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By Words they were CREATED:

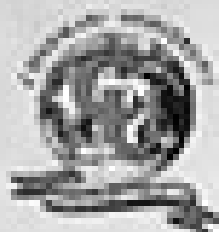## THE SYNERGY BETWEEN LANGUAGE, DISCOURSE AND THE MEDIA IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF REALITIES

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By Words They Were Created:
The Synergy between Language, Discourse and the Media in the Construction of Realities

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That this inaugural lecture coincides with my 60th birthday and 30 years in academia is by the special grace of God, because it is by His grace that I am alive and well today. I return all the glory to the Alpha and the Omega; the Giver and Sustainer of all things. Just over a year ago, my health was challenged to the extent that I was home-bound for some months. Today, I stand before you to the glory of God, to give an account of my research efforts and contributions to knowledge. I must specially appreciate The Chancellor and Chair, Board of Regents, Covenant University, Dr. David O. Oyedepo and our dear Mama, The Vice-President (Education) Living Faith Church Worldwide (LFCWW) for the expert medical attention I received, the constant prayers, all the efforts made to ensure my comfort and their regular calls during and after this period. Sir, and Ma, you are deeply appreciated!

I would like to specially recognise Prof. Eddy Omolehinwa, my teacher and mentor (since 1975) who is here seated today. Thank you, sir, for your tutelage and for your confidence in me. Prof. Abubakar Rasheed, the Executive Secretary, National Universities Commission, encouraged and mentored me when I started as a budding researcher in stylistics and the print media, at the Department of English, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. Sir, I appreciate your contribution to the totality of my research profile. My PhD supervisors, Profs Adebayo Joshua and Isaac Olaofe, deserve commendation for their guidance and constructive criticisms.

INTRODUCTION
By words they were created... Words are creative, and words are prophetic. At the physical and metaphysical levels, words are believed to be powerful. At the physical level for instance, most African cultures believe in the supernatural power of the word. There is a saying among the Yoruba people that *"eyin loro to ba bo ko se e ko"* (words/speech can be likened to an egg, when it drops, it shatters).

They also recognise the relevance of positive affirmation: *"ape mova l'a npe temidie"* (positive confessions are embraced with cordiality). The same is true of the Akan people of Ghana (Yankah, 1994). Agbese (1987) argues that: "the word, written or spoken, is a powerful instrument for social dynamics... anyone with a monopoly of the means or the medium by which the spoken or written word is disseminated cannot but be said to have, and exercise, power" (p. 9).

At the metaphysical realm, we are told that: *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God"* (John 1:1). In Genesis 1:3, we read that: *"And God said, let there be light; and there was light."* In other words, God made pronouncements to bring to reality/manifestation (to create) that which was hitherto not in existence. Interpretatively, light was created by an utterance, thereby accentuating the essentiality of the power of positive affirmation within the purview of communication. Just like in the physical, the power of positive affirmation is very important here, thus, it is recorded that: *"Life and death are in the power of the tongue..."* (Proverbs 18:21), and Psalms 19:14 reads: *"Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord,..."*

Because words embody power and/or represent the interests of the speaker, it can be said that words are covertly or overtly political. This means that we use language to frame or construct ideas and realities; and realities or truths are subject to language use. Such politicisation is manifested via an array of linguistic choices which the writer/speaker makes. These linguistic choices, which are significant for meaning, are broadly identified as stylistic and communicative devices. The central thesis of this lecture, therefore, is that communicative devices and, especially, stylistic devices are intentional. In particular, word choice defines respective styles of expression and such choice of words is pivotal in the definition, construction and expression of realities.

In this lecture, I will take you on a trajectory with paths such as: an overview of language (as distinctly human); discourse (as language use); style as unique; stylistics, Old and New Media, among others. I will then present the interplay of all these in the construction of realities in my research efforts. I invite you to come along with me.

LANGUAGE AS DISTINCTLY HUMAN

One feature that separates man from other creatures is the possession of the dynamic tool for communication called language. It is integral to humankind since animal communication is not regarded as language (Sapir, 1921; Yule, 2010). Yule (2010), for instance, argues that communication is not a distinguishing factor separating humans from animals. To him, it is reflexivity, the ability to use language to think and talk about language itself. Indeed, humans' dexterity in language manipulation has garnered a plethora of scholarly attention, giving rise to several definitions for the concept of language.

Most of these definitions tilt towards sociolinguistic perspectives, rather than the purely structural configuration of its forms. Basically, language is defined according to the purpose it is made to serve. Strunk and White (1999) argue that: "Language is perpetually in a flux: It is a living stream, shifting, changing, receiving new strength from a thousand tributaries, losing old forms in the backwaters of time" (p. 76). Language exists within a society; it is an agent of socialisation, and a means of establishing culture and sustaining human relationships. According to Emenanjo (1988):

> Human language is a very elusive phenomenon to define… language as the device which employs vocal symbols to give and to hide information, to give illusions of love and to create realities of hate, to build and to destroy. We use language to give and to change names, to appreciate or to deceive, to create literature and to describe it. Language is employed to encode

and to decode the most intricate computations. Language is everywhere (p. 8).

Brown and Yule (1983) must have considered this salient, hence, they construe language from two functional perspectives. To them, language performs both transactional and interactional functions. By its transactional nature, language transmits information. It is this communicative function of language that enables individuals of different cultures and disciplines to relate effectively. From a critical view, language as conceived in the foregoing purview is message-dependent, hence the thought of a possible misinterpretation of the information passed to the recipient poses a greater danger to this perspective. On the other hand, the interactional function of language focuses on the use of language to establish and sustain social relationships. This view aligns with the perspective of Odebunmi (2016) who depicts language as "a distinctively human resource which has empowered the race with expressivity and helps members of the race to flesh their thoughts and engage in interactive associations" (p. 3). Through such interactive associations, language builds social ties among individuals in a community. Halliday (2014) sees language as a text. In fact, to him, any instance of language use in context produces a text. He goes further to demarcate this stringy relationship between language and text by emphasising that language is, "in the first instance, a resource for making meaning; so, text is a process of making meaning in context" (p. 3). It thus follows that whatever we say or write, in whichever form, is a necessary means of text creation. This informs the classification of both the spoken and the written form of language as text in regular instances.

Other varying views abound in the explication of the concept of language. For instance, I observed while interrogating the use of language in newspapers (Abioye 2010), that language is the bridge of intentions. I identified two kinds of intentions: the writer/reader and

the speaker/listener intentions. The message, which is the information, is a representation of intention, in that whatever a writer writes is a product of intentional choice and this choice is embedded in language. Therefore, when communication ensues between interlocutors, there is a necessary negotiation of the listener and the reader's intention. Thus, we negotiate meaning when we interact. In addition, language is a vital means of creating identity. It creates an identity for its user and for itself. More specifically, Abioye (2009) avers that "language is a reflection of cultural identities and conventions, and it is enclosed in an interconnected triangle, along with culture and the society" (p. 3). Sometimes, to know an individual, allow him/her to speak. Speech does not only expose the cultural affiliations of a person, it also reveals the ideological polarity to which such an individual belongs, to the extent that through language, we are able to distinguish between a teacher and a doctor, a politician and a lawyer. There is actually more to language than speaking, writing, and gestures. Silence is also a form of language, especially in cases where an answer is expected or the norm is for people to be silent. Owing to the depth and diversity of the foregoing descriptions, the plausible question is, Can language be divorced from discourse?

DISCOURSE AS LANGUAGE USE

The purpose of language is to engage in discourse where the structure and style of interaction are fused in either dialogues or monologues to construct realities. Language has been described as a symbolic system for creating meaning which "comprises sounds (or phonemes), letters (or graphemes) and words (or morphemes)" (Thurlow *et al*, 2004, p. 118). These in turn result in "grammatical structures like sentences according to the rules (or syntax) agreed by any particular community of speakers" (*ibid*). This conception of language is form-oriented; and clearly, in the computer-mediated context, a wide range of language application shows the unique use of emoticons and other semiotic devices for communication among users. However, recent approaches

to language (see Halliday, 2014, for instance) have favoured function over form; within these purviews, the functional roles of language are given priority above the mere lacings of the structural patterns of the traditional levels of language such as morphology, phonology and syntax.

Incontrovertibly, the influx of social platforms has become diverse and the new media have firmer grip and influence on language than they ever did. Scholars have also refused to rest on their oars in investigating the state of language evolvement in the face of a vibrant media world. My scholarly journey attests to this emerging trend. As observed by Kenning (2007), "one of the most striking aspects of the evolution of means of communication is the increasing pace of technological advances" (p. 26). The evolutional tide was illustrated in the words of Kress (1998 in Kenning, 2007) that:

> In 1936, language is (sic) the vehicle providing all the information that is judged relevant, and images assume the role of illustrations repeating that information. In 1988, language no longer conveys all the information, and images are used to communicate what the world is like (p. 23).

This transition is in a state of flux and new waves are daily being recorded. The language of the new media, for instance, is framed in myriads of terms such as Netspeak, Cyberspeak (Crystal, 2004; Nuessel, 2015).

Why Discourse?

Discourse is the hub of language use. According to Woods (2006), "it is the real language that real people use in the real world" (p. x). This description further acknowledges the fact that language is much more than the sum of the linguistic elements that compose it. Hence,

language is tagged discourse when it is measured in real manifestations. Similarly, Blommaert (2005) stresses, in the most non-linguistic sense, that discourse constitutes all forms of meaningful semiotic human activities organised in connection with socio-cultural and historical patterns of use. In this view that somewhat leans on Foucault's conception of discourse, Blommaert conceives the various manifestations of language as discourse, be it objects, attributes and anything that constitutes language-at-work. At a familiar distance, Noris and Jones (2005) argue that discourse is tied to action. To them, meaning does not so much reside in the discourse itself, but rather, resides in the actions that people take with it.

As a concept, discourse has many disciplinary linkages such as linguistics, psychology, anthropology, psychiatry, sociology, Artificial Intelligence, media studies, literacy studies, and so on (Odebunmi, 2016). Perhaps, this is the reason for the multiplicity of the polemics of the term, "discourse". Rocci (2009), notes that discursive meaning has both pragmatic and semantic dimensions. On the pragmatic plane, discourse seen as a text, represents a complex action. More precisely, it is an articulated proposal of a joint action to be constructed with the participation of the addressee. From the semantic slant, a text establishes a developing representation of states of affairs which hold true in some possible world. Given the two sides, it is deducible from Rocci's submission that pragmatics offers a more interactive outlook of the concept, while semantics merely sees the propositional acts of discourse.

To Foucault (1984), in his famous lecture "Orders of Discourse", discourse is "neither defined thematically nor by a strict system of concepts, and that it is not an object, but rather a set of relationships existing between discursive events" (pp. 10 - 11). Apparently, the interactive nature of discourse is topicalised in the foregoing definition as it appeared in Rocci's pragmatic outlook. Now, do we

then say that discourse can only be dialogic? NO. Discourse occurs both in dialogic and monologic contexts. Language in use is not restricted to interactive face-to-face situations. It could be a speech delivered without being engaged in an interactive situation.

Wittgeinstein (1967) perceives discourse from the strands of Austin's (1960) proposition on speech acts. To him, discourse is mainly understood as linguistic action, be it written, visual, or oral, verbal or non-verbal communication undertaken by social actors in a specific setting determined by social rules, norms and conventions. Similarly, the term indexes language which communicates meaning in a context, for instance, spoken interaction between people and groups of people in real social situations (Cameron, 1998).

Earlier, while trying to define language, I established its connectedness to identity construction. In gender studies, especially in the world of feminism, discourse is conceptualised differently and mostly for its indexical relationship with identity. In a similar vein, Litosseliti and Sunderland (2002) argue that a speaker's identity emerges from discourse and that "whatever else we do with words, when we speak we are always telling our listeners something about ourselves" (pp. 22-23). Discourse has been viewed in the abstract sense to be the semiotic elements of social life involving language, visual semiosis, signs and body language, among others (Fairclough, Jessop & Sayer, 2002). In essence, discourse is conceived as an embodiment of language varieties. More narrowly, discourse is likened to "verbal communication"; that is, talk or conversation used to achieve communication (Cook, 1991, p. 86). We can also refer to discourses as units that make up a text, which is the focus of linguists in linguistic analysis. As units, discourse contains sequences of sentences which have semantic representation, also called "discourse representation structure" (Kamp and Reyle 1993, p. 59). By semantic representation, it suggests that each of the discourse sequences has its

own meaning, but not in isolation; it must be connected with the other sequences to provide the interpretation which the speaker has "assigned to the sentences preceding it" (Kamp 1995, p. 254). These sentences are discourses in their own right, which in turn, are organised into larger structures to arrive at a structural interpretation or meaning. The fulcrum of these myriad views about discourse simply exemplifies the basic reality that language is the heart of discourse and that discourse is language used for communication in whatever form.

Connecting Language and Discourse

The subtle link between language and discourse is difficult to establish. There is no way one can talk about discourse without recourse to language. Despite this obvious nexus, there are still arguments as to what should be appropriately tagged "discourse" and efforts are daily being exerted to establish a demarcation between these interrelated concepts. Basically, three approaches exist in the argument on the relationship between language and discourse. They are:

    a. The Formalist-Structuralist approach
    b. The Functionalist approach
    c. The Formalist-Functionalist approach

The above approaches typically involve reference to concepts of language in use, language above or beyond the sentence, language as meaning in interaction, and language in situational and cultural contexts.

The formalist approach sees discourse as a segment beyond the sentence level. It is also referred to as the structuralist approach. In it, the linguist is mainly interested in the relationships between the various factors in the event such as: the participants, their cultural backgrounds, their relationships with one another, the setting, what is going on, and the various linguistic choices made.

The functionalist approach considers discourse as language in use. For the linguist within this category, any aspect of language that is used in communication is discourse, that is, including phonology, syntax, morphology, or semantics. The position highlights the functions that units of language perform in use, taking cognisance of the context and the speech act associated with it.

The third approach is a blend of both the formalist and the functionalist perspectives. It holds that the two frontline approaches are both geared towards making discourse. It explores the values of sentence and utterance. While at the sentence level, discourse (language) is treated in exclusion of context, at the utterance level, context is pivotal to meaning negotiation. In sum, these approaches highlight the fact that language and discourse are indeed intertwined at various points of analysis. What initiates the language varieties used is most often a function of the discourse type engaged in such contexts. Moreover, the writer's employment of succinct and relevant paradigms while writing carves for the writer a uniqueness that is technically called *style*.

CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF REALITIES

Any budding researcher who has had glimpses of what discourse analysis entails, and then further comes across critical discourse analysis would want to naturally ask, What is critical about critical discourse analysis? As a matter of fact, such inquiry pervades the incursion of critical discourse analysis (CDA, henceforth) both as a theory and as a method of research appraisal.

Having known that discourse is language use in communicative contexts, invariably, discourse analysis is its systematic and scientific study. So, when it is "critical", queries tend to be boisterous on what makes the difference. Rogers (2004) admits that CDA is a method of discourse analysis that is different. In his notion, CDA is different

from other methods of discourse analysis because, beyond the trend of description and interpretation of discourse in context, it provides viable explanation of why and how discourse works. This necessarily implies that discourse operates in several domains, which CDA anchors. In a wider conceptual frame, Billig (2003) argues that "CDA is not critical in the ordinary sense of the word" (p. 38). Instead, he avers that it is critical on the premise that it is "rooted in radical critique of social relation". Social relation in this context encompasses the connectedness of the various social strata of the society and the discourses they engage in. That is the target of CDA. However, van Dijk (2001) contends that "CDA is not a theory, nor a method that simply can be applied to social problems"; instead it is a critical perspective of doing discourse analysis with an attitude. Attitude here indexes on a plan which "focuses on social problems and especially on the role of discourse in the production and reproduction of power abuse or domination" (van Dijk, 2001, p. 96). Apparently, CDA transcends the discourse of power abuse and domination.

CDA analytically is dependent in its course for the interpretation of discourse. As succinctly put by Hart (2014:2), CDA is "a particular form of discourse analysis, which, in one guise at least, seeks to disclose the ideological and persuasive properties of text and talk which might not be immediately apparent without the assistance of a systemized discipline". The dependency on other disciplines, suggests that it accommodates multidisciplinary approaches to discourse. Hart is particular about the inclusion of a grammatical theory that aids such analysis. Being an approach that is centred on the happenings in the society and its discursive events, the Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) proves to be the backbone of CDA (Rogers, 2004, Halliday, 1994, Halliday and Hasan, 1984). SFL assumes this pivotal role in CDA because of its functional approach to language study. It is capable of accounting for both the syntactic and the social structures of language use.

As an approach, Fairclough and Wodak, (1997, pp 258-284), offer eight (8) rudimentary principles of CDA which involve the following:

a. Appraisal of social problems
b. That power relations are discursive
c. That discourse involves society and culture
d. That discourse engages ideological work
e. That discourse is historical
f. That socio-cognitive approach is needed to interpret how the relation between texts and society are linked
g. That discourse analysis is interpretive and explanatory and uses a systematic methodology, and
h. That CDA is a socially committed scientific paradigm.

These principles guide the working of CDA in connection with other theoretical orientations as the text requires. The concept cuts across social, cognitive, historical, educational discourse and more as the society presents. That is why whenever CDA is applied to any discourse, the triggering reality that engenders its application is not far-fetched.

If reality is a product of social experience, then no doubt, CDA is a crucial tool in the construction of it. This could be traced to the rudimentary principles as highlighted by Fairclough and Wodak (1997). The concerns of these principles form the basis of man's reality. Is it social problems or power negotiations in discursive practices that ultimately involve how communication reveals social identities? Is it about locating ideology? CDA, in all spheres, is geared towards the determination of these societal discourses as ventilated in communication. A larger chunk, if not all, of my research foci has established this glued relation between CDA and societal practices that lean on various communicative (con)texts. Discourse reveals the identity, intention, and ideology of a group of individuals and how they

manipulate language. In many of these research works, the critical examination of discourse is apparently evident, as the research train runs through discourse and society (Abioye, 2012), discourse and medicine (Abioye, 2011, 2015b), discourse and literacy (Abioye, 1992a, 2010c), discourse and conflict resolution (Abioye & Simpson, 2009) and of course discourse and the (new) media, (Abioye, 1992b, 2011) etc., These works in their various degrees explored discourse and discursive practices in diverse disciplines and sundry domains with the sole aim of explicating the role language plays as well as how language can be better understood in discourse.

In a nutshell, CDA exists for the construction and deconstruction of social realities. Many a time, these realities are found in texts and talks, and that informs the plethora of scholarship that employs CDA either as a theory or a method.

LANGUAGE AND STYLE

Hartmann and Stork (1973) argue that language is the most fundamental means of human communication. The ability to use any language should implicitly suggest the ability to communicate effectively in that language. However, due to experiential differences, the way one individual uses language differs, sometimes significantly, from that of another, even when they are talking about the same thing (Abioye, 1992).

The distinct way a writer presents his message to his audience is often referred to as the "style" of that writer. This is what has become Comte Buffon's (an 18th Century French Biologist and popular writer) celebrated: *"Le style est l'homme meme"* (the style is the man). On the other hand, sociologists have argued that because a man is the product of society, whatever he writes is a reflection of his socio-political experiences. Thus, they conclude that the man himself is the style. Style could also be an ornament; or the way one does certain things,

like wearing a hat/cap; a wristwatch on the right hand rather than on the left, one's particular hairstyle, and one's way of organising things. There is equally what is generally referred to as journalistic style and in house style. The former describes the general way journalists write, such as the inverted pyramid style, while the latter is used with reference to particular publishing houses. Thus, 'style' can be described as that personal touch that people recognise, and which distinguishes them from others. The crux of the matter here is that all refer to the man and his style.

Style has been variously defined by scholars, but probably the most prominent is that of Crystal and Davy (1969, pp. 9 - 10), who posit that style could be seen in several ways:

1. as the language habits of an individual, as in Shakespeare's style, Bishop David Oyedepo's style, Olatunji Dare's style or George Ehusani's style. See Bishop David Oyedepo's style for instance, in the following expressions:
      "You can't be truly sold out to God and not stand out on earth."
      "Wearing a long face shows you still have a long way to go, therefore, rejoice in the Lord, and again I say, rejoice!"
      "Discipline is operating as demanded, not as convenient."
      "If you are not a hard worker, you will live a hard life. It is hard work that makes high fliers."

And as observed in Kamalu and Tamunobelema (2015, p15):
      We have to think our way out or we sink all the way through...We did some things right and we kept doing them... It is time for the nations of Africa to re-order their priorities... By leadership here, I mean men and women taking the lead, setting the pace and blazing the trail... By leadership here, I mean the rise of passionate visionaries, daring planners and dogged executors...We desperately need the right kind of

education, raising the right kind of leaders, promoting the right kind of values and graduating the right kind of students to bring about the right kind of changes…

2. Some or all of the language habits shared by a group of people at one time, or over a period of time; for instance, language use on Covenant University campus where faculty and staff are used to: "It is well". So, even when performance or a particular response is below expectation, the response is still, in most cases, "It is well". Other examples include "My New Dawn" which is the prophetic declaration for this year 2018. Last year, it was "My Case is Different";

3. Effectiveness of a mode of expression which involves making a value judgment such as a "clear" or "refined" style (this is subjective as it does not describe the formal characteristics of the language used; thus, style is a function of interpretational biases); and

4. The literary language utilised in literature, because style has long been associated primarily with literature.

Crystal and Davy (1971) also see style as the application of linguistic techniques to the study of particular language features within a speech community. According to Opuntase (1990: p. 4), style is "that quality which makes your writing different from the writing of all others" and is a totality of your reading and writing experiences, your thoughts and nature as a person. Thus, he points out that:

We can differentiate Chinua Achebe's writing which is often dramatic, life-like and fast-moving from Wole Soyinka's style which is metaphorical, hard and marked as to be almost immediately recognizable by those who know his work.

Besides, we can easily differentiate late Dele Giwa's style which is aggressive and pompous from Olatunji Dare's style which is satirical and powerful.

In the same vein, we can identify George Ehusani's style which is metaphorical and pungent. For instance, "Never Again!" and "Requiescat in Pace – A Dirge for Old Nigeria":

> Never again shall we adopt a cynical disposition of "sidden look" while a few callous usurpers take over the total control of our nation's sovereignty…Never again shall we be caught napping while the merchants of death dislodge the people's vote and take over the reign of power in our land…This massive land did flow with milk and honey. This giant in the sun was richly endowed with human and material resources. This giant of Africa did not succumb to foreign invasion. The giant collapsed due to internal decay…
>
> Never again shall we respond with guilty silence when our national peace is challenged by reckless plunderers and mindless looters. Never again shall we remain despondent while the custodians of primitive greed walk tall in and out of our national treasury, and legislate for the rest of us an existence of misery and destitution…Goodbye to the old Nigeria of fools and mediocres that put the people through such a nightmare. Goodbye to the old Nigeria of greedy usurpers and avaricious opportunists that condemned the people to such miserable existence… "Requiescat in pace" (Ehusani, 2002:216-220) *.

Williams, as far back as 1996 in his column in the rested *Newswatch* magazine, argues that:

> …there is a sense in which a writer's style itself might serve as an index of the social unease of his generation. …when you read Soyinka's prose, you come away with the impression of a man of immense vitality; a human Mississippi, laying waste acres of lies and deception. The urbane lucidity of Chinua Achebe's work speaks of immense self-possession, of a man of considerable charm and reticence (p. 22).

Thus, style is the personal idiosyncrasy of expression by which we recognise a writer, i.e. whatever goes into making a man's writing uniquely recognisable is what is known as style. These thoughts align with McMenamin's (2002) construal of style as behavioural. If one person could describe a particular idea in several different ways, then it follows that different people would have different "styles". Just as style distinguishes one person from another, one writer could write using multiple styles depending on the choice. Style could therefore be satirical, metaphorical, conversational or parodical.

Stylistics: The Middle-ground between Language and Literature

Literature uses language in depicting the ideas, emotions, desires, religion, culture and traditions of a people. The content of literature is expressed in language. Thus, we see literature as "what" the writer is saying and language (or stylistic devices) as "how" the writer is saying it. The expression or manner of expression is what is called "stylistic devices".

Stylistics is the study of "the relationship between language choice, contexts and effects" (Semino, 2011, p.550), and it has been defined as the scientific study of different styles. Bally (1909) had published *Stylistique*, in line with ideas from structural linguistics made popular by Ferdinand de Saussure. Stylistics found greater acceptance following Spitzer's 1948 publication on *Linguistics and Literary History: Essays in Stylistics*. Widdowson (1975) sees it as the study of literary discourse from a linguistic orientation.

Stylistics identifies the relationship between meaning and the means through which this meaning is produced. It is thus a conscious attempt to analyse the "form" which is exemplified by the creative output of the writer. This is what the linguist refers to as "structure", where textual analysis exhibits cohesive patterns, contrasts and levels of semantic meanings that form a structural whole or unit.

The linguist, in most cases, does not examine the socio-political motives and/or inclination of the literary critic. Rather, s/he is more concerned about specific details on the language of artistic expression. The background of the writer, range and character of his/her works within his/her society or group at certain times/periods may be common or inconsequential. Stylistics, therefore, offers a rich interdisciplinary common middle-ground for research and scholarship, which is indispensable in the explication of texts. This view is supported by Martin (2001) who affirms that stylistics should be seen largely as a bridge between language and literature; particularly in the structured academic approach to literature which invariably enhances learning.

It has also been observed that:

> Stylistics has always caused controversy: there are those who deny its usefulness, and those for whom it is an essential branch of applied linguistics. This is partly because it has proved notoriously difficult to define, since it functions as an umbrella term, covering a range of different stylistic approaches to the study of text (McRae & Clark 2004, p. 328).

Thus, Semino (2011) points out that these multiple views and influences point to the existence and proliferation of different branches/terminologies in stylistics, an indication of the complexities surrounding the concept and scope of stylistics (p. 545). Semino & Short (2004) state some of these branches/terminologies as:

Pragmastylistics (Hickey, 1989); *Affective stylistics* (Fish, 1970); *Discourse stylistics* (Carter & Simpson, 1989); *Critical stylistics* (Weber, 1992); *Feminist stylistics* (Mills, 1995); *Cognitive stylistics* (Semino & Culpeper, 2002).

The identifiable linguistic habits of writers, formed through the harnessing of the tools at the linguistic level of analysis, inform various theories of stylistics, such as, feminist and forensic stylistics. Proponents of the former believe that the linguistic choice (style) of an author betrays his/her gender ideology (Mills, 1995). For instance, a writer's choice to make a male character the protagonist of a play calls for a gender debate among feminist linguists, whereas it is a question of style. The latter, which is forensic stylistics, focuses on authorship identification of questioned writings. Questioned writings are writings believed to be imitated or forged in order to get a gain or save face. McMenamin (2002) describes this by affirming that forensic stylisticians deal with issues bordering on wills, insurance policies, contracts, agreements, laws, and the analysis of meaning in spoken discourse. Forensic stylistics, hence, deploys linguistic tools to the analysis of writings in legal or criminal cases. Other branches are: Linguistic stylistics, Literary stylistics, Phonostylistics, Applied stylistics, Socio-stylistics, Pedagogical stylistics, and Stylo-stylistics. From the foregoing, it is clear that there are several dimensions to stylistics.

The Relevance of Stylistics

The study of stylistics is indispensable in several ways:

1. Its aim is to produce systematic, explicit, rigorous and easily replicable textual analyses   (Wales, 2001; Simpson, 2004; & Semino, 2011).

2. In law courts, it could be argued that a text does not tally with a person's normal patterns of language use. "I know his style" or "this could not possibly be his work". Thus, it could either be

positive or negative; for or against. For instance, having examined Fr. George Ehusani's style in my research, my attention was called to an article published by *Sahara Reporters* on 25th June 2015, entitled *An Elegy for "Old Nigeria"*. I brought out my copy of Ehusani's book, *Nigeria, Years Eaten by the Locust* (2008). A comparison of both publications establishes a case of possible plagiarism. Stylistics could also serve as a pointer not only in controversial authorship of manuscripts, but also to the time when the text was written.

3. In the area of sociolinguistics, stylistics highlights language use at different points in time as well as dialectal varieties as found in the use of slang which is sometimes time-bound. It studies features of situational-distinctive (i.e. varieties) of language and tries to establish principles capable of accounting for particular choices made by individuals and/or social groups in their choice of words/use of language (Crystal, 1980).

4. It analyses literary style, language varieties, and components of utterances and deviations   that may characterise a writer or a group of writers within a speech community.

5. Pedagogically, stylistics is relevant in English for Specific Purposes (ESP), as it is   important to show people that particular types of texts have specific structures and conventions. Such things as arguments, as opposed to statements, are usually signalled by   subtle linguistic devices. Such knowledge can only enhance comprehension and   composition of texts.

6. Also, people in Theatre Arts and related fields need to know the linguistic characteristics   of characters they are depicting, such as accents and dialects in order to depict roles correctly.

7. Critical linguistics is also an area which enriches the study of

stylistics. Here, stylistics is seen as "practical criticism" (Chaycenaar, 1976), applied linguistics and using language in a communicative way. This approach recognises political, religious, social, cultural and historical factors as being part of the meaning of words of a particular language. This is a response to rule-governed pre-occupations that characterised the structuralist view of stylistics (Kress & Hodge, 1989; Birch, 1991). Thus, it focuses on the explanatory element which is either called the motivating force, ideology or purpose behind the message, thereby projecting the reality of the phenomenon being discussed.

The traditional and often celebrated distinction between literary and linguistic (non-literary) stylistics is said to be very important, but scholars like Halliday (1985) have differed by pointing out that features found in literary texts are also found in non-literary texts, and that it is relevant to note that some texts are labelled or classified as "literature" because of the treatment and attention given to them. Thus, any text is open to stylistic analysis, i.e. any text can be stylistically analysed. This view was buttressed in my 2004 study where I conducted an analysis of newspaper editorials and feature articles. This implies that as long as the linguistic theories, principles, rules and applications are relevant and replicable, they could be applied to any text. It also implies that any written material, including literary texts can be classified as "text". It, thus, examines creativity of language use.

A key concept in stylistics is foregrounding. For Wales (2001, p.157), foregrounding is (i) the 'throwing into relief' of the linguistic sign against the background of the norms of ordinary language" and (ii) "within the literary text itself linguistic features can themselves be foregrounded, 'highlighted', or 'made prominent', for specific effects, against the (subordinated) background of the rest of the text (for more

on this, see for instance, Mukarovsky, 1964, 1970; Selden & Widdowson, 1993; McIntyre, 2003). My take on this is that this concept cannot adequately project the reality of contemporary society. From the foregoing, it is necessary to reduce the constraints which stand in the way of the readers because written messages objectify and concretise speech. One of such ways is the use of different stylistic devices which has emphasised the inter-relatedness of language to media discourse, and to interrogate such using the critical discourse approach.

LANGUAGE AND THE OLD AND NEW MEDIA

Unquestionably, language and communication have become central to all human endeavours in the relative manner that the Internet has been viewed from the social perspective. Having been deeply involved in research during the two periods of the media, i. e. the old and the new, it is important that I quickly point out the 'bridge' that signifies the progression of my research. The old media, comprising basically of print and electronic were considered to be credible communication facilitators before the Internet revolution. At that time, social issues such as peace, war, human rights, women's liberation, education, health, religion, apartheid and politics were communicated to the people mainly through the print (newspapers and magazines) and the electronic (television and radio) media. People interacted and negotiated meaning principally on the pages of newspapers, hence it was generally tagged "the marketplace of ideas". The media, in addition to various other institutions, have the basic functions of informing, educating, motivating and entertaining listeners, viewers and readers. They are a major source of information, which help to shape people's views about local, national and global events. The aim is not only to persuade the audience that the information is special but also that the writer is qualified and entitled to have an opinion and equally to express the same on the subject. The editors performed gatekeeping functions by setting the agenda for public discourse. The

media, therefore, remain the watchdog of government's actions and policies, as well as members of the public.

The interaction and integration of ideas aided by information technology resulting in globalisation has, however, revolutionised communication. The effect is a preponderance of technological devices that make reading of books and newspapers a difficult and expensive task. Indeed, studies show that the electronic media, particularly the television, cable television, mobile phones, computers and even the radio, are gradually taking over the print media in the society (Imam, 2004, Abioye, 2010). Thus, while the old media is still relevant, it became imperative to shift research focus to the largely and relatively new and uncharted terrain of the new media.

According to Crystal (2003: viii) the Internet is a remarkable technological revolution that has bred a massive linguistic revolution, especially in recent times. The vast development in information technology has thus presented upon the human race a virtual form of communication that is termed as the new media. The new media is a relatively new branch of linguistic study associated with the twenty-first century. It is related seemingly to all forms of virtual communication. This form of communication has been branded, over time, by different scholars, as the 'Internet Mediated Communication' (Herring, 2000, Crystal, 2003), Computer Mediated Communication/Discourse (CMC/D), Human Computer Interaction (HCI), and virtual space communication, among others.

The social media vary from genre to genre. Dewdney and Ride (2006, p4) expand the scope of new media communication to the purviews of 'the mainstream media of newspapers, radio, advertising, television, photography, magazines and public relations'. For them, the new media explore and are reflective of the 'New territory', 'emergent fields', 'uncharted space', or the 'new frontiers'. In defining its

peculiarity, 'a series of spatial metaphors, whose roots lie in an historical time-frame and discourse of physical geography, science and colonialism', but not limited to these are identified. The peculiarity and diversity of this form of communication can also be viewed from the perspective of its users. They are from diverse origins and cultures with mutual and idiosyncratic characteristics. In most cases, their ideologies converge or differ, depending on their socio-cultural background. This accounts for the tagging of the new media as the virtual communities.

Taking the Internet as one of the main areas of the new media, it is seen as encompassing our everyday lives. One way or the other, it links other aspects of the new media. It is a ground for swift changes which later find 'their way into popular culture, both reflecting and building the excitement about new possibilities'. Taking this view seriously means distinguishing the old media from the new media. The old media in this context applies to the press, radio and television, which over the years have witnessed significant overt changes and innovations with the activities of the Internet, here considered as the new media. In the same vein, the Internet as well as other new media are considered to be susceptible to 'constant reinvention'. In other words, it also spurs 'creativity, collaboration and novel models for commercialisation' (Green, 2010: p. 2). It gives access to newer channels of seeking/accessing and getting/retrieving information.

Another remarkable aspect of the new media that attracts much attention, and is also pervasive in human communication is the mobile communication. Mobile gadgets are used 'for many different things in the course of everyday life'. These functions comprise the mobile phone, the address book, watch, camera, connection to computer, email and the Internet. However, model users of mobile phones use them to contact a wide range of people in their contact directories by way of making calls, sending text messages (texting, sending and

receiving emails, chatting) audio/video or text messages, pinging via the various social media platforms. The elusiveness of its use makes it evident that it has attained a 'global presence than almost any other information and communication technology (ICT) previously invented, and in a much shorter length of time' (Green & Haddon, 2009).

German and Drushel (2011: p. 1) view the new media communication to vary along cultural boundaries, considering that 'it shapes and is shaped by culture' and such changes appear in different ways. For them, the changes may appear 'subtle' or 'dramatic', 'periodic' or 'continuous'. On another pedestal, these changes may be 'isolated', 'unique', or even 'unconnected' depending on the nature of technological advancement that is at the centre of such communication. Technologies and social communication fora are variegated in communication features and innovations that contribute to the nature of interaction, and consequently identify them as distinct virtual communities. Among these platforms are, 'email', 'Facebook', 'Instagram', websites, and digital animations.

Interlocutors in the new media may share certain skills, aptitudes and knowledge in common. Of course, these features may arise through formal training in schools, interest, practice and interactivity. Despite these, they are divided along the boundary line of cultures and norms. It has been argued that the new media is a hybrid because of its multifaceted nature. This leads to the concept of 'practice migration':

> The hybrid and fluid nature of 'practice migration' makes it difficult, but not impossible, to describe at a general level what skills and training are needed to work in new media. In fact, there is no one set of skills or established body of knowledge that will fit a person to work in the area. . . new media practices are largely made up from the established media practices of,

for example, scriptwriting, image making, graphics, editing, composing and so on… (Dewdney & Ride, 2006: p. 9)

Jenkins (2003) posits that 'the media never rest'. This is because the materials, otherwise called trends of social media are constantly in circulation. These trends are perpetually 'consulted, scanned and read in every country and on every continent, they are a vital means of communication in the modern world'. Media relations are not only remarkable, but also interesting and inducing. In many instances, the trends are constantly in reviews, ideas are constantly criticised, refreshed and renewed. According to Aitchison and Lewis (2003), new media channels are always at the forefront of civilisation. The Internet transmits to innumerable numbers of followers. The social media annexes the views of readers/viewers who engage actively and passively with issues.

The platforms for new media communication serve as mediators for social interactions and social relationships despite the fact that they are ecologically situated. Green and Hadden (2009) opine that for effective social interaction, the individuals that constitute the virtual communities 'develop a repertoire of uses of different ICTs, and they choose among these depending on the communicative relationship and circumstances'. They argue that virtual communities serve specific social functions to their users who themselves are held by 'different social ties, associations and obligations'. The repertoires developed for specific social interactions in these media platforms, in time, become popular culture, and are then carried into informal communicative encounters.

A most peculiar and significant area of interest in new media interaction is traced to the social media texting, chatting or pinging or the short message standard (SMS), the language of which is termed as *Textese, txtese, chatspeak, txt, txtspk, txtk, txto, texting language, or txt*

talk. The peculiarity of this form of language is that it involves a lot of abbreviations and slang owing to the demand for brevity, time and space constraints, and in some extreme cases in peer interactions, 'coding'. This form of language also relates to the concept of 'rebus', which deals with the use of pictures, letters or numbers to represent entities, words, concepts or expressions. For instance, the pictogram of a heart is often used to represent love, the number '4' is used to represent the preposition 'for', while the letter 'u' represents 'you', among others. Also, there are elusive amounts of common and uncommon abbreviations that have populated popular culture in the new media, among which are 'dctnry' for dictionary, 'kybrd' for keyboard, 'ppl' for people. Here, expressions are also acronymised. For instance, 'lol' means 'laughing out loud' or 'lots of love' depending on the context; the former in humorous contexts and the latter in affectionate contexts. Thus, context plays an indispensable role not just in *textese*, the language of texting and chatting, but also in the new media generally. Such context cannot be neglected in its analytical framework.

Style in the New Media

Style in the New Media is constrained by the plethora of inventions of the media. The evolvement of the New Media brought with it different shades of social platforms that are characterised by linguistic functional variations. By functional variation, we mean that the discourses of the media are often and prominently embellished with trending social structures that allow for dynamic use of language in different contexts. Specifically, the incursion of the online communicative world brought the New Media into the limelight. A very apt example to reckon with is the art of texting in the New Media in which syntactic modifications, culture-specific expressions, coinages and repetitions are prevalent (see Abioye et al, 2017). Style, again, is influenced by the individual idiosyncrasies and socio-cultural liberties of the writer.

Having examined language as distinctively human, discourse as language in use; style and the scientific study of style, i.e. stylistics; and the Old and New Media, it becomes necessary to identify the interplay of language, discourse, style and the media in the construction of realities as my own contribution to Computer Mediated Discourse.

RESEARCH EFFORTS: THE INTERPLAY OF LANGUAGE, DISCOURSE, STYLE AND THE MEDIA IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF REALITIES

Noting the complexity of the scope of stylistics as well as the insufficient attention paid to its analysis of pragmatic, ideological and socio-political issues in our clime, I was spurred to delve further into this field, not from the traditional perspective, but from different discursive approaches to stylistic analysis, particularly the critical discourse perspective, forming the basis of the need for a much more innovative approach to stylistic analysis and engagement in social issues.

The Chancellor Sir, it is very clear that I saw gaps in research which I explored. I now go on to my research efforts in line with the reviews outlined above. Before I proceed though, it may interest you, ladies and gentlemen, that scholars like myself are interested in social issues such as fuel scarcity, population explosion, food security, politics, gender issues, climate change, healthcare, religion, and economy. We unveil those hidden meanings and ideologies via thorough and systematic analysis, using linguistic devices. This new direction found utterance in my research, especially on stylistics. Let me point out that the Internet was not as vibrant in 1992 as we see it today coupled with the fact that many publishers who could not readily identify the amount of work and creativity that goes into interdisciplinary studies found it difficult publishing papers such as mine at that time.

Discourse, Style and Effective Message Encoding in Socio-political Commentary in the Old Media

I undertook a stylistic analysis of satirical columns in *The Guardian* and *Weekend Concord* (Abioye, 1992a), observing that satirists have tended to follow, largely, either the Juvenalian or Horatian traditions. Juvenal, incensed by immorality, was often "fierce and furious" in his manner of protestation. Horace, on his part, attacked societal ills in a "mild and genial" manner, implying that satirists can either be mild or bitter in their use of linguistic resources. This means that they were "either gently nudging their subject or ruthlessly attacking it". It is said that Swift excelled at satire, and Pope saw himself "as a Hebrew prophet with a sacred mission" (Worcester 1960: p. 160). It is, therefore, not surprising that Elijah the prophet mocked the prophets of Baal, saying: *"Cry aloud, for he is a god: either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is on a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth and must be awaked"* (1 Kings 18:27).

This Yoruba proverb, for instance, says a lot: *A mini bini-eran ibiye* (One [either a human being or a lower animal] that is precursory to the abuse of another). Some of the meaning, no doubt, gets lost in transit. The case here is that one-eyed Ibiye also has a one-eyed goat. The notoriety of goats is known to everybody. So, in the event of abusing the goat: *"Eran oloju kan"*, the wronged ends up insulting the owner as well because the sentence is ambiguous; it can be interpreted in two different ways:

  i. The one-eyed goat, or
  ii. The goat that is owned by a one-eyed person.

The irony of this case is that nobody uses this proverb on animals, let alone goats. It is always used on human beings. The offender is, therefore, blamed for this insult to his parent/guardian. Thus, satire is identified with social, political, personal, religious or literary criticism

using humour, laughter, irony, sarcasm to point out moral excesses and unacceptable behaviour.

This (1992a) study was predicated on the constant cases of misinterpretation of satirical elements in columns of Nigerian dailies. Largely because of the obscurity/camouflage associated with the application of satire, its use in the dailies obfuscated potential readers. Consequently, the infusion of satire in these texts has engendered misinformed rejoinders in mass media outlets. This suddenly became a heightened problem.

Extant studies have mostly approached and almost confined satire to literary texts. However, the study deconstructs satire as a stylistic tool beyond poetry and drama texts and as a weapon in the hands of columnists addressing social issues/realities. In the main, Awoyinfa's "May Your Road Be Rough" (1989) and Dare's "This Leaping Year" (1988) were reduced to a stylistic scale where the linguistic and extra-linguistic resources were weighed as possible factors for the demystification of writer's intended meaning. To properly situate meaning in the columns, I examined the conceptual interpretation and the writer's intention in both texts. Conceptual interpretation is that interpretation that derives encyclopaedic/denotative meaning, that is, outward meaning whereas the writer's intention is clearly at variance with what the linguistic forms merely convey. For instance, I noted that in "May your Road Be Rough", Awoyinfa's style of language manipulation puts the potential reader on the brink of taking numerous swipes at the author, judging that he was rather rude to Tai Solarin, an astute misinterpretation of intention.

Satire is thoroughly demystified in this study both from linguistic and extra-linguistic perspectives. The author examines the effect of satire on selected writers' columns of Nigerian newspapers. Leaning on transitivity as the linguistic anchor, the different process types that

established the physical, relational and the mental occurrence of the satirised participants were made glaring (Fig. 1). When matched with the extra-linguistic forms, the author professionally unveils the satirical tools that mystify interpretation, leaning on Halliday's SFL. One important contribution of this study to knowledge is the genre direction to which satire was located that is, print media. Hitherto, it has always been literary texts but this work launched readers into the consciousness of the deployment of satirical tools in newspaper columns. The paper, therefore, cautioned that columnists and other writers should avoid, as much as possible, the use of words loaded with ambiguity.

A significant contribution of this study to knowledge is the sensitisation of the reading populace about the application of satirical elements in the print media and the linguistic and extra-linguistic means of deconstructing the possible meaning of a satirical piece. The study also provides an analytical model that would aid easy unearthing of satire-embedded writings or speech, as the case may be, by writers, readers, scholars and other academics (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Satiric Frame: A Model of Derivation of Satire

"The Power and Politics of Satirical Discourse in some Nigerian Newspapers" (Abioye, 2009) interrogates why a writer will choose satire as a form of literary comment, noting the effects of this device on the readers/listeners. The choice itself has political underpinnings which are highlighted by the power the use of this stylistic device has on readers/listeners. In this paper, the writer of the text analysed, Dare (1990), trivialises the 100-days "game" so much so that it has become ridiculous (p. 13). By the same token, and by a semantic extension, he likens his five years in *The Guardian* (as a commentator: See "My Own Anniversary") to the first 100-days of any public officer anywhere".

A new game is coming to town. Actually, it is not so new. It goes back to the time of Napoleon Bonaparte, specifically the 100 days from March 20 to June 28, 1815, during which he recaptured power as French emperor after escaping from his exile ...The 100th day itself has become a quintessential pseudo-event for government as well as the news media. For the government it is an occasion for flaunting real as well as contrived achievements, for putting the best face on failures, and for remarking the good fortune of the people in having such a solicitous, God-fearing...It is, most significantly, an occasion for demanding sacrifices and giving fair warning that whereas constructive critics are ever so welcome, fault finders no matter how highly placed should be prepared for the consequences of their temerity.... that contractors ought to be willing to celebrate the 100th day of winning a major contract and that swinging men and women should jubilate over the first 100 days of their latest dalliance. Couples need not wait for a year to celebrate their wedding anniversary when they can, while the romance is still torrid, have a 100th-day bash. And why wait for your baby's first birthday when you can celebrate

his first 100 days on earth? Why can't undergraduates celebrate their first 100 days in the university? On graduating, why can't they celebrate their first 100 days of liberation from those tyrannical lecturers and professors?... (Dare, 1990, p. 13).

This lends credence to what is known as the politics of satire, i.e. the reason why writers choose this particular stylistic device. Ideally, the writer is a visionary to his people. If he has to keep the people informed, but is constantly being harassed and subjected to inhuman treatments by dictatorial governments in seemingly democratic dispensations, then the committed writer does not give up: he looks for other stylistic options, in this case, the satirical option.

Another study that focuses on the stylistic import of language use is Abioye (2008). This particular work examined the resourcefulness of rhetorical questions in Ehusani's "A New Year Prayer for Peace". The gap the study stands to fill is not far-fetched. This stylistic device, Rhetorical Questions (henceforth RQs) has, most often, been interrogated from the conventional literary point as a question that requires no direct answer, leaving out its other functions in various communicative genres.

The RQ is an assertive, sophisticated and authoritative style frequently used by Jesus to drive home His point:

> *"How is it that ye sought me?" Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"* (Luke 2:49);
> *"Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division:* (Luke 12:51).
> *"Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?"* (Matthew 16:13). *"But whom say ye that I am?"* (Matthew 16:15).

In literature, Shakespeare's Julius Caesar exemplifies how RQs are used to achieve different purposes. For instance, Caesar used it to

emphasise his personality as unmovable and unshakable as Mount Olympus: "Hence! Wilt thou lift up Olympus?" And completely devastated when he saw his most trusted friend, Brutus among those that stabbed him: "Et tu Brute?- Then fall Caesar"(Act III Scene I). Also, Marcus Brutus expresses his feelings of outrage to Caius Cassius who was accused of collecting bribes:

> Remember March, The ides of March remember: Did not great Julius bleed for justice' sake? What villain toucht his body, that did stab, And not for justice?... Shall I be frighted when a mad man stares? (Act IV Scene III).

Identifying this gap, this study explicated RQs from an interdisciplinary standpoint; it explored the various import of RQs in human communication using Ehusani's (2007) text, "A New Year Prayer for Peace". In the basic corpus, the author who is a Catholic priest, teacher and social commentator powerfully engaged RQs to portray reality and enforce messages that mere declaratives could not afford. The literary piece is so rich in RQs that in the 24 sentences which make up the 'Prayer', 45 RQs were identified, however only 22 RQs were selected for analysis.

The study identified six major types of RQs classified structurally according to: 'what?', 'why?', 'how?', 'is it?', 'can't you?', and 'don't you?' These questions, contextually leaning on cohesive devices, express emphatic condemnation, inherent contradiction, repetition, plea for divine intervention, sarcasm, and positive affirmation. (See Table 1). They specifically address the nation's religious situation and governance, as well as pronounce blessings on the people. In essence, RQs are seen as discourse strategies that stylistically organise evidence, facts, and information in the reader's mind and also stimulate discussions.

Table : A Stylistic Analysis of Prominent Features in Elesanmi's Rhetorical Questions

RQ	STRUCTURAL FORMS OF RQ	Topic %	CONCEPTION LINGUISTIC SIGNS	RHETORICAL STRATEGIES
RQ1	Rhetorical questions that begin with "what"			
	What's the point in going to church or frequenting the mosque when our lives are not touched?	4 Times (11.4%)	Church/mosque Lives not touched	Declarative, Emphatic condemnation, Inherent Contradiction, Rejection
	What's the point in offering you sacrifices of peace when we have blood in our hands?		Sacrifice, peace Blood in our hands	
	What's the point in being religious and having no regard for human life?		No regard for human life	
	What's the point in dancing around your altar when our hands are polluting with him?		Hearts polluting, him	
RQ2	Rhetorical questions that begin with "Why"			
	Why, Lord, do you allow the devil to walk in our streets in broad daylight?	4 Times (11.4%)	Devil, broad daylight	Plea for divine intervention, Repetition
	Why do you abandon us in our toil and tears?		Abandon, toil, tears	
	Why don't you intervene now for the love of your people?		Intervene, love	
	Ah Lord, **why** do you remain there in silence?		Remain in silence	
RQ3	Rhetorical questions that begin with "How"			
	How can you lead us then far and abandon us?	4 times (11.4%)	Lead, abandon	Plea for divine intervention, Challenge, Repetition
	How can you turn your face away?		Turn your face	
	How can you leave us in our own darkness?		Leave, darkness	
	Lord, **how** can you remain silent?		Remain silent	
RQ4	Rhetorical questions that begin with "Is it"			
	Is it the kleptomania that characterizes our national governance?	4 times (11.4%)	Kleptomania	Sarcasm, Rebuke, Repetition
	Is it the verbal acrimony, manipulation and subterfuge that define our political alliances?		Verbal acrimony	
	Is it the massive decay that is the lot of our social infrastructure?		Massive decay	
	Is it the enormous greed and callous exploitation that make up our economic relations?		Enormous greed	

	Rhetorical questions that begin with "Is it"			
RQI	Is it the kleptomania that characterizes our national greatness?		Kleptomania	Sarcasm, Rebuke, Repetition
	Is it the mutual acrimony, manipulation and subverting that define our political alliances?	Five times (9.7%)	Mutual acrimony	
	Is it the massive decay that is the lot of our social infrastructure?		Massive decay	
	Is it the insensitive greed and callous exploitation that make up our economic relations?		Insensitive greed	
	Rhetorical questions that begin with "Can't you"			
RQC	Can't you see that one half of our people are slowly drowned and the other half are swimming in the wrong direction?	Four times (14.5%)	Drowned, swimming, wrong direction	Persuasion, To encourage reflection, Repetition
	Can't you see that all the people are upright?			
	Can't you do something dramatic as in the days of old?		Something dramatic	Biblical metaphor, Plea for divine intervention
	Can't you feel the tense vibrations everywhere in the land?		Tense vibrations	Repetition for emphasis
	Rhetorical questions that begin with "Don't you"			
RQD	Don't you see?	Two times (7.1%)	See	Positive affirmation
	Don't tell me you do not know that it must be the Nigerian poor to get to heaven...?		Nigerian poor, heaven	Unworthy fascination

FQO = Frequency of Occurrence;
RQT = RQs that begin with "What?"
RQY = RQs that begin with "Why?"
RQH = RQs that begin with "How?"
RQI = RQs that begin with "Is it?"
RQC = RQs that begin with "Can't you?"
RQD = RQs that begin with "Don't you?"

The study contributes to scholarship in a number of ways. First and foremost, is an interdisciplinary approach to the determination of the stylistic device. The paper has equally been able to project the resourcefulness and employable structural forms of the RQs in making a good writer. The study creates a novel insight into cases of implicitness of information in the use of Rqs.

Abioye (2009) assessed the "Typology of Rhetorical Questions as a Stylistic Device in Writing". Here, the RQ is evaluated from its types and how these influence better writing skills. English, being a second language to many Nigerians, comes with the challenge of proficiency, aside from the fact that rigorous thinking in the mother tongue first takes place in the brain before codification also sprouts problems of (mis)interpretation. One major stylistic tool that contributes to this language situation is RQs, their use by writers and comprehension by readers. It is on this premise that this study examined the types of RQs and guided readers into the understanding of the application of RQs. Eight types of RQs were highlighted in the study. (See Table 2). These include the A-H of evaluative RQs, RQs in quick succession, Discourse opening RQs, Self-questioning RQs, Empty RQs, Self-answering RQs and Command RQs. These functionally relate emotional outpour and criticism depending on the contextual affordances. The paper's eclectic approach therefore helps provide a reasonable guide to students in deciphering the varying manifestations of RQs in both media and non-media writings.

Ultimately, the study initiated (as a contribution to knowledge) a theoretical frame for the analysis of RQs which other researchers in that direction would find apposite. The paper opens another chapter of stylistic significance in RQs as a veritable tool of enhancement of writing.

Table : Typology of Rhetorical Questions

S/N	Rhetorical Questions	Type	Characteristics/Purpose
1	a. Who are these fanatics? b. How daring can criminals be? c. When will fuel scarcity end? d. What are they celebrating?	A Evaluation, Functionally, it could be a claim, a leading question	Express/provoke anger, astonishment, disappointment, ridicule or outrage. Sometimes supports already-expressed views. Works up emotions. Sometimes functions as a claim. Can influence further thoughts/ideas which express fear, anxiety or worry.
2	"... What is going to happen to Daniel Kanu and his YEAA? What becomes of the Abacha coup, the Abacha medals and the Abacha TV? What will be YEAA's next line of action? What becomes of the other youth movements and associations which were set up for the purpose of ensuring the alleged self succession bid of the late Gen. Abacha? ... What is going to happen to Arthur Eze who allegedly declared he would emigrate from Nigeria if Abacha did not become president in the next dispensation? What is going to happen to Arthur Nzeribe who propagated the idea of the indispensability of Gen. Abacha with venomous drive? ... And what about the traditional rulers nationwide whose entire lives are woven around the self succession bid? Is it all over? Just like that? ..."	B Series of RQs in quick succession	"Litany" of questions which usually require complex replies. They express strong emphasis, weighty observations, a sense of bewilderment, and strong feelings of outrage. Such RQs usually form a paragraph or a concept. Inherent contradictions are highlighted and reduced to virtually nothing. They jolt the reader out of a state of complacency. Sometimes anger and they express stronger and more vehement indignation. This means that the strong feelings expressed here are amplified by the profusion and/or repetition of the RQs.
3	"Do you think I have come to give peace on earth? No, I tell you, but rather division, for henceforth in one house there will be five divided, three against two ..."	C Highlight a new subject especially at the beginning of discourse	To give prominence to the new subject/topic so that people can realize its importance. Used in debates, developing/stimulating an argument or raising issues for discussion.
4	Can this system work? After this mess, what happens?	D Debating, Arguing or Questioning oneself in thought or doubt	Allows you to speculate aloud, probe your readers' minds, express your level of understanding, and helps you expose potentials that are open to amendments. Used in pleas.
5	Q. "Do didn't greet you?" A. "Me? Little me?" Q. "Oho saw you and didn't stop to say hello?" A. "Why should he?"	E Response to a previous question	To express strong feelings of displeasure, sometimes supports confirms/confidence on already expressed view.

6	a. Why is it called a "building" when it is already built? b. Why does an alarm clock "go off" when it begins to ring? c. Why does your nose run and your feet smell? d. Why is it called TOOTH brush when you brush all of your teeth? e. Why are they called apartments when they are already stuck together? f. Why is it that when you transport something by car, it's called a shipment, but when you transport something by ship, it's called cargo? g. Why is it called a TV set when you only get one?	F Empty RQs	They are presented as antithetical, because they exhibit some of life's self-contradictions. They are axiomatic because they are already accepted as the norm. They hardly provide sensible answers.
7	One of the more bizarre episodes of the period was the widely publicised flogging of Minere Amakiri, a reporter… He crime? He raised the governor's birthday by reporting factually…	G A question that is immediately answered	Reasoning aloud where questions are asked and the same are immediately answered. To chide, express grief or inveigh against something or somebody
8	Will you shut that door? Do I make myself clear?	H Command	Express the speakers' preference, urge/criticism especially in unpleasant situation. It also helps to intensify a corresponding command or request.

Sources: (1a.) The Punch editorial, Nov 14, 2000. (1b) Normal conversation. (1c) The Guardian editorial, April 17, 1992. (2). Ebisani, 2000: 53. (3). Holy Bible; (4) Common examples in normal everyday conversation. (5). Enahoro, 1992. (6). Why ask why? Rudy #@hiway.net (7.) Dare, 1985. (8). Normal conversation (YEAA means 'Youths Earnestly Ask for Abacha', Nigeria's former Head of State, now deceased, who 'succeeded' Chief Ernest Shonekan, Head of the Interim Government after the June 12 debacle).

As a follow-up to earlier works, Abioye (2011) investigated the "Preference for Rhetorical Questions as an Index of Textual Message Effectiveness among Readers". The paper sampled texts embellished with RQs and contrasted them with texts that were not driven by RQs in order to determine from readers the one that encodes the desired message in the most alluring fashion. Style, as deviation from the norm, seems to characterise the complexion of this paper, in that RQs

are investigated as literary comments different from the conventional style. One may be tempted to ask: Why focus so much on RQs, satire, metaphors and other stylistic devices in a society where even the conventional style is problematic? These stylistic devices cannot be wished away.

Nevertheless, the problem had been that in earlier studies, little or no attention was paid to whether the readers of print media texts got the message contained in the pieces they read, and whether the messages are effectively transmitted to the readers. The study adopted the Effectiveness Rating Instrument (ERI) designed by Abioye (2009), to scale the preference on the basis of socio-cultural data, pattern of newspaper reading and measurement of message effectiveness.

In the research studies on RQs, interdisciplinary theories were carefully integrated: Content Analysis/ Corpus Linguistics, Linguistic/Media Effect theories, Reader Response where results were statistically analysed, culminating into an integrated Effectiveness Rating Instrument (ERI). The Reader Response strategy is one of the germane contributions to knowledge in this paper. (See Appendix for the ERI).

Table 3: Relationship between Preference for RQ and Age of Respondents (N=1,550)

With the Use of the RQs I consider the Total Effect of the Text				
		Effective	Ineffective	Total
Age of Respondent	25 years or less	604 (39%)	171 (11%)	775 (50%)
	26-35 years	372 (24%)	62 (04%)	434 (28%)
	36 years and above	310 (20%)	31 (02%)	341 (22%)
	Total	1,286 (83%)	264 (17%)	1,550 (100%)

Table 4: Relationship between Preference for RQ and Frequency of Newspaper Reading (N=1,547)

		Effective	**Ineffective**	**Total**
Frequency of Newspaper Reading	Frequently	464 (30%)	77 (05%)	541 (35%)
	Sometimes/Occasionally	712 (46%)	201 (13%)	913 (59%)
	Rarely/Never	77 (05%)	16 (01%)	93 (06%)
	Total	**1,253 (81%)**	**294 (19%)**	**1,547 (100%)**

With the Use of the RQs I consider the Total Effect of the Text

Table 5: Relationship between Preference for RQ and Respondents' Patterns/Timing of Reading

		Effective	**Ineffective**	**Total**
I read Newspapers anytime	Yes	758 (49.2%)	166 (10.8%)	924 (60%)
	No	516 (33.5%)	100 (6.5%)	616 (40%)
	Total	**1,274 (82.7%)**	**266 (17.3%)**	**1,540 (100%)**

With the Use of the RQs I consider the Total Effect of the Text

In its findings, using the ERI, the study revealed that there is a strong relationship between the preference for RQs in print media texts and age (Table 3), frequency of newspaper reading (Table 4) and timing of reading newspapers (Table 5). The results derived from the ERI were subjected to statistical analyses using chi square and cross tabs (Tables 3,4 and 5). In all, it was submitted that readers' preference for RQs as an index for message effectiveness in texts far outweighed respondents on its ineffectiveness. As part of the findings, the paper gathered that RQs embellish the level of language used and give the text polished, specialised and sophisticated elevation that projects the hallmarks of a good writer. Among other insights created, two major contributions of this study to scholarship are the establishment of the RQ as an effective writing strategy and the exposition of the various factors that influence readers' appreciation of the stylistic device.

"Pragmatic Functions of Rhetorical Questions in Ehusani's *Nigeria, Years Eaten by the Locust*" (Abioye, 2011) examined the pragmatic potential of RQs as a discourse strategy including the presentation of the thematic preoccupations in the collection of articles. Reconciling these two fields of language study (Pragmatics/Stylistics) in the corpus, the author concludes that the pangs inflicted by the metaphorical locusts (destitution, oppression, criminality and waste) identified in the texts were uniquely crystallised in the pragmatic functions: assertive, declarative, indirect and non-confrontational as well as interactional style. Thus, the investigation critically provides an understanding of pragmatically styled persuasive devices to aid the effective comprehension of language learning, reading and writing.

Another study investigated metaphor and ideology in George Ehusani's 'Truth Trilogy' (Abioye, 2011). The study uncovered how Ehusani, in his careful deployment of metaphors contextually exudes ideology in his 'Truth Trilogy': *Fragments of Truth*, *Petals of Truth*, and Flames of Truth (analytically coded as FROT, PTOT and FLOT respectively). The study foregrounds the dove-tailing relationship between metaphor and ideology in the communication of literary messages. One significant aspect of the study is the location of the place of culture in the rich metaphorical configuration of Ehusani's truth design.

The trilogy is a collection of poems: FROT contains 66 poems, PTOT has 51, while FLOT embodies 45 poems. These were subjected to critical metaphor analysis (CMA) which helps in situating the understanding of metaphor in the unearthing of societal realities. As an approach, CMA is an aspect of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) which is detailed to uncover power relations in socio-political discourse. The study, thus, was directed at determining the ideological

content, the sociocultural imports, the patterns of inferences and the mental frames invoked by the application of metaphors.

Ultimately, all the poems were geared towards the general theme of truth. In cognisance with the socio-political challenges of the country, Ebusani's trilogy was categorised into six (6) leading metaphors. These include: agony and oppression metaphors which are indexed by the expressions such as "vestiges of feudal hegemony", journey metaphors, strength and vitality metaphors, tyranny and oppression metaphors, inequality/oppression/hope metaphors and biblical metaphors. These metaphors overtly reveal the social vices inherent in the Nigerian society and consequently, the underlying ideologies that are feeding the flames of these socio-political realities.

One major contribution of this study is the institution of the teaching, learning and the processing of language, especially when heavily infused with metaphors. The work also enables the polarity of the societal structuring where the rich is unevenly distinguished from the poor, the same as the strong from the weak, light from darkness and joy from grief.

Abioye and Ajiboye (2014) conducted "A Lexico-Stylistic Analysis of Kaine Agary's *Yellow-Yellow*", focusing on the lexical peculiarities in the presentation of socio-cultural realities in this novel. Within the framework of Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics and discourse-stylistics, the study reveals the relevance of a functional use of language, accentuating the fact that language exists in the context of people and situations, in this case, the Niger-Delta region of Nigeria, and as such, *Yellow-Yellow* reflects deliberate lexical choices such as loan-words/blends, semantic extensions, neologisms, direct translation equivalents, Nigerian Pidgin, and imageries drawn from the immediate environment. These perform textual metafunctions of

depicting the relationship between form and function, and therefore, have discursive implications which to a large extent, relate to the context of use. The research ascertains that writers' lexical choices, though stylistic, are not singularly for aesthetic purposes, rather they are strategic, enhancing originality and are a simulation of reality, especially in relation to the setting established in texts.

Realities of Discourse and Style in the New Media

In the "Stylistic Analysis of Emerging Paradigms and Prominent Features in Nigerian SMS Discourse" (Abioye, 2012), a stylistic appraisal of Short Message Services (SMS) in the Nigerian context strictly among lecturers in the university setting was undertaken. The study observes that texting among educated individuals in university settings is constructed around fundamental thematic preoccupations such as religious, social, economic, and educational discourses. More importantly, each theme is projected with appropriated lexicons from the world of the Internet. Abbreviations and signification of the service providers' slogans are prominent features that characterise their discourse. The discourse field is delimited to cover the university setting in order to bring focus on the educational implications of the use of Short Message Services in the academic environment in "The Prevalence, Effects and Reactions to the use of Short Message Services in the University Settings in Southwestern Nigeria" (Alao, Abioye & Evbuoma, 2015).

In "The Psychosocial Implications of Code-switching in Text Messages in Nigeria", authored by Abioye, Soneye and Ajiboye (2017), the focus was on Short Messaging Systems (SMS). The study explored how shared sociocultural knowledge of the participants in the communicative event aids the flow of expression among them. Particularly, the study identified six (6) psychosocial implications of code-switching as exemplified in the text messaging system of

Nigerian users of the telephone. These include the maintenance of social relationship and cultural identification, enunciation of pleas and requests, expression of appreciation, indication of expectation and prayers, giving of information and expression of surprise. The study therefore submits that the mobile phone is not just a technological ornamentation but also an indication of users' literacy skills which serve as a source of enhancing their self-esteem as well as an avenue for satisfying some psychological needs.

The Reality of Gendered Discourse

In recent years, gender inequality has been a topical issue at the national and international domains, particularly in countries with developing economies where the different perspectives such as gender and education, gender and politics, gender and government, gender and employment, and gender and language have been examined using largely anthropological and sociological methods. Many of the studies have not rigorously investigated the systemic imbalance which is skewed in favour of males (See Oloruntoba-Oju 2009; Odebunmi 2010, 2013; Arua, 2015). The discourse of gender has turned broader by its various cultural perspectives, and yet language stands at the centre of its construction. Gender, as a concept, parades three principal categorisations which are made to include grammatical, lexical and social constructions (Thüne *et al,* 2006). Interestingly, all these mappings are indexed by the language and culture of the people with regard to gender-selective linguistic paradigms. For instance, languages that seem to have less gender morphology like Chinese and Turkish are still found to have gender-related discourses through other linguistic means (Thune *et al,* 2006). In a grossly patriarchal African world, the need for an intense study of the African-type gendered discourse is imperative.

In my study entitled "A Socio-cultural Analysis of Yoruba Discourse

Patterns in Selected Child Welfare Clinics (CWCs) in Southwestern Nigeria" (Abioye, 2011) which falls within the domain of medical/gendered discourse, I examined the discourse or communication patterns/behaviour of CWCs. It veered into how nurses and mothers negotiate turns in Primary Health Care encounters. In its outcome, it was revealed that emphasis should be placed on the indigenous codes for better orientation, especially as Nigeria is a multilingual nation. The study also noted that regular infusion of songs in the communication intervals is a borrowing from the cultural practices of the folkloric African society. It thus explains that, to have effective healthcare publicity or orientation, the place of culture should be acknowledged. The paper specifically noted that none of the fathers were present at the CWCs; the responsibility was left to the women. The health talks and the songs were aimed at improving the welfare of the child and the mother.

In the study I co-authored titled, "Male and Female in Ola Rotimi's *Our Husband Has Gone Mad Again*: A Sociolinguistic Overview" (Abioye & Soneye, 2010) explicates the need for Africa and indeed the world to be an egalitarian society. It accentuates the role of teachers in finding innovative ways of using language to deconstruct sexist literature and helping readers, particularly students, to imagine a world in which there can be genuine equality. The findings from this study reveal that the literary text adopted gender sensitive or inclusive language because it overly recognises males and females as possessing equal potential; *"So, God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them"* (Gen. 1:27). The paper recommends that writers should adopt gender-sensitive language such as is employed in this text for their literary writings, to prevent their giving a one-sided view of societies. It further suggested that teachers of literature and curriculum planners should find

innovative ways of breaking stereotypes where they exist, such as the objective representation of men and women as butting-in and nagging, since it is a reality that both men and women take part in such speech acts.

The Reality of Pentecostal Discourse/Language

In another paper I co-authored, "Pentecostal Language and Conflict Resolution in Africa" (Abioye and Simpson, 2009) Pentecostal language as a positive trend in conflict resolution in Africa was investigated. Language in use is given robust attention in this paper, which notes that the advent of Pentecostal naming and positive confession has almost completely eroded the existing negativity of language use especially in the family setting. Specifically, the study draws on the Pentecostal Power of faith, the Word and the Supernatural to quell the verbal curses and abuses that frequently pervade African homes. The paper observes that:

> The term "Pentecostal" is derived from *Pentecost,* a Greek term describing the Jewish Feast of Weeks. For Christians, this event commemorates the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the followers of Jesus Christ, as described in the Acts: 2 and Pentecostals tend to see their movement as reflecting the same kind of spiritual power, worship styles and teachings that were found in the early church. Thus, people are gravitating more towards the Pentecostal churches where the language in particular is a standout. Subcultures often develop a specialized language understood only by the members of the group, a language that must be learned as a new member becomes assimilated into the group and that, when artfully and correctly employed, will signify membership to others in the group... Positivism is a crucial aspect of Pentecostalism. When one believes and one says it, things can only get better.

Hence, they believe strongly in Biblical sayings like: ...*let the weak say I am strong...* (Joel 3:10; ...*for when I am weak, then I am strong* (2 Corin 12:10). (pp5-6).

Realities on Discourse and Style in Socio-political Commentary in the Old Media

Realities are the happenings that characterise an individual's political, economic, social and religious experiences. Significantly and more interestingly, these happenings are not evenly reported. The reason is not far-fetched: the way realities are constructed largely depends on the sophistication and viability of the media in that era and chiefly on the style of the reporter, since no two individuals write or speak the same way. We could make this more lucid. The discourse and style of representation of realities in the period when the print media was dominant and viable cannot be compared with the technologically more advanced media as we have now. There is an enormous gulf in-between! As aptly categorised by Hoskins (2010):

> those born between 1924 and 1929, their formative years being 1935–1945, the 'print/radio' generation, (2) those born between 1954 and 1959, their formative years being 1965–1975, the 'black-and-white television generation', and (3) those born 1979–1984, their formative years being 1989–1999, which were labelled the 'Internet generation'... (p. 462)

On the socio-political arena of the old media, the peculiarity of style in its discourse of realities is quite different from the style of the trending ones of the new media which is also described above as the Internet generation. It is instructive to quickly reaffirm at this point that what is classified as the old media, thus, encompasses the print/radio generation. It has not stopped anyway, but the incursion of the new media has engulfed its expanse.

Particularly in socio-political commentaries, two principal stylistic tools used by commenters in the creation of realities in the old media are satire and rhetorical questions. Satire was not only engaged to encode the reality of that time, but it was also a powerful tool for newspaper commentary. Abioye (2009), commenting on the power and politics of satirical discourse in some Nigerian newspapers, notes that satire has always been employed to point out societal ills with the intention to effect the deserved correction, emphasising the fact that linguists analyse social and political issues in texts. Some prominent artistes and writers in Nigeria who engaged this tool include the late Dr. Hubert Ogunde, the late Kola Ogunmola, Mabel Segun, the late T.M Aluko, Nobel Laureate, Prof. Wole Soyinka, Niyi Osundare, and Femi Osofisan. These artistes and writers were vocal and are still in the business (through their works) of using their art to correct the ills of the society; representing national mood through satire. One very unique feature about them is that when they write, their readers are able to easily distinguish their writings. And this is where style separates their individual methods of reality (re)presentation.

Discourse and Social Commentary in the New Media

There is a new wave of technological advancing that has incurred a fresh pattern of discourse, especially in the slant of social commentary. Social commentary in the new media comes in form of reactions to pressing issues of national concern. Discourse, being language in use, is at the mercy of the writer or commentator. In essence, there is bound to be inevitable variations among commenters. This variation breeds style. Common to the New Media is the creation of social identity by participants in the field of discourse. Comments are made via verbal and non-verbal communicative resources made available to users on the designated platform (be it *Facebook, Whatsapp,* etc). Communication between humans and technology (the New Media) in

this wise is hinged on or better enhanced by technological determinism. Thurlow *et al* (2004) describes technological determinism as "the assumption that technologies are the primary cause of major social and historical changes at the macro-social level of societal structures and processes" and further as "subtle but profound social and psychological influences at the micro-social level of the regular use of particular kinds of tools" (p. 40). Here again, Halliday's (2014) construal of language as a social construct comes to the fore. Social commenters therefore are expected to react to discourses with that specialty that acknowledges the socio-cultural background and linguistic common middle-ground of the targets.

My research, "Discourse Mapping of Online News on Fuel Subsidy Removal in Nigeria" (Abioye, 2014), explicates the place of language in social crises, and how language can be used to negotiate meanings, alleviate or even complicate societal issues. The reality of the relevance of language in social discourse is portrayed in dichotomous categories and social formations in Nigeria. For data, corpus gathered from online news reports in such computer mediated sources as *BBC, CNN, Pointblanknews, Osundefender, Economic Confidential, Nigeria Village Square, VOA, "Occupy Nigeria" website* and *Reuters* were purposively selected since they had wider coverage. Employing an aspect of CDA and SFL, different patterns of language use that show bitterness as well as caustic, passionate, vituperative and unequivocal expressions were identified. Two social actors, principally the government and the protesters are identified in the news concerning Nigeria: the government against the governed, the oppressor against the oppressed, the rich against the poor, the strong against the weak, truth against falsehood, and dream against reality, with the use of metaphors, adjectives, RQs, cynicism/ridicule, satire and negative expressions. For instance:

The day after **Abuja sprang an ambush** *on a people who had been led to believe that their representatives were negotiating with honourable and well-intentioned officials.* **I can almost see the in-house choir serenading President Goodluck Jonathan as the Lion-hearted Man who did what his predecessors, among them battle-tested generals whom nobody ever accused of timidity, could not bring themselves to do.**

And I can almost see **Himself the Lion-hearted Man** *and his fawning inner circle downing yet another cocktail and another far into the night, as is said to be the custom of the house… As for courage, the jury is not yet out. But I am not persuaded that* **imposing on other people pain and hardships from which you and your household and your courtiers and your cronies are splendidly insulated qualifies as an act of courage… The** *harder they try to explain away the withdrawal of the "subsidy" and the more they rhapsodise about all the wonders that will flow from it, the more dubious the whole thing becomes.*

Abuja adds wanton insult to bitter injury when it reminds the public that Ghana recently abolished gasoline subsidy without stirring any social upheavals. As a result of the price adjustment, the gasoline price rose by just15 per cent in Ghana. In Nigeria, it rose by an unconscionable 115 per cent… **When did Nigeria become "other countries?" Nigerians live and work and create and reproduce in Nigeria, not in "other countries."** *It is on the Nigerian reality that public policy must therefore be grounded.*

At any rate, why are public officials ever so quick to point to

> what happens in "other countries" when it comes to taking concrete measures to improve living conditions of Nigerians, but never say a word about the practice in "other countries" when appropriating unto themselves obscene compensations, one notorious example being the "hardship allowance" paid to legislators? **My emphasis.** (Dare, 2012 cited in Abioye, 2014, pp. 318-319).

Another related study, "A Pragma-semiotic Analysis of Occupy Nigeria Group Online Posts on the 2012 Fuel Subsidy Removal in Nigeria" (Igwebuike, Abioye & Chimuanya, 2016), projects social commentary discourses in the New Media. This jointly authored research effort investigates how Nigerians were represented during a protest that was engendered by an upsurge in the pump price of fuel as a result of the Federal Government's removal of subsidy in 2012. The study finds its strength in the fact that previous studies on such online activism were more pronounced on identity construction and self-determination at the expense of the verbal and visual strategies that are found apparent during such protests. Thus, in a swoop, the study examines the verbal and visual modes of participants' representation in the heat of the protests launched under the aegis of "Occupy Nigeria Group".

With the view to properly demystify these strategies, the various posts that were purposively sampled for the research were subjected to the theoretical orientations of Mey's pragmatic acts (2001) and Kress and Leeuwen's Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis (2006) in order determine the peculiar 'practs' in their verbal and pictorial encoding.

The study shows that the verbal-visual modes of advancing the protest hold a relationship that is semantically dovetailing and therefore complementary. This relationship is entrenched in the projection of the

demands and resistance of the group leading the vanguard. The research classified the protests posts into six (6) categorical semantic fields of divine intervention which are couched in mockery of the helplessness of the citizen even if they ever consult God, security consciousness in which fuel is presented as a rare commodity that needs to be jealously guarded, innovations which offer impossible alternatives to fuel, exaggeration where the predicted means of transportation had to be wheelbarrow, defamation in which the picture of political leaders are 'photoshopped' to deride their administration, and finally abusive placards.

These were projected through the pragmatic strategies of prayer, negative labelling, humour, mockery, abuse, passionate and fierce appeal, in addition to photo trick. These strategies further align with the pragmatic acts of demonstrating, asserting, supposing, condoling, and stipulating. Leaning on the contextual affordances of socio-cultural, historical, religious and economy, the study cautiously concretised the hardship occasioned by the inflated fuel price on the people via the posts. The paper was, therefore, able to mirror the social reality of the times through pragma-semiotic tools employed in online activism. These two sections: 7.5 and 7.6 are results of my research efforts on socio-political commentary in the Old and New Media respectively.

Language and the Reality of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Another interesting aspect of my research is on language and literacy, with specific focus on women development and empowerment as enunciated in first, the Millenium Development Goals (MDGs) and presently the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Having discussed language extensively, we go on to briefly look at literacy.

Literacy in Nigeria

Literacy has been described as an individual's ability to read, write, speak (in English), compute and solve problems at levels of proficiency necessary to function on the job, in the family of the individual and in the society. Literacy is a recurring concept in global conventions, documents and declarations such as the World Conference on Education for All (WCEFA), the United Nations Children's Education Fund (UNICEF), the World Bank (WB), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) and the African Development Bank (ADB).

Literacy has generally been associated with power and social class since ancient times: the ability to read a text proved one's educational level, and consequently allowed one special treatment as an elite. Literacy has long been attached to elitism and an enhanced social status. In the US, President Clinton's initiative, the National Institute for Literacy, was created to "assist in upgrading the workforce, reducing welfare dependency, raising the standard of literacy, and creating safer communities" (Wysocki & Johnson-Eilola 1999, p. 350).

Education is a fundamental human right as entrenched in the United Nations Charter. It enhances people's ability and skill development, improves workers' efficiency, adaptability, and productivity (NBS, 2010). The current Honourable Minister of Education, Mallam Adamu Adamu, remarked during the 2017 World Literacy Day, that "Education is the bedrock of any country's development and that any country that does not educate its population is bound to fail." He regretted that Nigeria has a very large population of illiterates (FG, 2017).

Literacy level is described as the percentage of people of ages 15 and above who can read and write with understanding a short simple statement about everyday life. Low level of literacy, and education in general, can impede the economic development of a nation, particularly in a knowledge-based economy that we are currently in. Nigeria's literacy rate is given as 59.6% made up of 69.2% male and 49.7% female, and ranked 139 over 155 globally (*Index Mundi, 2017 & CIA World Factbook, 2017*).

Figure 2 shows the gaps in education between northern and southern Nigeria. Socio-cultural factors are also potent ones as they bring further to the fore the educational gap between the North and the South. This is strongly linked to the dichotomy of the Nigerian Press which is usually categorised into two major groups: The Lagos-Ibadan axis (Southwest) and the Northern Press. This dichotomy is connected to the different sociological and ideological leanings of the two zones. It is obvious that literacy level reduces from the South towards the North, which may partly account for the frequent breakdown of law and order in the North.

Figure 2. Adult Literacy and Numeracy Rates and Secondary School Net Attendance Rates for 15 – 24 Years Olds (Source: NPC, 2011)

This fear is confirmed in the statement below, credited to Balarabe Musa, one-time Governor of Kaduna State in a Punch newspaper report of April 18th, 2017 titled "North lagging behind in Education by 40 years". He lamented that:

> The North is truly behind, but it is not only the North that is in trouble. **The whole country is in trouble.** The North is not another country. The problem in the North, as far as education is concerned, is a gap, which it inherited from the British colonialists. And I have estimated that this gap in educational development between Northern Nigeria and the South is a 40-year gap… This means that the North is behind the South in educational development for at least 40 years. This shows that even if the North wakes up today and takes a revolutionary step to bridge the gap, it will take the North 40 years…You know the position of educational development in national growth. This is the reason why the North is a troubled child and has never allowed Nigeria to have peace, unity and progress. It is not possible for the northern people with this unequal human capacity to participate actively in their affairs. They will always be the source of trouble…**I believe this problem can be tackled by the government bringing a free, compulsory primary and secondary education throughout Nigeria. The government can afford it.** I think this talk of 'North', 'North' should stop. The whole country should come together and find solutions to these problems. (My emphasis).

A strong link is thus established between literacy on one hand and economic, political, and other relevant factors in the process of national development on the other hand. Nigeria has been battling with the weight of illiteracy, which does not seem to have improved, for

decades. Indeed, Babatunde Fafunwa, a professor and former Minister of Education in Nigeria observes: "A nation that plans to be great, yet remains 50% illiterate, plans what never was and never shall be" (TELL, Nov 3, 2008:13). Yet, decisive steps in literacy efforts provide an index for national as well as international advancement in capacity building, socio- economic, political, technological and even global advancement.

Without literacy, our goals for social transformation and sustainable human development cannot be actualised because literate people are the real wealth of a nation. Abioye (2010a) observes:

> The major factor militating against the achievement of an effective literacy level in Nigeria is the persistent pattern observed in government's attitude. Government has consistently exhibited lack of political commitment by paying lip- service to its policies rather than actively encouraging and backing the implementation of these (Oyedeji, 1997; Abioye, 2004). Also, misplaced priorities have seriously affected education in Nigeria as government spends extravagantly on sports and politics whereas policies and projects are poorly implemented/completed, sometimes diverted, inadequately monitored or even abandoned and subsequently forgotten. Indeed, in most cases, educational policies are sometimes personalized and used in scoring cheap political goals or in settling scores (p. 99).

Women Literacy

Noting the alarming rate of illiteracy, particularly among women, the National Mass Literacy Programme, partly sponsored by the UNDP, was launched in 1982 with the aim of eliminating illiteracy by 1996 by providing facilities for Basic Literacy, Functional Literacy and

Remedial/Continuing Education Courses (Abioye, 1998). However, because it did not yield positive results, the goal shifted to 2000. In spite of this, not much was achieved. Earlier, the Universal Basic Education Act (2004) and the Child Rights Act (2003) stipulated that *the Nigerian government shall provide compulsory, free and universal basic education for every child of primary and junior secondary school age* (**my emphasis**).

The negative effects of gender inequality have encouraged global institutions such as CEDAW, UNICEF and UNDP, since the Beijing Conference in 1996, to actively and increasingly seek parity between the genders. These global institutions have had limited success, in spite of the commitment in 2000 of the UN member states to the 8 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs); local and global development goals. Even the MDGs initially targeted for actualisation by 2015 could not be achieved and cannot be achieved without literacy, which is presented as its 2nd goal: "Achieve universal primary education". The 3rd goal is equally relevant here: "Promote gender equality and empower women".

Although not much success has been achieved, UN member nations are unrelenting in pursuing goals that would ensure that development reaches all nations, thereby significantly eradicating poverty and ensuring peace in the world. The signatory nations, in consequence, have fashioned a sustainable development agenda, actualisable by 2030, that would accelerate economic development, so that no nation is left behind. Of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Quality Education (goal number 4) and ensuring Gender Equality (goal number 5) have been explicitly indicated in my studies (Abioye et al, 2017) on "Education, Gender, and Child-Rights: Salient Issues in SDGs Years in Ado-Odo/Ota Local Government Area of Ogun State, Nigeria".

Statistical information for most African countries reflects high levels of poverty and low levels of human development. While budgetary allocations for education are low, poor governance and low absorptive capacity of agencies assigned the task of providing education lead to even poorer outcomes. As a result, enrolment levels, especially of girls, are low. As mentioned above, this problem is further accentuated by widespread poverty, cultural and supply constraints (UNGEI, 2008: xiii) affirms:

> Female education is also the key to overcoming oppressive customs and traditions that have neglected the needs of girls and women. Besides, women's education greatly improves their ability to manage basic childcare, increase the nutritional content of the household's diet, ensure more effective diagnosis of diseases, and improve elementary healthcare. Educated mothers are also more likely to send both girls and boys to school and to keep them in school longer. The level of mothers' education is a vital factor in determining infant and child mortality. Empirical evidence suggests that after controlling for other socio-economic differences, the children of educated mothers have higher survival rates through infancy and childhood. Educated women are likely to be more aware about nutrition, hygiene and healthcare. Education increases women's knowledge about controlling fertility and access to family planning services, and often encourages them to delay the age at which they marry. Educated women enjoy an improved status in family, community and society (UNGEI 2008, p. 5).

Realities on Style and Literacy in Effective Message Encoding
The pattern of organisation of teaching and learning has a huge influence on its productivity. That organisation is simply a function of

the teacher's or instructor's stylistic/ methodological leanings. In our nation's educational system, it is an indisputable reality that there is a drift in students' reading culture. One can readily imagine what is to be expected of a system where the reading culture is rapidly wearing away. The question is, how would individuals decipher a write-up that is heavily laced with stylistic elements that further obscure the intended meaning?

As a response to this gap in one of my interventional papers (See Abioye, 2010), I considered integrating reading and writing skills in Nigerian schools using newspaper texts. This study was basically geared towards addressing the dying reading culture of the nation. It has been observed that the circulation of textbooks among students in the English language class has always engendered recurring problems due to the cost of acquisition and the skewed process of distribution. In the place of textbooks, newspapers were suggested, for their cost-effectiveness and presentation of current issues. Since this could be photocopied and easily circulated without the fear of piracy, the newspaper was recommended as a surer remedy to the cry of textbooks' insufficiency for teaching and learning purposes. Students are equally expected to be exposed to different styles and techniques of good writing, as evident in newspapers.

It can be argued that textbooks are voluminous, boring, psychologically classified as 'study books', and therefore, already stereotyped as difficult and frightening; they actually put off some students, whereas the newspaper has several advantages. It is not restricted to only one subject. This means that it is to a large extent flexible and adaptable to all curriculum areas and grade levels and thus can be used by teachers in all subject areas ranging from English to Social Studies to Mathematics, to the sciences. It is also believed to be

authentic. Unfortunately, though, most of the dailies are beginning to lose grammatical exactness and succinct language expression that young English learners can adopt as a reliable model. Embarrassing errors of concord, tense and misspellings are now common. This is a call to media workers to mind their language use because a leader's error is a leading error!

The currency of ideas, information, innovation, among others is high in newspapers. This means that students can obtain up-to-date information from a fresh perspective on Law, Education, Health, Technology, Politics, and so on, thereby creating forums for reading, discussions and debates. Newspapers are equally "user friendly" (Cheyney, 1992) as students/readers can always find interesting topics on sports, music, politics, cartoons, weather, editorials, personal columns, inspirational columns, health, international developments, environment, education etc. The design is such that makes information readily accessible to the reader through the headlines, letters to the editor, kids section, opinion columns, etc. Then, it challenges and excites students, acting as a bridge between life in the classroom and the real world outside by creating sensitivity and awareness of the capabilities and limitations of the individual and the world at large. It thus helps to bridge the gap between the classroom and the 'real' world outside (Abioye, 2010).

CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE

I obtained the B.Ed (Language Arts) degree in 1987; and my M.A and Ph.D degrees from the Department of English, Ahmadu Bello University (ABU), Zaria. My sojourn in academia at the same university started in 1988 as a graduate assistant from where I moved to Covenant University in 2005 as a Senior Lecturer. Ten years out of my 17 years' service in the Department of Mass Communication, at the

ABU was spent teaching writing courses, supervising undergraduate projects and Industrial Training in different media houses across the entire country. At the postgraduate level, I have examined several theses and supervised and co-supervised 6 theses in the departments of Mass Communication and English (now Languages) of Covenant University.

In the area of pedagogy, I investigated the perennial problem of language testing in large classes in the Nigerian educational system (Abioye, 2010b); and suggested an integration of reading and writing skills using newspaper texts (Abioye, 2010c), as well as the call for stylistics to be included in the senior secondary school curriculum in the interest of readers and writers (Abioye, 1992b).

I was privileged to represent Ogun State for two years (from 2006-2008) as a facilitator. As Ogun State Representative, in the Continuing Professional Development Course (CPD), a joint British Council/NTI Programme for English Language Teachers (ELT) in Nigeria & Africa as well as NTI/MDGs Resource Person for three years, it is not an exaggeration to say that our educational system needs urgent and drastic restructuring. I am happy to announce that three of the 10 English teachers involved in the CPD programme I facilitated now have their PhDs.

In university administration, I have been privileged to serve as the Head of Department of English (now Languages) for four academic sessions (2008-2012), and as Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Covenant University, from 2012-2016, representing the Vice-Chancellor at different occasions and even chairing Senate meetings.

Concluding Remarks and Recommendations
The Chancellor Sir, distinguished ladies and gentlemen, this inaugural

lecture has touched on discourse and style in the expression and representation of realities. It has also pointed out that there are endless possibilities in the strategies, methods and approaches to the analyses of stylistics, which will further enrich this discipline and expand the frontiers of knowledge. In particular, it shows a systematic departure from the traditional which makes stylistic analyses as interesting as it is topical in terms of social realities. It is therefore instructive. The interdisciplinary domains traversed by this researcher show clearly the enormous tasks ahead for stylisticians as well as the benefits of interdisciplinary studies. This has revealed not just our social realities, but a critical interrogation of the forces and ideological configurations behind the socio-economic and political travails of the vast majority of Nigerians.

This lecture has also highlighted the complexity, diversity and dynamics of language use in the Old and New Media, and in different contexts with specific reference to realities in discourse, style and literacy. It focused on how language and media reify human experiences - the social impact of language, "the humour", and what linguists do while analysing texts as socio-political artefacts. With this, the attention of language students, teachers, curriculum planners, writers and readers has been drawn to the different under-utilised stylistic phenomena, which have linguistic, semantic, stylistic/rhetorical, discursive and communicative functions.

Let me emphasise this: undergraduate students of English need not be disturbed about chances of getting or creating jobs after graduation. All that is required is a discerning mind, identifying a gap and moving in to close that gap in such areas as publishing, IT, PR, Banking, Tourism, Media and it is thus not surprising that world class universities such as Yale University are running combined honours degrees in Linguistics and Computer Science.

FURTHER RESEARCH

Thus far, Discourse, Stylistics and the New Media have been given an appreciable level of scholarly attention from interdisciplinary perspectives, but obviously, there are still fresh grounds requiring innovative explorations in the respective fields. It is, therefore, instructive to suggest for subsequent studies, some areas believed to have lacked sufficient research devotion. Some of these supposed gaps are identified with viable suggestions offered:

On discourse analysis (DA), it is apposite to recall that several trans-disciplinary studies have been carried out in the field, and these have linked it to gender, literacy, medicine, and politics, with most of them being reduced to an eclectic theoretical orientation. With that, there is no doubt that discourse analysis has been well-explored. But then, with respect to my research concerns as reviewed in this lecture, there is the need for future studies to address economic discourse in reports. In a nation that claims to have come out of recession and is still having piles of debt of salaries yet to be defrayed, studies should consider face construction in government's justification of the situation and the agitations of workers. In addition, gender discourse should also tilt towards institutional perspectives. For instance, in academia especially in Nigeria, institutional gender discourse is not pronounced. Institutional gender discourse focuses on sex polarity in politics, law and education. Enough has been done on culture, but more is to be done on popular culture such as the emerging hip-hop and stand-up comedy.

In a similar proportion, stylistics should also be more critical. Subsequent works should, therefore, engage critical multimodal stylistics where words and representations in pictures depict current trends. Style in the present media needs that.

In the New Media, fresh focus should be drawn to gender representation and the politics of governance. As a follow up, if satire was a viable tool in the hands of commenters of socio-political issues in the old (print) media, then research should, for instance, now take on non-verbal satirical forms in the New Media, since memes, emojis and emoticons are more preferred communicative means in the new media.

The Need for a Language Development Centre

The university would benefit from a Language Development Centre where different aspects of language studies are pursued. For instance, a unit of the Language Centre could focus on teaching and administering international qualifying examinations such as Teaching of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), working together with the Department of Psychology. To the best of my knowledge, there is no such centre in Ogun State. Another unit could offer professional editorial services to individuals and organisations for reasonable fees. A third unit could offer English for Specific Purposes (ESP) certificate particularly to candidates from French-speaking countries.

Government should live up to its responsibilities. The culpable devastation and reckless plunder of the nation's resources presents the image of an irresponsible and ineffective government incapable of providing *"compulsory, free and universal basic education for every child of primary and junior secondary school age"*. I observed earlier that "Nigerians on their own have become their own government: they generate their own electricity and they provide themselves with water, education and healthcare" (Abioye, 2014, p. 326), not to mention security, good roads, and so on.

In my extensive interaction with women both within and outside the university, I have observed that in most families, men are no longer the

bread-winners, rather these families are largely dependent on the income of the women. Our research cluster which I chair, Women Development and Human Security Initiatives (WD&HSI), is largely interested in educating and empowering women, and has trained women in our immediate environment in different empowerment seminars depending on their area of need. In this regard, we have enjoyed the support of The Vice-President (Education) Living Faith Church Worldwide (LFCWW), Pst. (Mrs) Faith Oyedepo, the Covenant University Community Development Impact Initiative (CUCDIIC), and the Centre for Entrepreneurial Development Studies (CEDS). One of our on-going research efforts is aimed at discouraging women from going to questionable cooperative societies for loans where guarantors and collaterals are not required and where recovery of the loan, tends towards the erosion of human dignity, and subjects them to some level of dehumanisation. Rather, we hope to encourage these women to set up cooperative societies among themselves. The women will be empowered in different skills such as soap/detergent-making, perfumery, catering services, etc., while sensitising them on the importance of literacy in whatever language: the mother tongue, "father tongue"; family planning; primary health care; food security, and also pointing out the dangers of societal vices such as human and drug trafficking, robbery, child-abuse, etc.

A Women (and Family) Development Centre/Institute would, therefore, be required for ease of administration. Data generated from our interactions with these women will be processed and published in reputable journals while we continue to contribute to the fulfilment of the university's corporate social responsibility to its immediate environment.

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This is My New Dawn Era!

*The two articles were first published in 1995 and 1998 respectively. They are now part of a collection of Ehusani's articles published as a book: Nigeria: Years Eaten by the Locust. 2002.

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Appendix: Effectiveness Rating Instrument (ERI)

Dear Respondent, I am carrying out a doctoral study to determine whether rhetorical questions contribute to the effectiveness of newspaper messages. Kindly answer these questions as accurately as you can. Please, do not write your name on this instrument.

Thank you for your assistance.

Researcher.

Part 1: Demographic data

Please tick ( ) as appropriate

1. Sex: male [ ] female [ ]
2. Age: (a) 16 – 20 years [ ] (b) 21-25 years old [ ] (c) 26 – 30 years old [ ] (d) 31 – 35 [ ] (e) 36 – 40 [ ] (f) 41 – 45 [ ] (g) over 45 years old [ ]
3. Current Employment a) student [ ] b) lecturer [ ] c) Civil/Public Servant [ ] d) Private company Employee [ ] e) Self-employed professional (Accountant, Lawyer, Business etc) [ ] f) Petty Trader/Artisan (Trader, Mechanic, etc) [ ] g) Unemployed [ ]
4. Highest Educational Qualification: a) Primary School Leaving Certificate [ ] b) GCE "O"/ "A" Level [ ] c) Diploma (please specify) [ ] d) First degree (HND) [ ] e) Higher degree (please specify) [ ]
5. Ethnic Group: --
    ----
6. Type of Residence: (a) 1-2 Room(s) "Face-me-Face you" [ ] (b) "Boys" Quarters" [ ] (c) Block of flats [ ] (d) Bungalow/Duplex [ ]
7. Monthly Income group: a) N10,000 or less [ ] b) N11,000-20,000 [ ] c) N21,000 – 30,000 [ ] d) N31,000 – 40,000 [ ] e) N41,000 – 50,000 [ ] f) N51,000 – and above [ ]

8. Marital Status (a) Single [   ] (b) Married [   ] (c) Divorced/
Separated [   ] (d) Widowed [   ]

Part II: Pattern of Newspaper Reading

9. Frequency of Newspaper reading: (a) Frequently [   ] (b)
Sometimes [   ] (c) Occasionally [   ] (d) Rarely [   ] (e)
Never [   ]

10. Give reasons for your level of frequency of reading: --------------
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11. If you read newspapers, which of the following are your
favourites? List the first three in order of preference i.e. 1,2,3
The Guardian (2) The Punch [   ] Daily Trust [   ] This Day
[   ] Tribune [   ] New Nigerian [   ] The Vanguard [   ]
Daily Times [   ]

12. What are the major attractions in your favourite papers? List
the first three in order of preference i.e.   Sports [   ]
Editorials [   ] Cartoons [   ] Headlines [   ] Obituaries [   ]
] Book Reviews [   ] Health [   ] Science & Technology [   ]
] Features [   ] Politics [   ] Fashion [   ] Women [   ]

13. Usual period of the day that you read newspapers: Morning [
] Afternoon [   ] Evening [   ] Night [   ] Any time [   ]

14. Which one of the following do you gain from reading
newspapers? a) Helps in forming my own opinion on particular
issues [   ] b) Able to assess two or more views [   ] c) Able
to argue with and/or persuade others on political issues [   ]
d) Entertains me with stories, cartoons and articles [   ] e)
Acquire more knowledge in health, science and technology
[   ] f) Up-to-date with books just published [   ] g) Current
information [   ] h) Social interaction [   ]

Part III: Effectiveness of the Message

15. One of the devices used by writers in passing the message to readers is the Rhetorical Question. (RQ), which usually does not expect an answer. This device is sometimes employed in place of a statement. The idea is to vary the style of presentation, give the message more weight, etc. e.g. "Who cares?" which means "nobody cares". Please, read these extracts below (Texts Ia, Ib, IIa, IIb,IIIa, IIIb) and answer the questions that follow:

Text Ia: Ghost Workers
The Minister of State for France, Alh. Jibril Martins-Kuye says the Federal Civil Service is infected and haunted by ghost workers …. rather than abate, this social malaise is like wild sea weeds, spreading and making dangerous foray into the federal public services at a scale formidable enough to disrupt payment of salaries for two whole months. And more remarkably at a time when government has given teeth to its determination to fight head-on the scourge of corruption by establishing the anti-corruption law. **How daring can criminals be?** State governments are on record to have lost millions of Naira to this group of irritants particularly between 1983 and 1984. Ghost workers gave states, notably Kaduna, Kwara, Bauchi and Borno a good run for their money.
(The New Nigerian Editorial. Wednesday Sept 27, 2000. Pg 3)
a. By the use of the Rhetorical Question (RQ) in text 1,
I consider the total effect of the text:
a) Very effective [   ] b) Effective [   ] c) Ineffective [   ]
d) Very ineffective [   ] b. Give reasons for your choice: -------
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It is possible for the message contained in the RQ to be presented in other ways. This means that the RQ is a stylistic option. Look at the other option carefully as it is now presented in Text 1b (the same text) not as a rhetorical question but as a statement. Please, treat Texts IIa and b, and Texts IIIa and b the same way.

16. Text 1b: Ghost workers

The Minister of State for Finance, Alh. Jubril Martins – Kuye says the Federal Civil Service is infested and haunted by ghost workers.... Rather than abate, this social malaise is, like wild sea weeds, spreading, and making dangerous foray into the federal public service at a scale formidable enough to disrupt payment of salaries for two whole months. And, more remarkably, at a time when government has given teeth to its determination to fight head-on, the scourge of corruption by establishing the anti-corruption law. **Criminals can be daring!** State governments are on record to have lost millions of naira to this group of irritants particularly between 1983 and 1984. Ghost workers gave states notably Kaduna, Kwara, Bauchi and Borno a good run for their money.

Now that the RQ has been substituted with a statement, the total effect of the text, compared to Ia is: a) Very effective b) Effective c) Ineffective d) Very ineffective

17. Text II a: Expose "ghost workers" fraudsters ...

Ghosts do not sign pay vouchers; nor can they go to the bank to cash pay cheques. Evidently, therefore, it is men and women, probably top civil servants, who have been defrauding the federal government of up to N15 billion monthly, posing as "ghost" staff. **Who are these fraudsters?** We challenge the

FG to fish them out and reveal their identities (The Punch Editorial, Tuesday, Nov 14, 2000 pg 8). a) By the use of the RQ in Text IIa, I consider the total effect of the text: a) Very effective [ ] b) Effective   [ ] c) Ineffective   [ ] d) Very ineffective [ ]

b) Give reasons for your choice--

Kindly suggest any other option you can think of here ----------
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18. Text IIb: Expose "ghost workers" fraudsters...
Ghosts do not sign pay vouchers; nor can they go to the bank to cash pay cheques. Evidently, therefore, it is living men and women, probably top civil servants, who have been defrauding the federal government of up to N15 billion monthly, posing as "ghost" staff. **Nobody cares to know these fraudsters.** We challenge the FG to fish them out and reveal their identities. a. Now that the RQ has been substituted with a statement, the total effect of the text, compared to Ia is:

a. Very effective b. Effective c. Ineffective d. Very ineffective
e. Give reasons for your choice--

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c. Kindly suggest any other option you can think of here.

19. Text III a: A hike too many
Let us face this bitter fact: there is no government in Nigeria. No government. True, we have a band of men and women in extravagant robes and with obscene bank accounts, and a loud

swagger, gallivanting up and down the streets, making sure they are not only seen but heard... We hear them when the President, no doubt the supreme in the political pecking order, washes his hands free of the country's educational mess, conscripting "God instead into his holy war against ASUU and others unpatriotic enough to press for a decent and functioning university system. **On whose side is the Obasanjo government? Whose agenda is it so much at pains to execute? Does this government hear the battle cry in the market place? Does it, can it listen to the groans and whimpers of the people?** You may hike the "pump price" of petrol to N1,000 a litre; Nigeria will remain poor and backward as long as those in position of power keep on stealing, squandering, and mismanaging public funds. What Nigeria needs more than anything else are appropriate wages for workers and appropriate spending by public officials.

d. By the use of the Rhetorical Question (RQ) in Text IIIa, I consider the total effect of the text:

(a) Very effective [   ] (b) Effective [   ] (c) Ineffective [   ] (d) Very ineffective [   ]

e. Give reasons for your choice: --------------------------------
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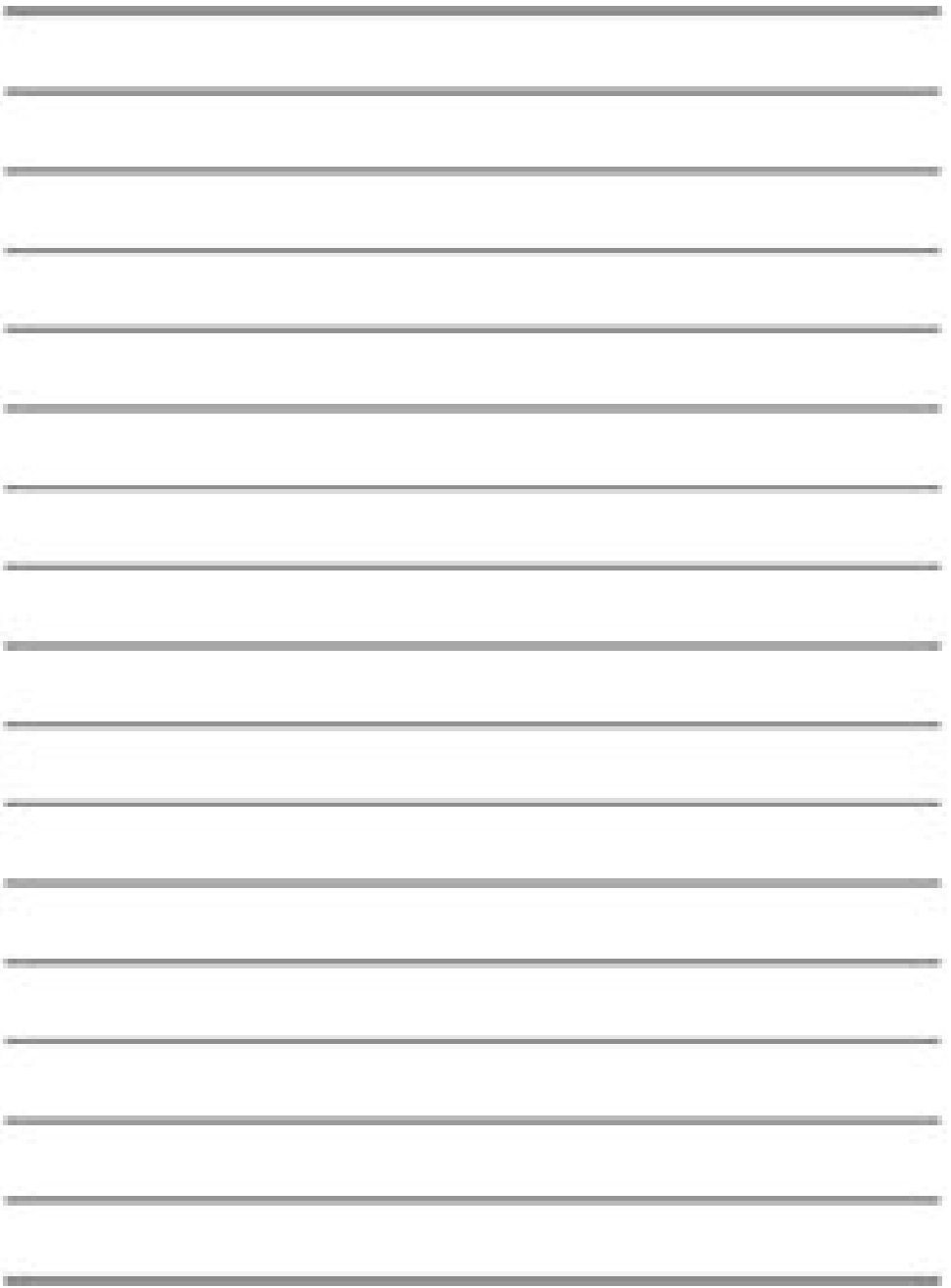--
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20. Text III b: A hike too many

Let us face this bitter fact: there is no government in Nigeria. No government. True, we have a band of men and women in extravagant robes and with obscene bank accounts, and a loud swagger, gallivanting up and down the streets, making sure they are not only seen but heard... We hear them when the

President, no doubt the supreme in the political pecking order, washes his hands free of the country's educational mess, conscripting God instead into his holy war against ASUU and others unpatriotic enough to press for a decent and functioning university system. **The Obasanjo government is clearly not on our side, because it does not appear to be executing the peoples' agenda. This government does not seem to hear the battle cry in the market place. It has turned a deaf ear to the groans and whimpers of the people.** You may hike the "pump price" of petrol to N1,000 a litre; Nigeria will remain poor and backward as long as those in position of power keep on stealing, squandering, and mismanaging public funds. What Nigeria needs more than anything else are appropriate wages for workers and appropriate spending by public officials.

a. Now that the RQs have been substituted with statements, the total effect of the text compared to IIIa is:
a) Very effective [ ] b) Effective [ ] c) Ineffective   [ ]
d) Very ineffective [ ]