

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Language is the distinctive quality unique to man. It is what enables man to express him/herself and communicate with his/her fellow man, and it is acquired naturally. According to Fromkin et al “...language is the source of human life and power” (3). They also state that “we use language to convey information to others..., ask questions..., give command..., and express wishes” (173). There are two specific media of using language: oral – which is by words of mouth; and written – which is a graphic representation of words on paper.

It is in the use of language that style comes in. Style shows the difference between one piece of writing and the other. According to Adejare, “style is an ambiguous term...” (1). He further states that the term style means different things to different professions. Some examples are: to a psychologist, style is a form of behaviour, to the critic, style is individuality and to the linguist, it is the formal structures in function (1).

Stylistics is the study of oral and written texts. It is the description of the linguistic characteristics (which means features of linguistics) of all situationally restricted uses of language. Linguistics is the scientific study of language or of a particular language. Linguistics is scientific because it applies the method of objective observation, collection, classification and application of facts to the study of language.

Stylistics focuses on texts and gives much attention to the devices, parts of speech and figures of speech. It goes further to look into the effects of the use of the devices on the reader.

Talking about the scope of stylistics, Onwukwe Ekwutosi gave four distinctive types of stylistics and they are:

General stylistics

Literary stylistics

Stylo-stylistics

Phono-stylistics

General stylistics deals with the non-dialectical varieties found within a language. In other words, it deals with situational or contextual use of language, that is, variation according to use. It also includes variation of language according to field of discourse, variation according to mode of discourse and finally, variation according to style of discourse.

Literary stylistics deals with language use in literature, that is, variations, characteristics of individual writer that made mark in literature. Often, we hear people talk about the style of Shakespeare, Milton, Achebe or Soyinka.

And also, stylo-stylistics deals with the qualification of stylistic pattern. It studies the statistical structure of literary texts often using computers. Finally, phono-stylistics is the study of expression of aesthetic function of sound.

Stylistic features can be described as features that produce style. They include linguistic features such as diction(writer’s choice of words, such as clichés, archaism, polysyllabic, monosyllabic), sentence structure such as loose and period sentences, parallelism, parenthetical expressions and passive expressions. Other features are cohesion, coherence, use of punctuation marks and figures of speech such as metaphor, simile, hyperbole, metonymy and personification, slang, colloquialism and connotation.

Diction: By diction, the reader looks at the simplicity or the difficulty of words chosen by the writer to express himself.

Sentence: It is made up of words that express a complete thought. It is the basic unit of thought in any communication. Both oral and written languages are made up of sentences. There are two main kind of sentences; loose and periodic sentences.

Loose sentence: It is the kind of sentence that states the main point at the beginning. Even when the statement is grammatically complete, one or more explanatory clauses or phrases come after it.

Periodic sentence: This kind of sentence keeps the main point for the end. The sentence is not grammatically complete until the end of the sentence.

Parallelism: It is the use of pattern repetition in a literary text for a particular stylistic effect.

Parenthetical expression: It is used to give more information and also as an after thought in a statement.

Passive expression: This is the use of words in the past tense to show the time of action.

Cohesion: It is a linguistic phenomenon which explains the way discourse is structured or organized with regard to message. It is a binding force that ties together stretches of utterances.

Coherence: This is the arrangement of sentence in a logical order.

Punctuation marks: Are signs in writing to divide sentences and phrases and to make meanings clear.

Figure of speech: A figure of speech is an expression used figuratively rather than literary. It gives a deeper meaning to word. Some examples are:

Metaphor: Is a comparison between two dissimilar things which have something in common.

Simile: It is a clear comparison between two dissimilar things. These two unlike items however share something in common. It is this common characteristic that is emphasized by the use of like or as ...as.

Hyperbole: It is an overstatement where the speaker exaggerates what he is saying out of proportion.

Metonymy: This is using a word for something to refer to another with which it has become closely associated.

Personification: It is giving human quality to an inanimate object.

Slang: Very informal words and expressions that are more common in spoken language, especially used by a particular group of people.

Colloquialism: A word or phrase that is used in conversation but not in formal speech in writing.

Connotation: It is the additional meaning the word gains because of the different environment in which a word has been used in the past.

Archaism: This is the use of old and middle English words which are no longer in general usage today. Some examples are, "thereto", "thou".

Clichés: They are phrases or ideas that have been used so often that it no longer has much meaning and is not interesting.

A way of stylistic analysis is taking a text and analyzing it at the various levels of linguistic organization – phonological, morphological, syntactic, and semantic levels. It is the identification of patterns of usage in speech and writing. It is usually made for the purpose of commenting on quality and meaning in a text.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Though many works have been done on the style of Ngugi wa Thiong'o's other novels, not much has been done on his style in *Wizard of the Crow*, which is his most recent novel, published in 2007. Consequently, the researcher intends to examine the style of Ngugi in this latest novel.

Secondly, most of the works did not use quantitative stylistic analysis to determine the predominant or most frequently occurring devices. They often simply listed out all the devices used.

1.3 OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The objectives of this study is to identify the predominant devices used by Ngugi wa Thiong'o in his novel *Wizard of the Crow* and what he achieved by using those devices.

1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This research will help the readers identify the predominant stylistic devices used by Ngugi wa Thiong'o in his latest novel *Wizard of the Crow* and why he used them. It will also provide reference material for other researchers in the field.

1.5 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study is restricted to the novel *Wizard of the Crow*, a novel comprising six books namely; Book 1 – Power Daemons, Book 2 – Queuing Daemons, Book 3 – Female Daemons, Book 4 – Male Daemons, Book 5 – Rebel Daemons and Book 6 – Bearded Daemons, with a total of 264 chapters.

To enable the researcher carryout a detailed study of the text and for close textual references considering the limited time available to the researcher, the scope is further restricted to only 30 chapters of the novel. In addition, the researcher will restrict the analysis of the stylistic devices to the use of ellipses, rhetorical questions, parenthetical expressions, italics and long sentences which in the course of reading the novel, the researcher found to have occurred more frequently than the others.

1.6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The method to be used in this study will be intensive study of related materials from the library and close textual analysis of the text: *Wizard of the Crow* using quantitative stylistic analysis. This entails counting and writing down the number of times each of the selected stylistic devices occurred. In addition, 5 chapters will be selected by simple random sampling from each of the six books giving a total sample of 30 chapters out of the total 264 chapters that make up the novel.

PREDOMINANT DEVICE USED BY UGUGI WA THIOGO WIZARD OF THE COW

The complete project material is available and ready for download. All what you need to do is to order for the complete material. The price for the material is NGN 3,000.00.

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