois Senior looked up from his crouching position and simply muttered "thank you." SPCC, PC

Through the use of the above complex sentences, the author was able to bring alive the activities of Nina Sortorne (of the 2nd Battalion, 13th Infantry of the US Army), a combatant American soldier sent on rescue mission to Niger Delta of Nigeria. Through the use of these sentences, we learn of the serious combat and the final battle between Nina Sortorne and Geologist Murray (Creek Face). His final and last plan was to flush the villagers into the sea with oil spills, thus recording one of the greatest oil spills in the history of mankind and as usual, "the blame would be heaped on the obnoxious militants who bomb oil pipes as a means of demonstration," which was averted by Nina and her team who dug a trench that collected the oil spills, thus turning the evil plot to an economic advantage for the inhabitants. The sentences reveal that her mission was predestined by fate. She came back to her roots, fulfilled and accomplished her mission. The writer made use of both the main clause and subordinate clause to coordinate the ideas.

Conclusion

The aim of the study was to examine the contributions of the linguistic features employed by Helon Habila in *Waiting for an Angel* and Ngozi Chuma-Udeh in *Forlorn Fate* to the projection of their message to the target audience. Linguistic analysis which comes in the form of stylistics, has been applied in the examination of language use in the selected literary texts. Both writers used the group types, sentence patterns and clause structures appropriately. Syntactic structures such as SPC, SPCA, SPCC, ASP, etc, were displayed. The linguistic structures used in the texts have enabled the writers to communicate powerfully as well as creditably, both their social and personal experiences.

Recommendation

The researcher recommends that other researchers should carry out stylistic analyses of more sentences from the novels so as to discover other various ways of manipulating words to achieve set goals which future literary artists and critics of these works will find useful.

References

Adagbonyin, A.S. (2017). Linguistic form and literary function: A journey through the stylistics

bridge, *An Inaugural Lecture Delivered at Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma* (63rd in the series).

Afolayan, A. (2004). "The surface and deep planes of grammar in the systemic model. "In Tomori, S. H. O. (2004). *The morphology and syntax of present day English. An introduction*. Heinmann.

Agbẹdọ, C. U. (2003) *General Linguistics.* Nsukka: ACE Resources Konsult.

Alabi, V. A. (2003). *Scale and category grammar in stylistic studies* in Lawan A. (2003) ed *Stylistics in theory and practice*. Paragon Books.

Anagbogu, P.N. *et al.* (2010). *Introduction to Linguistics.* Amaka Dreams.

Butler, C. S. (1985) *Systemic Linguistics: Theory and Applications.* Batsford Academic and Educational.

Chomsky, N. (1957). *Syntactic Structures*. Mouton.

Chuma-Udeh, N. (2019). *Forlorn Fate*. Paper works.

Crystal, D. (2006). *Penguin Encyclopedia.* Penguin group.

Finch, G. (2000). *Linguistic terms and concepts.* Palgrave Macmillan.

Habila, H. (2002). *Waiting for an angel*. Norton ad Company Limited.

Halliday, (2000). "Grammar and daily life in functional approaches to language culture and Cognition" papers in honour of Sydney M. Lamb. John

Halliday, M. A. K. and Hasan, R. (1976). *Cohesion in English, Essex*: Longman Group Ltd.

Lamidi, M. T. (2013). *Aspects of Chomskyan grammar.* University Press PLC.

Lawal, A. (2003). "The application of linguistics to literary criticism. Controversy and Prospects." In Lawal, A. (2003). Ed. *Stylistics in theory and practice.* Paragon Books.

Matthews, P. H. (2005). *The concise oxford dictionary of linguistics.* Oxford University Press.

Mcintyre, D. (2012). *Linguistics and literature stylistics as a tool for literary critic.* University of Hudderfield.

Muir J. (1972). *A Modern Approach to English Grammar; An introduction to systemic grammar.*

Ngugi, W. O. (2008). *Why I write in Gikuyu,* BBC Focus on Africans 57.

Nnadi, I. C. (2010). "A linguistic stylistic analysis of Chukwuemeka Ike's novels." Department of English, University of Jos. An unpublished PhD thesis.

O'Grady, W. and Archibald, J. (2009). *Contemporary Linguistic Analysis, An introduction,* Longman.

Okeke, F. A. &Chukwu, K. U. (2013). *Introduction to the English Language.* Feb Anieh Nigeria.

Onwukwe, E. (2012). *An introduction to general and literary stylistics.* Alphabetic Nigeria Publishers.

Osimen, S. E. A. (2019). *Complete English Language Text for Schools and Colleges.* Destiny Prints.

Patpong, P. (2009). "The persuasive discourse: A systemic functional approach to analysis of amulet advertisement." *In Revista Alicatinde Estudios Ingless* (200922).

Syal, P., & Jindal, D. V., (2015). An introduction to linguistics, language, grammar and Semantics, PHE Learning Private.

Tomori, S. H. O. (2004). *The morphology and syntax of present-day English. An introduction.* Heinemann Educational Books.

Umera-Okeke, N., (2012). *Basic English and communication skills.* Chinaza Printing and Publishing.

Uwadiegwu, C. U. I., (2017). *Functional approach to Applied English Linguistics.* Cel-Bez Publishing company (Nig.).

Wales, K. (2002). *A dictionary of stylistics,* 2nd edition. Longman.