

# LANGUAGE IN INDIA

Strength for Today and Bright Hope for Tomorrow

Volume 12 : 2 February 2012

ISSN 1930-2940

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## Informal Language in Opinion Editorials: A Stylistic Analysis of Political Literature on 234next.com

**Eniola Olamide Adedoyin, B.A.**

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### ABSTRACT

In this paper, we extract an article from an Opinion Editorial; 234next.com written by Victor Ehikhamenor, a columnist. The article, titled "Igodomigodo must not Comatose" is a literature on politics and the state of the nation - Nigeria. Using Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics as theoretical background, aspects of naming, lexical ingenuity and semantic implications are divulged from the text. This is done in the bid to establish writers' idiosyncrasies, who have become prone to using words creatively. The question remains however; whether this aids or inhibits communication. Findings reveal that the text is extremely worded but words are connected creatively and symbolically. We conclude by stating categorically that style is infectious, naming is universal and meaning can be largely subjective though universally appreciable.

### Keywords:

Language, Stylistics, Naming, Semantics, Political literature

### INTRODUCTION

The issue of style and stylistics is a controversial one because it has been approached from several angles. Some of the conceptualizations include style as ornamentation, elemented expression, deviation from the norm, dispositions of existences or thought, entities beyond the sentence level etc. Beyond these varied interpretations, it is obvious that style exists

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fundamentally at the individual level; idiosyncrasies, mannerisms and preferences of the individual as he expresses himself verbally and in orthography. <sup>1</sup>Jonathan Swift is quoted by Richard Nordquist as saying “Style is proper words in proper places”. Two planes of linguistic engagement often face writers; the plane of selection (paradigmatic) and the plane of combination (syntagmatic). But, if this selection is creatively made, style evolves. It is against this background that the following analysis is built. We extract a two-paged text from an opinion blog and analyze stylistically; studying planes of selection (meaning) and combination (syntactic construction).

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

The theoretical framework adopted for this study is the Systemic Functional Grammar by M.A.K. Halliday (1961) who explains the basic assumption of the Systemic Functional Grammar (henceforth; SFG), often referred to as scale and category grammar. SFG states that two basic concepts are involved in the linguistic analysis of language. These concepts are scale and category. Category establishes that there are four categories of grammar – Unit, Structure, Class and System while scale establishes that there are levels of relationships among these categories of grammar. However, each of these levels and categories generates some other sub units so as to achieve a finer and detailed linguistic analysis.

<sup>2</sup>Jolayemi (2000) expatiates further on this by quoting Halliday (1961, P. 248-255, 1964, P. 302-307) and Tomori (1977, P. 46-56) as saying that Systemic linguistics is a semiological theory because it concedes that any analysis of language must involve not only its grammatical units but also the meaning and the context or situation of usage. Therefore, Systemic linguistics recognizes language analysis at the levels of syntax, semantics and pragmatics. It also recognizes various layers and relationships in the communication of a message which are Substance, Form and Situation.

The basic structure of Halliday’s systemic Functional Grammar informs that the phonic and graphic attributes of language constitutes substance (realized by phonology and graphology). Form refers to the structure of a text and it is subdivided into grammar and lexis. Context refers to situations in relation to form. SFG also recognizes four grammatical categories namely: Unit, Structure, Class and System.

Unit gives the hierarchical nature of sentence structures; the highest in the rank is the sentence, followed by the clause, group, word and the least being the morpheme. Each unit above the morpheme is made up of one or more of the unit that is next below in rank. For instance, a word contains one or more of the unit that is next below it in rank. Thus a word contains one or more morphemes, a group contains one or more words, and a clause consists of one or more groups while a sentence is composed of one or more clauses.

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Structure exemplifies the arrangement of elements in the English clause pattern namely: Subject, Predictor, Complement and Adjunct (SPCA). The subject performs the action expressed by the verb or predictor. The predictor is obligatory in a normal clause pattern and it determines the verbal structure. The complement is a word or group of words, excluding the verb that completes the predicate of a sentence or clause. Of all the elements of a clause pattern, the adjunct is the most dispensable as it is mobile and can be placed anywhere within the sentence. Its deletion does not affect the fundamental meaning of a clause.

Class accounts for the groupings of members of a unit, with regard to their operation in the structure of the unit, immediately above, in the rank scale. These groupings are into the verbal group, nominal group and the adverbial group. The verbal group incorporates the predicator. The nominal group incorporates the subject and complement and it consists of the modifier (M), head (H) and qualifier (Q). The adverbial group incorporates the adjunct.

System accounts for a finite set of alternates from which a choice must be made. In English, there is a system of clause providing a choice between main clause and subordinate clause; singularity and plurality; first, second and third person; active and passive voice; past, present, future tense etc.

From the structure above, we can state categorically that SFG operates both at the formal and situational levels. The formal level accounts for the analysis of units of a text at the *phonological, graphological, grammatical and lexical levels* while at the situational level, occurrences of language events are explicated. Thus, the systemic model is both systemic and functional because aspects of sociolinguistics, semantics and stylistics amongst others, are incorporated.

## DATA ANALYSIS

The text is something of a political satire. The writer, Victor Ehikamenor, a regular columnist in the site *234next.com*, clones the great Igodomigodo (henceforth IG) and tries to replicate his style of writing in his own article. Victor imitates IG's style and at the same time, satirizes it. The irony of the matter is that readers can hardly understand the writer's diction. History of the persona "Patrick" (alias Igodomigodo) is that he was formerly a member of the Nigerian House of Representative but decamped from the most influential party P.D.P. (People's Democratic Party), to A.C.N. (Action Congress of Nigeria); unfortunately losing in the PDP primaries for a senatorial seat in Edo state. His progenitors; who had also previously decamped from P.D.P. to A.C.N. include the Nigerian ex-ruler; Atiku Abubakar. The language of the text is rather complex and the lines oscillate between semi- formality and total informality. The words used are rather bookish, intense and verbose such that it might be difficult for a layman to understand. However, this is done intentionally in order to reiterate the point that there is gain and loss for every idiosyncratic or individual style. Osundare (2008) hold forth that:

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*All art seeks to effect. The efficiency and effectiveness with which art does this depends upon a number of factors, such as the degree of originality or stylistic virtuosity of the artist, the socio-cultural ambience of his operation and its historical imperatives, his view of the role of art in society and the nature of his own social vision.*

Style is also infectious as seen in the comments following the essay. The author or writer writes in the past tense, indicating that the event described or illustrated had already taken place. There are eight paragraphs in all, each paragraph carrying a primary unit of information. There are also some words from the native language (Edo) such as *dotoa* and *Igbanaka*. This reflects that the writer still recognizes the importance and relevance of the language because it fits perfectly, the setting and cultural background of the politicians described. The perspective is third person and sentences are written in the passive and mostly, compound – complex sentences.

Coinages exist as in the words *Atikulated*, *Nwodonised* which seems to be a purposeful declension, assuming the meaning of the real words; *articulated* and *disappointed*. We say “disappointed” because the paragraph states that most hopefuls were Nwodonised meaning that the experiences of Nwodo became their own experiences as well and this connotes great disappointment and failure. We reflect that the writer still recognises, respects and appreciates the ability of the native tongue/language to bear the burden of the expressions he had in mind. The English language might not have sufficed to interpret his exact thought which is intended to describe Edo state’s political milieu. It is noticed that English has become highly impressionable in the present 21st century, adopting freely, ideas and philosophies and even naming such after the idealist. We hear of “The Soyinkian ideology or Soyinkian drama” and consequently, an Nwodonised situation as used in the studied text. The question would be; what is the relevance of these coined words to the concept of meaning and then, scholarship? Further analysis is aimed at answering these questions.

Figures of speech used in the text are itemized and explained:

Metaphor as seen in the following examples: *Webster ways* [Paragraph 1]; personification,

Simile: “*tumbling of his political tibia broken... like disingenuous China...*” [paragraph 3];

The author adopts several instances of imageries and simile:

Imageries: “*metric ascension to a paramountical Everest altitude*” [paragraph 4]

“*like disingenuous China dashed on igneous rock*” [paragraph 3]

Pun (razzle – dazzle, 4<sup>th</sup> paragraph).

Hyperbolic expressions

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[Par. 2 line 4]: “... *IG does not match the textile elongation that spanned kilometers behind Chief Okotie-Eboh*”

[Par. 5 line 6]: “... *characteristics more radiant than the iridescence of a razzle dazzle palace peacock plumage*”

[Par. 8 line 4]: “... *a gaudy god of lexis and structure that wakes one’s laughing bones from a thousand years of solitude*”

[Par. 5 line 2]: “... *Hon. Obahiagbon is a seasoned Centaur who has phonexical prowess.*”

Acronyms

P.D.P. (par. 5 line 10), F.C.T. (par. 6 line 7)

Rhythmic lines

(Igodomigodo’s Lingo, Par. 3 line 6)

Tautology

“... my very individual self, par. 7 line 3)

Alliteration

“... fibular is too feeble in federal financial finagling” [par. 3 lines 3 and 4]

“... dabbled into double-dipping....” [par. 4 line 3]

‘... palace peacock plumage...’ [par. 5 line 6]

The work is an essay which when read, also seems like verses in poetry. This is so because the writer, like a poet, exercises his poetic license (research) and muse or ingenuity when he releases to the public, his perception of issues. Ordinarily, the text could have passed for a regular, every day write up concerning the state of the nation. However, style is a deviation from the norm and like it or not, the author has brought to bear, the worries of literary icons such as <sup>3</sup>George Orwell in his essay “Politics and the English language” where he divulges the use of language of politicians and its import on the sanity of the English language globally and nationally. Orwell, in the concluding paragraph of his essay submits that:

*I have not here been considering the literary use of language, but merely language as an instrument for expressing and not for concealing or preventing thought... If you simplify your English, you are freed from the worst follies of orthodoxy. You cannot speak any of the necessary dialects, and when you make a stupid remark its stupidity will be obvious, even to yourself. Political language-and with variations this is true of all political parties, from Conservatives to Anarchists--is designed to make lies sound truthful and murder respectable and to give an appearance of solidity to*

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*pure wind. One cannot change this all in a moment, but one can at least change one's own habits, and from time to time one can even, if one jeers loudly enough, send some worn-out and useless phrase--some JACKBOOT, ACHILLES' HEEL, HOTBED, MELTING POT, ACID TEST, VERITABLE INFERNO or other lump of verbal refuse--into the dustbin where it belongs.*

(Source:[http://www.george-orwell.org/Politics\\_and\\_the\\_English\\_Language/0.html](http://www.george-orwell.org/Politics_and_the_English_Language/0.html))

Orwell identifies dying metaphors, operators or verbal false limbs, pretentious diction and meaningless words after viewing the writings of academics such as Professor Harold Laski and Professor Lancelot Hobgen. In his own view, the language of political writings and speech is decaying.

However, Victor's writing seems to say that despite the ability in English to confuse listeners and users alike, the indigenous native language can still be infused without necessarily *cushioning* the words. Several of the indigenous words used are not cushioned (interrupted) and saliently, this seems like an affront, a bold step towards legitimising the ability of indigenous languages to have the same effect as the English language. If the English language has the ability to confound, so does the Edo language. To a wider non-African and even some African audience, words like "igbanaka", "abracadabra" and "dotoa" are strange, compelling the readers to carry out researches on what the words could mean.

From the sociolinguistic approach, there is close connection between society, language and individual connection. All forms of text imply an argument. The field of discourse is politics, evidenced in the imagery, diction and phono-graphological representations.

## **SUMMARY OF THE TEXT (IN SIMPLIFIED LANGUAGE)**

The first paragraph states that Edo state's political persona was forcefully removed from the Benin political terrain by political giants who are influential.

In the second paragraph, the author states that he read the news and was surprised or shocked because Hon. Patrick Obahiagbon a.k.a. igodomigodo (IG) reminds him of Niger Delta's chief, Festus Okotie – Eboh a.k.a. Omiemiejor with respect to style. He respects IG's means of communication which is highly flamboyant in the House of Assemblies which was usually hilarious.

In the third paragraph, author states that IG decamped from one party to another which was considered a weak decision.

The fourth paragraph details that he was doing well in People's Democratic Party (PDP) until he decamped into another party; Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN). The latter is regarded as

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a neophyte (beginner) i.e.; not as powerful as the PDP in the ability to support his quest for the senatorial seat which he vied for.

In the fifth paragraph, the author eulogises IG's greatness with words and satirically wards off jesters who seem to think that his political career from the purview of Abuja politics has taken a downward slope saying that he will recapitulate. At the same time, author asks that the great IG should admit that he was not particularly recognized in the ACN manned by Atiku Abubakar in the Niger Delta area. Most who desired a political appointment, failed like Nwodo did.

In the sixth paragraph, the author attempts to encourage IG, an ex-legal eminent person that he should not be discouraged. Rather, he should be encouraged by the public support he seems to continually get. He should return to PDP in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) rather than continuously complain about his defeat in ACN senatorial primaries in Edo state, Nigeria because the continual attitudinal consequences will be the paralysis of his political career. From the author's point of view, he and the populace need to laugh once again as they used to when he was in FCT's House of Representatives.

In the seventh paragraph, author states that he is yet to see IG since the latter's defeat in the attempt to grasp Edo state's senatorial seat. But, he was sure that soon, they will both seat to resolve or rescue the people of Niger Delta or South South from an imminent political chaos.

In the eighth paragraph, author concludes by advocating for people's support to reinstate the great politician, a man with an unusual communicative lexicon, a god in his own right; hilarious. This, he says, is the only way people from the Niger Delta can temporarily enjoy life without thinking of the privileges they have not been able to enjoy as an oil rich state.

## **PRESENTATION OF DATA**

### **Phono – graphological Analysis**

At this level of analysis, we view that the text is extremely worded. Hence, our analysis will be at two levels; first is a close analysis of the phono-graphological implication(s) of his use of nativised and coined words, proper names; most of which are not cushioned and secondly, randomly selected sentences which divulges the stylistic import and nature of the author's personality and by extension, the style of the text.

#### **(Proper names, indigenous words and coinages)**

1. Edo /'edθo/

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2.	Hon. Patrick Obahiagbon	/ˈɒnˈpætɹɪkɒˈbɑːjɪə(-)ɒn/
3.	Igodomigido	/i: ˈgɒdɒmɪgɪdɒ/
4.	Benin	/ˈbɪnɪn/
5.	Aruaran	/əˈruərən/
6.	Abracadabra	/əˈbrækədəbrə/
7.	gods	/ˈgɒdz/
8.	Obeche trees	/əʊˈbɪtʃɪˈtriːs/
9.	Niger delta	/ˈnaɪdʒəˈdeltə/
10.	Chief Festus Okotie-Eboh	/tʃiːfˈfestʊsəʊˈkɒtɪe/
11.	Omiemiejor	/əʊˈmɪemɪədʒɔ/
12.	Webster	/ˈwebstə/
13.	British lingua franca	/ˈbrɪtɪʃˈlɪŋɡwəˈfrɑːŋkə/
14.	Latin	/ˈlætɪn/
15.	Medulla oblongata	/meˈdjuləːblŋˈgɒtə/
16.	People's Democratic Party	/ˈpiːplzdeməˈkrætɪkˈpɑːti/
17.	Igbanaka	/i ˈ(-) a:nəka/
18.	Oduma	/ˈɒdʊmə/
19.	Abuja	/əbʊˈdʒə/
20.	Centaur	/ˈsentɔ:(r)/
21.	Cranium bifidum	/ˈkrɪnrɒmˈbɪfɪdʊm/
22.	Brutus	/ˈbrʊtʊs/
23.	Calcium carbonate	/ˈkælsiəmˈkɑːbɒneɪt/
24.	Narcissistic	/nɑː ˈsɪsɪstɪk/
25.	Homo sapiens	/ˈhɒməʊˈsɑːpiens/
26.	God-father	/ˈgɒdˈfɑːðə(r)/
27.	FCT	/ˈefˈsiːti/
28.	Dotoa	/dɒtə/
29.	Edegbe	/eˈde(-) e/
30.	Politician	/ˈpɒlətɪʃn/
31.	Atikulated	/ˈɑːtɪkʊlɪtɪd/
32.	Nwodonised	/nˈwɒdɒnɪzɪd/

### Statistical analysis of phonemes

The words above are selected at random based on the significance of the words to the overall *thematic preoccupation* or realization of the text. This being so, the significant words are the pillars which subsumes the use of other words and their frequency of use in the lexicon of the writer. This statistical approach to phonemics is therefore aimed at discovering the preponderance of sounds used in the selected words and by extension, the overall essay. From this, we attempt to derive on the average, the conglomeration of phonemes used in the text, their frequency of occurrence and the significance of this.

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Stress placement on the words is indicated by the phonetic symbol ('). However, we do not concern ourselves with weakly stressed syllables but the strong one because that is our area of focus. It is noticed that most of the words are multi syllabic and stress placement oscillates mostly between the first and third syllables except in the case of monosyllabic words where as expected, stress fall on the first and only syllable.

In all, thirty seven phonemes are used in the text as follows /e d əv n p æ t r ɪ k b a j i g m ʊ aɪ ʊ ə ŋ ʃ ð ɔ: tʃ w z s i: dʒ l a: f eɪ aɪ w ə/ and one /gb/ represented as (-). The phoneme is absent in English phonology but present in Nigerian phonology. The /e/ phoneme occurs fourteen(14) times, the /d/ phoneme occurs thirteen (13) times, the /əv/ phoneme occurs eleven (11) times, the /n/ phoneme occurs eleven (11) times, /b/ sixteen (17) times, /p/ five (5) times, /æ/ five (5) times, /t/ twelve (12) times, /r/ ten (10) times, /ɪ/ eighteen (18) times, /k/ ten (10) times, /l/ twelve (12) times, /a/ six (6) times, /j/ once (1), /i/ thirteen (12) times, /g/ six (6) times, /m/ ten (10) times, /ʊ/ five (5) times, /aɪ/ twice (2), /ʊə/ twice (2), /ŋ/ twice (2), /ʃ/ twice (2), /ð/ once (1), /ɔ:/ once (1), /tʃ/ twice (2), /w/ twice (2), /z/ three (3) times, /s/ ten (10) times, /i:/ three (3) times, /dʒ/ thrice (3), /l/ eight (8) times, /a:/ seven (7) times, /f/ five (5) times, /eɪ/ once (1), /aɪ/ twice (2), /w/ twice (2), /ə/ eighteen (18) times and /-gb/ thrice (3).

Twenty one of these phonemes are consonants while eleven are pure vowels and sixteen diphthongs totaling sixteen vowel phonemes. Their frequency of occurrence ranges between one to eighteen times and we notice that the schwa /ə/ has the highest number of occurrence. In other to derive the average frequency of sound occurrence (AFSO) in the text, we divide the total number of sound frequency (TNSF) by total number of sounds (TNSO). Hence:

$$\text{AFSO} = \frac{\text{TNSF}}{\text{TNSO}}$$

Where TNSF = 257 and

TNSO = 37,

$$\text{AFSO is } \frac{257}{37}$$

$$37 = 6.94, \text{ approximated to } 7.$$

The analysis above shows there is richness in sound combination inherent in the words used by the author. The average number of sounds used per word in seven. ***The sounds used in the protagonist's name "Igodomigodo" is seven.*** This interesting occurrence reveals a method in the menace and the stylistic choice of the author, in replicating the style of the protagonist.

Graphologically, we view that there is a reinforcement of the topic; "Igodomigodo must not Comatose" in the sixth paragraph. Judging by the first letter beginning each eight paragraph; [T, W,I, H, T, A, I, I], we view that the preponderant letter is the letter [I] which incidentally

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begins the name “Igodomigodo”. Could this suggest that “IG” and the author [I] share an idiosyncratic and subjective view towards self expression and the interpretation of issues? Osundare (2008: 12) has opined assertively that: “*style is never an accident. It is a configuration and a consequence of interrelated factors – historical, cultural, social, and ideological*”. This suggests that style can be a build-up of a preexisting style; an infectious medium of continuation of ideas and ideologies. While the author satirises IG’s menace, he also falls victim of the same syndrome by using even more verbose words than the author will likely have used.

When we count the number of lines that make up each paragraph, we notice a rhythm; [3, 9, 6, 5, 14, 14, 6, 7]. From this, we view that the tendency of the writer to reflect his and IG’s distortion of words and rhythmic imbalance in the construction of sentences and autography seems mutual. This can be poetically likened to a journey that begins with three items for survival, acquiring six others along the way, degrading to six and then five, seeming to increase at a certain kilometer, stabilizing with fourteen items at two distinct points in the course of the journey, finally descending to six towards the end of the journey and ending with seven items at hand. Taken that each item is crucial to the success of the journey, the traveler keeps oscillating between low and high chances of survival. If the numbers of items determine the traveler’s sanity, relevance and focus, the traveler will definitely lack these things because the flow of words is in a state of rumble jumble. This concept can be graphically represented below:

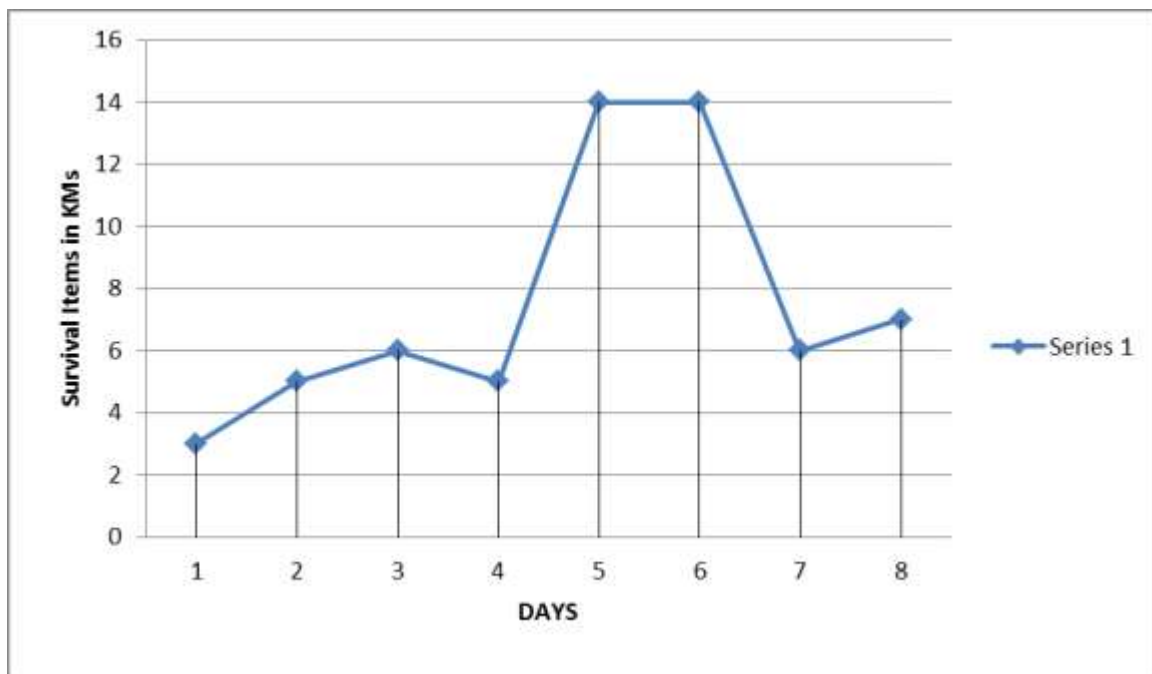


Fig. 3.1: A graphical implication flow of words in sentences and paragraphs

The graph above places an assumption that IG's diction is replicated on the author of the text. When words are few and lines in a paragraph are sparing, this suggests a cycle of word-flow as it pours out from the persona's thoughts. Chomsky in his (1957) *Syntactic Structures* seconds this view by asserting his position as a proponent of "radical behaviourism" where he considers all human knowledge and belief, and all the "patterns" of thoughts and action as characteristic of man which can be explained as "habits" built up by a process of "conditioning". He goes further to state that all humans have a Linguistic Acquisition Device (LAD) which automatically aids the acquisition of language for the purpose of self-expression.

An upward slope in the graph indicates an increase in mental motivation while the downward slope indicates an increase and stability between two time lines as seen in days five and six which indicate a rest and some-what self-actualization. Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs ultimately confirms that motivation affects output and productivity, first, psychologically and then physically. The implication of the graph can also extend **semantically** to connote that the persona (IG) rises through the ranks in his political career, stabilizes at some point and then experiences a downward slope in societal relevance and success via his failure to grab the Edo senatorial seat. This is why the author encourages him in the last paragraph to pick up the pieces and embrace life with vigour and tenacity as he once did. Could a rise at the end of the graph indicate a sudden willingness to heed the author's advice?

### **LEXICAL ANALYSIS AND NAMING PERSPECTIVE(S) IN THE TEXT**

Probably the most confounding fact discovered about the words used in the text is that they mean a lot more than their surface denotation. This is notable also in the names employed by the author in the text. By names here, we mean personal names and identification tags for the ideologies in the text. The proper names in the text are few but importantly, some words in the text also act as pivots for understanding the cataclysmic occurrences in the Nigerian political milieu. This is why the author overtly advises IG to return to his former party and locate "*a means of rescuing the people of Niger area from a burgeoning conflagration that is currently brewing in body polity.*"

The words listed at the phonological analysis above have a direct import on the overall thematic preoccupation of the text. For instance, the setting of the text is Edo in the Niger Delta, Nigeria. IG is the protagonist while chief Festus is the antagonist. PDP is the party of focal attention because it burgeons the discourse on IG's career and the unfolding of the plot. The words *aruaran*, *centaur*, *abracadabra*, *gods*, *obeche trees* indicate a diffusion of Greek mythology with the African mythology. The words act as spiritual metamorphoses, a situation needing a *duex-ex- machina* where gods or ethereal forces are needed to dislodge the climax in the plot, leading to a catharsis and finally, a denouement.

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The word “webster” constitutes the personality of the round character IG and is linked with the French word; *lingua franca* which means *language of convenience*. The word “Latin” is vital because it reveals that there is the presence of Latin-originated registers in the text such as “medulla oblongata”, “fibular”, “cranium bifidum”, “homo-sapiens”, “calcium carbonate”, “modus operandi”, “fiefdom” and “encephalo” amongst others. These words or names serve to preserve the original meaning of some concepts that tend to water-down across generations. For instance, the phrase *Homo sapiens* a scientific term that refers to mankind generally; it actually means “wise man”. Originally meaning *a wise man* but presently, most refer to it as a symbol representing the first name given to a replica of the figure of modern day man.

*Narcissism* means the habit of admiring yourself too much, especially your appearance. It is derived from the Greek myth in which Narcissus, a beautiful young man, fell in love with his own reflection in a pool. He died and was changed into the flower which bears his name (*Oxford 2006*). By this, we reflect that IG has a tendency for excessive self admiration and reflection which prompts him to speak and act the way he does.

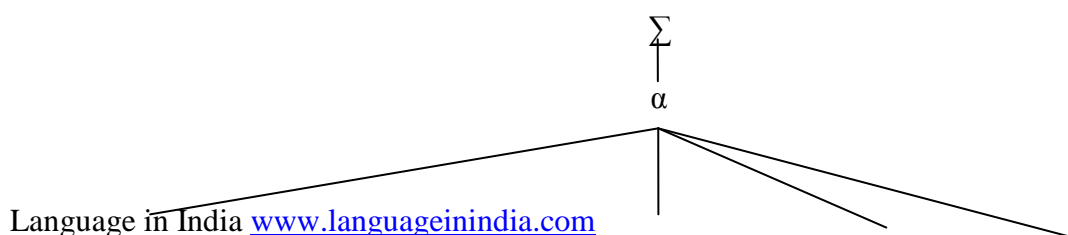
The phrase *senatorial castles* indicate an unfolding of the plot; an event which was to take place at this “location” but failed utterly.

The name “Brutus” reminds one of Dennis Brutus, born in 1924, South African poet, teacher, and political activist, whose lyric poetry is structured around a finely wrought tension between the personal and the political (Microsoft Encarta 2009). The author therefore, creates a synergy between the works of Dennis Brutus and the fierceness of political writings. The concept of *godfatherism* is prevalent in Nigerian political milieu. *Dotoa* (sit down), *edegbe* (transport) *igbanaka* (ladder) *iyemen o! iyemen o!* (exclamation) are all native words that spice up the richness and creativity of the text.

## SYNTACTIC ANALYSIS

At this level of analysis, we extract two sentences that interpret the essence of the text in other to analyse the nature of sentence construction and their overall implication on the thematic richness of the text. First, we do a bracket analysis and then reinterpret our findings in phrase markers. It is important to state at the outset that the sentences are sometimes broken into two tree diagrams due to the largeness of each tree where applicable.

Sentence (1) - The ostensible mandible [of Edo political juggernauts [[masticated Hon. Obahiagbon a.k.a. Igodomigodo [[and spat him out [to the wetlands of Benin mote [[dug by aruaran giants]]]]]]

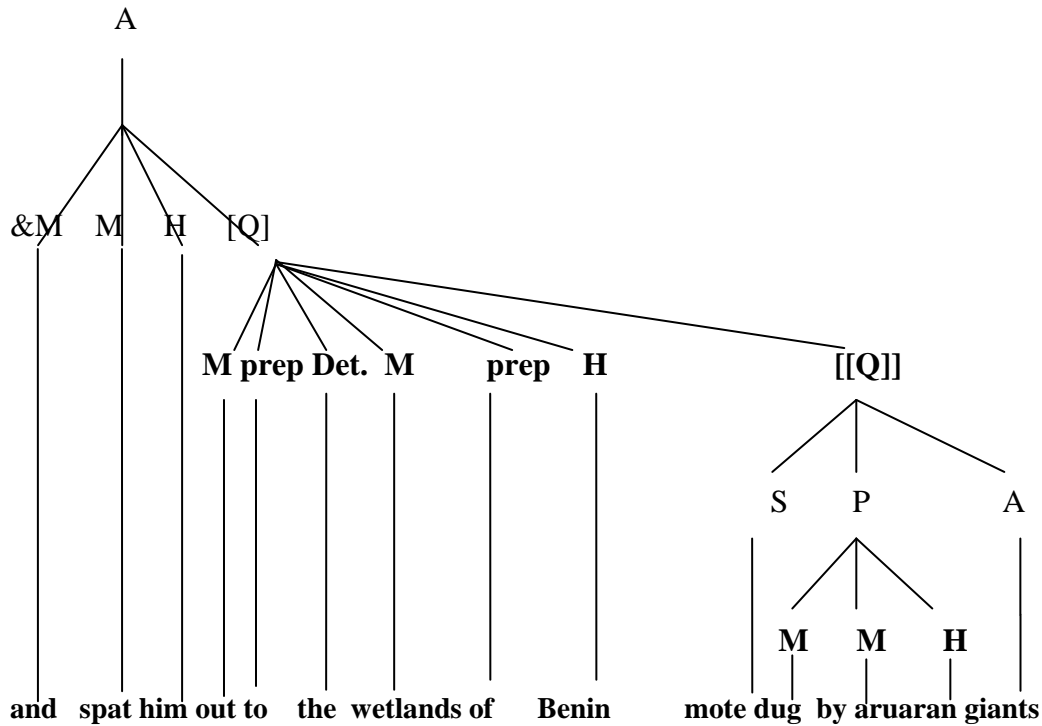
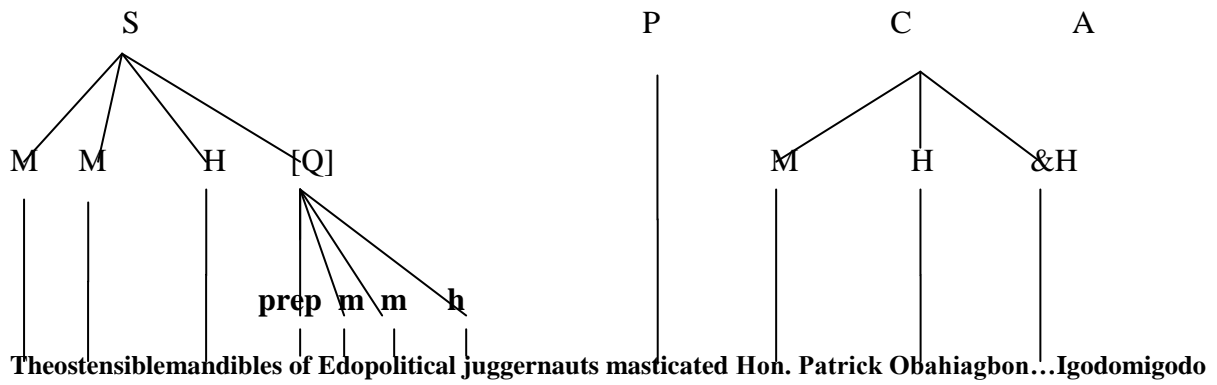


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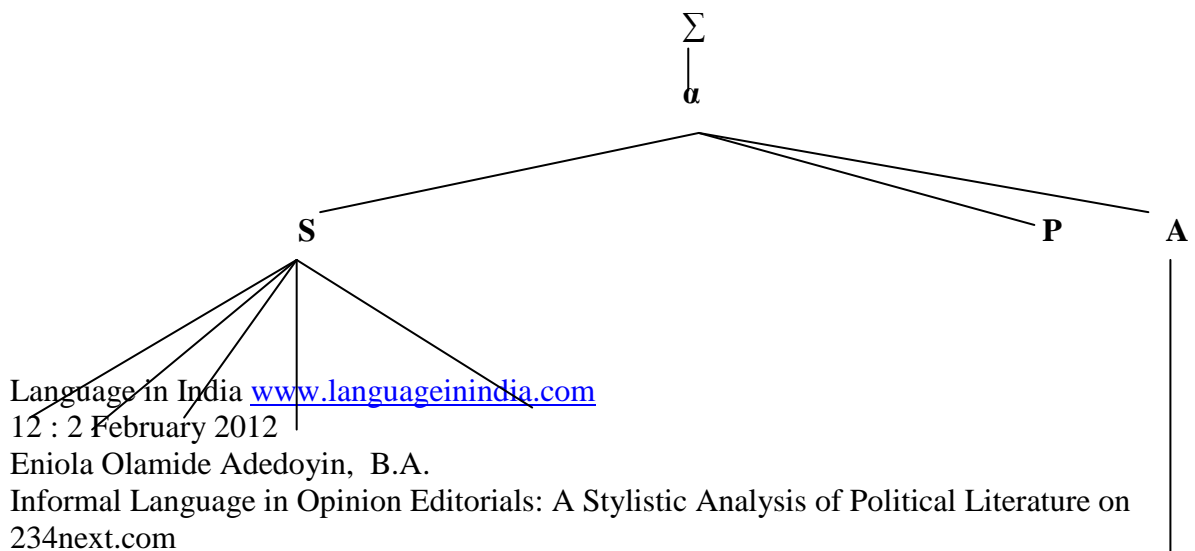
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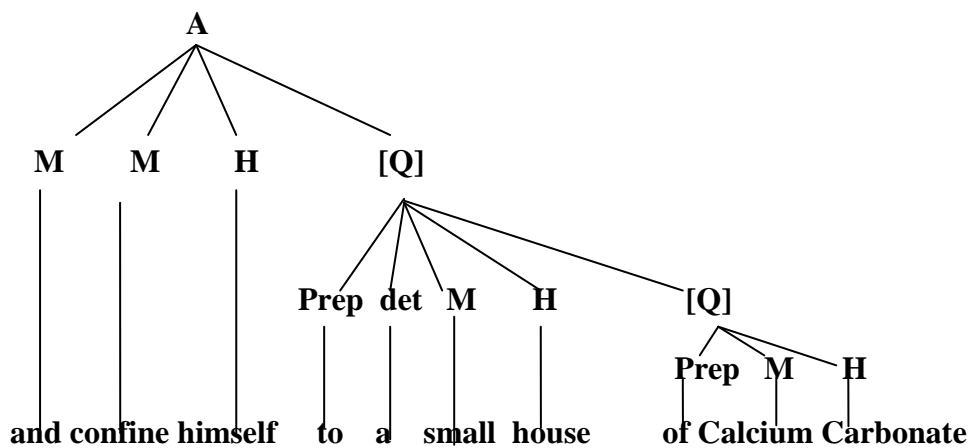
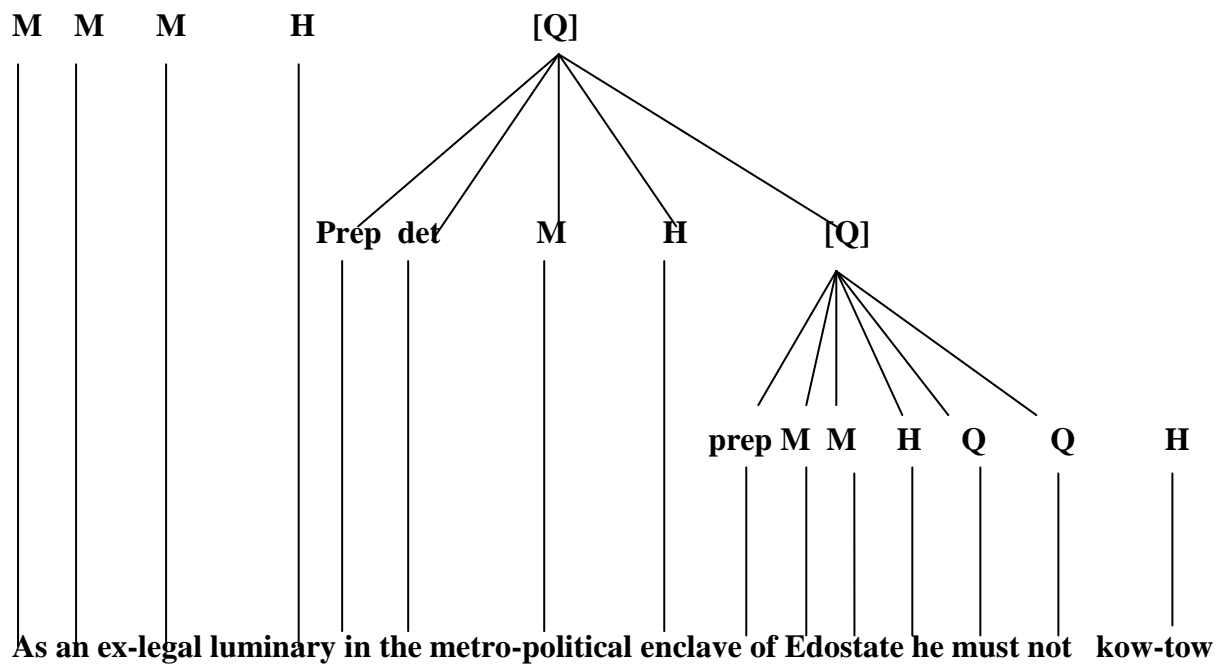
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(Figure 4.1)

Sentence (2)-As an ex-legal luminary [in the metro-political enclave [of Edo state [he [[must not kow tow [[and confine himself [to a small house [of Calcium Carbonate]]]]]]]]





**Figure 4.2**

The sentences analyzed above indicate several cases of rank-shifted clauses and phrases. They lack brevity; entirely qualifying one another. The author’s use of qualifiers is therefore seen to be strategic. First, the nature of the qualifiers used in the text is such that they suggest all new information on their own. If detracted from the main clauses, the subordinate clauses carry a complete meaning, mostly only weakened by the prepositions or conjunctions that precede them. This presents multiple cases of Subjects (S) and predicators (P); requiring a keen eye to distinguish between the main subjects that subsumes the existence of the others in the body of clauses. A good example is the sentence analysed in figure 4.1. The second phrase; “*Edo political juggernauts*” is a subject but not the main subject. *Hon. Patrick Obahiagbon* is the main subject, the centre of the discourse in that complex sentence. Figures 4.3 and 4.4 also depict this aptly.

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The author does not just stop at making a statement but makes sure he pre and post modifies as well as qualifies each statement. This is a case of excessive foregrounding where author's use of prepositions, conjunctions and determiners serve to connect one expression to another; making the article rather wordy. Few predicators are used because the words are predominantly descriptive and sentences are elaborated by nominal and prepositional adjuncts. In figure 4.6 for instance, the phrase "to a small house" is brought to bridge the geographical gap between phrase before it and the last phrase "of Calcium Carbonate"- a syntactic strategy that helps to co-ordinate thoughts.

Using figure 4.6 as prototype, we notice that the author uses a lot of cataphoric expressions. In the dependent clause "As an ex-legal luminary in the metro-political enclave of Edo state", author makes reference to "he" (IG) by firstly describing his status quo with a number of adjectives and nouns. Figure 4.1 presents two occurrences of ampersands tying up expressions that make reference to the same referent. Here, we see that the author enjoys playing with words

In essence, we see that several of the clauses and phrases are actually adjuncts that can be done away with and the discourse will still make perfect sense.

## CONCLUSION

From the analysis done above; three things are overt, first, that style is infectious as seen from the author's adaptation of IG's style. Second, that naming goes beyond proper names into ideological tags. Third, that style though subjectively and personally created, has an implication for everyday life and cuts across views from all aspects of life. Above all, the world of politics and political literature as assessed by George Orwell depicts that writings of this nature will continue to be studied by linguists and sociologists for a long time to come.

## END NOTES

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## APPENDIX

Ehikhamenor, V. (2011). *EXCUSE ME: Igodomigodo must not comatose*. Opinion-Editorial of [234next.com](http://234next.com). [Timbuktu Media Ltd](http://234next.com) – An Online Magazine posted on January 21, 2011 at 12:59AM and retrieved on March, 2011 via <http://234next.com/csp/cms/next/home/5664864-182/story.csp>

The ostensible mandibles of Edo political juggernauts masticated Hon. Patrick Obahiagbon aka Igodomigodo and spat him out to the wetlands of Benin mote dug by aruanran giants who knew how to arm-twist abracadabra gods. When I first read the communiqué in the by-product of Obeche trees, I somersaulted. I submit to you that I was overtly flabbergasted beyond my usual bemusement in matters related to our motherland's political lowballing. Hon. Obahiagbon was a staunch reminder of the great son of Niger Delta, Chief Festus Okotie-Eboh aka Omimiejor, though Igodomigodo does not match the textile elongation that spanned kilometres behind Chief Okotie-Eboh. I usually wear hard hat whenever Hon.

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Obahiagbon jaw-jaw with his oral cavity. Though egregiously high falluting, his means of communication was highly flamboyant, a comical academic exercise for those who are learned in the Webster ways. While in the House most makers of law fundamentally found his coagulated British lingua franca and legal Latin jargon hard juggernauts to digest and often times caused them gastronomical malady.

It is hard for one to be suffused with emotional turbulence which could exacerbate the pounding of one's medullar oblongata because of his miscalculated political calculus. Igodomigodo, though popularly gregarious with the powers that be, decided to oscillate to a party who's fibular is still too feeble in federal financial finagling. Shall we shed tears for the tumbling of his political tibia broken to pieces like disingenuous China dashed on igneous rock? I qualm if your answer is dissimilar to a million fans that once fanned the embers of Igodomigodo's lingo.

Hon. Obahiagbon's meteoric ascension to a paramountical Everest altitude in a rocky political terrain in the People's Democratic Party was hitherto devoid of flukiness, until he dabbled into double-dipping in the hands of deceptive gargantuans. Igodomigodo should have known that Edo State's political igbanaka which helps neophytes in climbing to the apogee of senatorial castles rest in the hand of a fierce oduma whose face is mysteriously askew.

Those that are guffawing off Igodomigodo's downward inclination from the acme of Abuja politics must be reminded that Hon. Obahiagbon is a seasoned centaur who has Phoenixial prowess and this factual appurtenance must reverberate in their Encephalo, even in their egalitarian slumbering. Igodomigodo was not a charlatan who suffered from cranium bifidum thereby romanticizing Webster's convoluted compilations at every opportunity, he was a man of many hues with characteristics more radiant than the iridescence of a razzle dazzle palace peacock's plumage. One could articulate his profundity of profitable politics as riding the high horse of uncertainty after the primaries, but only chronological prolongation of Homo sapiens' existence will be able to discombobulate or corroborate such hasty conclusiveness. Igodomigodo will soon cohobate to cohabit with PDP that sculpted him to a gigantic figure in Nigeria's flatulent opinionated quagmire square. He might be discombobulated now by the errant Brutus that anchored a usurious sword in his promissory broad back, but he must take succour in the gospel genuineness that he was not a peculiar specimen in the Niger area's Atikuated primary experimentations. Most hopefuls were woefully Nwodonized.

As an ex-legal luminary in the metro-political geographical enclave of Edo State he must not kowtow and confine himself to a snail house of calcium carbonate, instead he should imbibe public supportive helium and soar above this reckless display of narcissistic hedonism by disloyal recalcitrant and be parsimonious instead of the expected profligacy. The recent gory cadmium topography of Edo campaign terrain does not allow for a protracted political highhandedness, therefore Igodomigodo must find a clever modus operandi to navigate the shark-infested and crocodile guarded track back to his PDP kibbutz. He should not placard any Homo sapiens with compulsive rhetoric; instead he must placate the revelling lions that roar in the godfather's expanse fiefdom in our sedimentary FCT city. This is the time to deactivate the defibrillator that will arrest the fibrillation of the dead ventricular muscles of the heart of his old party. Igodomigodo must not dissipate teaming loyalists by wailing about his primary trouncing and yelping iyemen o, iyemen o, which could lead to the comatose of

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his fascinating political occupation. We the people need to chortle again, despite the sordid rituals of our current democracy's insidious repercussive and cataclysmic exigencies.

I am yet to Edegebe myself to see Hon. Obahiagbon since the debilitating debacle and indiscriminate fiasco that finagled his fathomless and inestimable bird-at-hand from his grasp in Edo State. But I am persuaded that soon the honourable and my very individual self willdotoa in his palatable palatial palace in the capitol to rub our psyche and situate our cephalo together in locating a means of rescuing the people of Niger area from a burgeoning conflagration that is currently brewing in our body polity.

I bawl out to every non-apolitical personage without timorous tendency to augment support and reposition the great Igodomigodo, a politician with cacophonous communicative prowess, a man whose consternation could re-arrange one's homily faculty, a giant with low tolerance for unjustifiable judiciary acrobatic manipulation, a gaudy god of lexis and structure that wakes one's laughing bones from a thousand years of solitude. That is the only way we from the Niger area can snicker again at our wanton encumbrances while the country lingers on like a malfunctioning choo-choo locomotive.

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