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Abdelhamid Ibn Badis University of Mostaganem

Faculty of Foreign Languages

Department of English

Oppositional Meanings in Post-colonial West African literature:

A Stylistic Analysis of Okri's *'the Famished Road'*:

***Short and Leech* model (1981) as a Tool of Analysis**

By

Hadj TAYEB

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Board of Examiners:

Dr. F Z Benghrouzi	MC (A)	Présidente	Université de Mostaganem
Dr. Bel Abbès Neddar	MC (A)	Encadreur	Université de Mostaganem
Dr. Neema Masmoudi Ghenim	MC (A)	Examinatrice	Université d'Oran 2
Dr. Yasmina Djaafri	MC (A)	Examinatrice	Université de Mostaganem

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Dedication

To the memory of my father;
To my mother;
Tomy wife, And my daughter.

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I would like to thank my supervisor, Dr. Bel Abbes Neddar for his support and guidance. For this, I owe him many thanks.

My sincere thanks go also to all teachers by whom I had been taught during this magister; and whose guidance were as the moonlight that shows me the path in dark nights!

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Abstract

This dissertation examines Ben Okri's use of antonyms in his Booker prize novel, *The Famished Road* (1992) to show relationships between groups in Nigeria during the postcolonial era. A stylistic analysis of the novel reveals the socio-political effectiveness in the system. It also reveals the hard social contact of groups such as the colonizer vs the colonized; the spiritual vs the natural; the rich vs the poor; the white vs the black; the politician vs the inhabitant; the urban vs the rural, etc. Drawing insights about postcolonial theory that is based on binary terms, the novel is analyzed using stylistics to find out what purposes the author used numerous oppositional pairs in the work. The analysis of the text shows the imposition of the strong over the weak. Through applying the model of Short and Leech (1981), the use of language and style in Okri's novel is examined, mainly the antonymous words. Thus, in order to explain the functions of such pairs in interpreting the general aims of the novel, it focuses on how a literary text is interpreted from a linguistic point of view in relation to the social semiotic aspect of language. Thus, I came up with the conclusion that opposites are well used by the author to show his ideology.

Résumé

Cette dissertation tente d'analyser l'utilisation des antonymes dans une nouvelle littéraire de Ben Okri qui a été publié en 1992. L'analyse utilise le model de Short and Leech (1981) Elle montre les relations entre les groupes existant dans la société Nigérien après le colonialisme. L'étude stylistique du texte dévoile la réalité sociopolitique dans la société. Cette réalité montre aussi la juxtaposition et le contact entre le colonisé et le colonial ; entre le riche et le pauvre; entre l'urbain et le rural; entre le politicien et le citoyen; entre le spiritual et le naturel… etc. l'idée que le postcolonialisme est intéressé de traiter les oppositions binaires montre les reasons d'utiliser les antonymes. L'analyse montre aussi l'imposition du qui est plus fort sur celui qui est faible. En fin, elle indique que l'auteur utilise les antonymes a cause de son idéologie qui est basé sur la résistance contre le colonialisme.

الملخص

تهدف هده الرسالة الى دراسة الكلمات المتضادة في احدى روايات الكاتب النيجيري 'بن أوكري' والمتمثلة في رواية الطريق الجوعى المطبوعة سنة 1992. تظهر الدراسة العلاقات بين المجموعات الموجودة في المجتمع النيجيري بعد الاستقلال. من خلال الدراسة الأسلوبية للرواية يتبين الصراع الدائم بين عدة متضادات, حيث هناك صراع بين المستعمر و المستعمر, بين الخيال و الواقع, بين الغني و الفقير ، بين الأبيض و الأسود، بين السياسي و المحكوم, بين المدني و الريفي... الخ. كما انه انطلاقا من فكرة ان نظرية ما بعد الاستعمار مرتبطة ببعض المتضادات ، و بتطبيق الدراسة الأسلوبية على الرواية المذكورة أعلاه نجد الدوافع وراء الاستعمال البارز للمتضادات في الرواية. بعد الدراسة الأسلوبية للرواية و بتطبيق نموذج 'شوورت و ليتش 1981'. كما تظهر الدراسة أيضا الوظائف التي تؤديها المتضادات في الوصول إلى مغزى الرواية من خلال إظهار إيديولوجية الكاتب.

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General Introduction

Literature is a part of human life. Literature and humans are inseparable since one may influence the other. A writer can refer to a certain current issue as an inspiration for his work as a work itself can be inspiring its readers. Therefore, literature can expand imagination that let readers imagine and compare the imaginary story with the real life and to gain some moral lessons, insights, and experiences through it. *The famished road* by Ben Okri is a nove lis worthnoting in this purpose. He can be categorized under the postcolonial writers.

The continued domination of European languages (mainly English and French) in the African world especially in the literary field has caused various doubts on the legacy of the African literature. In other terms, one may notice that African languages have been significantly lost to English and French languages. Nevertheless, and after about five decades of political independence, the continent is yet to be liberated from the linguistic influence of these foreign languages, at least culturally and ideologically. The aim of this dissertation is to examine how the use of language and style of writing in Ben Okri's *the Famished Road* have been used to advocate the racial identity of the West African states in literature.

Considering the influence of colonialism which led to the genocide of the African world with the implementation of the foreign cultures; and imposing the languages of these cultures as official ones, the paradox in the contemporary African authors is how then would Africa advocate its own cultural identity in works of art using a foreign language? Therefore, the aim of this paper is to show that Ben Okri has been able to return back his readers to the real African context. Through mixing the real with the fantastic; the living with the imaginary, life and death, Okri has depicted his African nation as a place that was a stage for experiment for three different periods: the pre-colonial, the colonial and the postcolonial one.

This dissertation concerns the style of language the African literature. Thus, it aims at analyzing one of the West African literary works, mainly *the famished road* by Ben Okri. It is mainly to analyze the use of oppositional words and antonymy in such novel. For, such notion has not been dealt with the recent stylistic analyses. The English used in this novel is that which comes to be known as New English, considering that the English language has evolved. In most former colonies, New English exist alongside standard varieties of English. This linguistic trend needs to be accompanied by well thought out and researched strategies.

In most of the African communities, literature is a way of life. This is manifested especially in song and dance. People sing or recite poems when they are working on farms, in factories, community projects or when they are protesting against their enemies. However, it is generally agreed that the novel form was imported. Several forms of writing existed before and during colonialism. Another controversial issue in West African literature is the language used in it. Perhaps the first reason why West Africans started producing literature in European languages is that it is in these languages that they discovered literacy and literature; gradually they realised that the ability to read and write could be used as a weapon. In fact, education gave them a tool to fight colonialism.

Chinua Achebe has said that it is important to give credit where it is due and that the only reason why we can actually talk of African unity is that when Africans gather, they have few languages in which they can communicate: English, French and Arabic (1975, p. 95). He cannot blame those who choose to write in European languages because the colonial masters created the entities we have as countries in the first place:

> Those African writers who have chosen to write in English or French are not unpatriotic smart alecks with an eye on the main Chance - outside their own countries. They are by-products of the same process that made the new nation states of Africa. (1975, p. 95)

There is also another reason. That is the English-speaking world has become more receptive to creative writing in nonnative varieties of English (Kachru, 1986, p. 122). At the same time, it facilitates the emergence of such literatures as African English literature, Chineese English and Indian English literature. Such literatures are not only different in name, but also in style and cultural context (Kachru, 1986, p. 122).

Therefore, the aim of this dissertation is to reveal all the stylistic and ideologic aspects of one of the West African novels written in English. The nove lis The Famished Road by Ben Okri, a Nigerian novelist living in Great Britain.

The total work is divided into three main chapters. The first chapter deals with issues related to the theoritical part includingdefinitions of key terms such as postcolonialism, African literature and West african literature, hybridity, minor literature, and other key words in dealing with bothAfrican literature and postcolonial issues. As a first step, the research report engages with a definition of New English as well as of other important concepts in the research report: colonialism, post-colonialism, hybridity and indigenisation.

The second chapter is also a theoretical one. It tackles the definitions of stylistics, style, and is concerned mainly with the model of Short and Leech (1981). **In the next chapter, we look at Ben Okri's style as well as his use of New Englishes. The aim of this is to draw a** stylistic analysis of *The Famished Road* following the model.

This is followed by a discussion of the author's signification of using numerous stylistic techniques, including the use of figures and mixing between the real and the magic; with special focus on the author's signification of using numerous opposites and antonyms in his style of writing. My main concern will be with pairs of words, or even clauses, whose oppositional relationship can be deduced from their textual surroundings. These constructed opposites or non-canonical antonyms (Murphy 2003, p. 11) contribute in the interpretation of the text under scrutiny.

The theoretical concern about the study of stylistics based on the model of Leech and Short (1981) is given also in this dissertation; which the work of analysis is based on. According to Leech and Short, "Stylistics may be simply defined as the linguistic study of style." (2007, p. 11) Literary stylistics; however has, implicitly or explicitly, the goal of '*explaining'* the relation between language and artistic function." (ibid) With literary stylistics, it is the literary element that takes primacy of place; on the other hand, with linguistic stylistics, the text becomes a model of language to linguistic analysis for the furtherance of linguistic theory (Carter & Simpson, 1989, p. 04). For Fish (1980, p. 28), stylistics is the means of making the effect of literature on the reader explicit. However, for Short (1996, p. 61) stylistics proves to be complementary to literary criticism.

Besides, in this research paper, I will explain and illustrate some of the ways in which textual structures, both syntactic and semantic, can create temporary opposites which serve the purpose of the text's meaning and yet which rely on the reader's understanding of conventional opposition to decode them. A more thorough account of the different triggers of unconventional opposites or created opposites Jeffries (2010, p. 24) and their relationship of conventional opposites will be undertaken here.

Also, what is paradoxical is that Ben Okri forgot or, he might have forgotten, that he is writing in English; which is the language of the colonizer. With the process of globalization, he is promoting and contributing in the spread of English. So, one question comes to our minds, how did one write for claiming his homeland identity and restoring it from the former colonizer and using the latter's language in doing so?

Nevertheless, the African identity lies in its tradition, not in its modernity given by an outsider. Again, my suggestion is that magical realism, as being "the literary language of the emergent postcolonial world" according to Bhabha (1990, p. 07), is best tool for an author who wants to (re)construct his social identity; thus, to create a new context, which is different from what was taken for granted by the community; and which was imposed by the other.

Hypothesis and research questions

A binary opposition (also binary system) is a pair of related terms or concepts that are opposite in meaning. In other words, the term refers to the system by which, in language and thought, two theoretical opposites are strictly defined and set off against one another; such as on and off, up and down, left and right. Yet, "the opposition does not have to be restricted to a sense relation between two single lexical items, but may relate two concepts that need phrases or even clauses to define them. "Jeffries (2010, p. 40)

That is why structuralist theory considers it as a fundamental organizer of human philosophy, culture, and language. It originated in Saussurean structuralist theory in early twentieth century. According to De Saussure, "it is not a contradictory relation but, a structural, complementary one". (Saussure, 1916). Also According to Derrida meaning in the West is defined in terms of binary oppositions, "a violent hierarchy" where "one of the two terms governs the other." Within the white/ black binary opposition in the United States, the African American is defined as a devalued other. Derrida (1981, p. 41)

Therefore, the study is built upon some hypotheses such as; the writing styles in the African literature reveal the people's ideology and cultural heritage. Also, the writer has invested such binary oppositions to reveal the living circumstances that Nigeria is witnessing. According to Jeffries (2010), "interpreting oppositions of textual data depend to a certain extent on the reader construing them as analogous to the conventional oppositions of the langue."

Research Questions

Ben Okri uses what comes to be called New English, so what are the features of this new English? In other form, is this New English a reflection of the socio-cultural reality in West Africa, and more particularly in Nigeria? And does this New English affect the text and contribute well in transmitting the ideology of the author to his readers? Also, How can language transfer the native people's ideology and beliefs though it is the language of the

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colonizer? How has Okri used language and style of writing to show the African identity to his readers? How did he review the past, assess the present and project a better future for Africa? And why was it magical realism? What is the aim(s) of shaping one's messages through integrating the magic and the fantastic? In relation to the genre, why does it appear only in a marginalized context, and not on a canonized one? More strikingly, how does the African writer advocate the cultural, literary and racial identity of his environment in a *foreign language*?

What is the extent of created opposition across text-types? What is the relevance to unconventional opposition, if any, of the semantic sub-divisions of antonymy? Also, what is the function or meaning of created opposition in particular contexts? Furthemore, what insights can we obtain into the process of interpreting unconventional opposition?

Methodology

Aims of Stylistic Analysis

This dissertation will be concerned with the narrative of one of the African contemporary authors. I will analyze one of his novels, the famished road, in which my concerns are to explore the effects of using different opposites in such literary text and how they help decoding the hidden messages of the author. For such aim, I will conduct a stylistic analysis, applying the model of Mick Short and Geoffrey Leech of (1981), in which they set a checklist of categories that should be taken into consideration when conducting a stylistic analysis for a literary text. The main aim of Stylistic analysis is to explicate how our understanding of a text is achieved, by examining the linguistic organization of the text in detail; and how a reader needs to interact with that linguistic organization to make sense of it. Therefore, this detailed examination of the text reveals new aspects of interpretation or help us to see more clearly how such text achieves its goals and purposes. Also, the main purpose of stylistics is to show how interpretation is achieved.

According to Leech and Short (1981), to conduct a stylistic analysis of a narrative text, one has to consider four main categories. The categories are: *lexical categories*, *grammatical categorie*s, *figures of speech*, and '*cohesion and context'*. For instance, under the heading of lexical categories; one has to demonstrate how choice of words involves various types of meaning. Such type of analysis includes other subdivisions such as; nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs… etc. Grammatical categories; however, are concerned with the use of sentence types. Then, the section of Figures of speech considers the exploitation of regularities of

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formal patterning, or of deviations from the linguistic code. For identifying such features, the traditional figures of speech (schemes and tropes) are often useful categories.

Finally, dealing with Context and Cohesion means analyzing ways in which one part of a text is linked to another: for example, the ways in which sentences are connected. This is the internal organization of the text. Under context, one should consider "the external relations of a text or a part of a text, seeing it as a discourse presupposing a social relation between its participants (author and reader; character and character, etc.)" (Leech and Short 1983, p. 77)

With regard to the notion of antonymy and opposition in narrative, little has been done about them. For this aim, I intend to focus on the use of what is known by semanticians as opposites or antonyms. Thus, in this dissertation, I will try to integrate at least three different levels of analysis: the cognitive stylistics or the ideology of conceiving opposites in the real world by readers or interpreters of the text; and the discursive practices, which is the novel of Ben Okri or the text in general. Therefore, I have limited the study of this research to the use of language and style as used by Ben Okri in his deliberate attempt to depict and restore his West African racial identity in general and his Nigerian one in particular.

Precisely, I will focus on the use opposites and how are such terms presented in the novel to construct a given meaning. Secondly, the works of Ben Okri are different and time may not permit me to conduct a careful examination of all his works. So, my primary data of analysis shall be '*The Famished Ro ad'* (1992) In this novel, I will give consideration to different themes in the novel.

Chapter one

Introduction

Literature is a creative activity that would not exist or flourish without language. And language therefore serves as the concrete means of the human expression, and the concrete evidence of one's imaginative ability. Therefore, the aim of this chapter is to explore the relation between language and literature, and to draw the assumption that language is very important in shaping one's way of expression. For the African context, ways of expressing ideas are different even though the literature of the region is known only through using the language of the other, mainly the colonizer.

It is worth mentioning that all of the West Africa nations were colonized by the French, the British or the Portuguese. As a result, the languages of these countries became widely used, which resulted in the fact that most West African nations rely on the language of their colonizer as the working and official language. In fact it can be argued that a lot of the fighting exists because of language issues. The result is that despite a desire to move away from using European languages most countries in region have had to continue to do so. For, series of civil wars in West Africa are because of linguistic issues.

On the other hand, the use of foreign languages in Africa mainly engfluis and French has some bad effects of the local languages. In *language Death (2003)*, Crystal points out to such alert saying that :

> "In parts of West Africa, where English and French creoles in particular are attracting huge numbers of new speakers, many local languages are felt to be endangered – even though they are currently spoken by several hundred thousand." (Crystal, 2003 p.13)

This indeed has endangered Yruba language, because though is spoken by twenty million speeakers; yet, it has been called 'deprived' simply because it is being dominated by the English language in the region, especially in higher education. This dominance of English over the local languages can be found in other sectors of the peoples daily life. Crystal adds : "There are many cases in Africa where an indigenous language has come to be less used in educational, political, and other public situations, because its roles have been taken over by English, Swahili, or some other lingua franca." (ibid, p. 21)

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1. **Language in West Africa**

West Africa's cultural diversity has been shaped mainly by the distinctions between "city life" and "country life." The influence of the American and European style is quite obvious in the literature, music, and art of city dwellers. Whereas, Traditional ceremonies, music and oral story-telling are alive and largely unchanged in the rural places. (Harmon, 2001, p. 129)

One of the features that one would notice in West Africa is the huge number of languages that are spoken in the region. Although the languages do have some similarities, the users of those languages are very different in their cultural background and social practices. This, in fact, has created problems for the countries of West Africa since the end of colonialism. The majority of these languages come from what is known as the Niger-Congo family, which is believed to be the largest family of languages in the world.

The reason for such multiplicity of languages in the area seems to be that people have lived there for so long. The early settlers presumably spoke the same language. However, as those peoples were nomadic tribes, differences in their tongues occurred through the years and over the next generations. The result is that there is now little in common between all of such languages. This also has created a lot of problems for many of the nations in the region as they may have citizens who speak different languages on the same national territory.

1.1. **The Linguistic Situation in West Africa**

According to Cristal (Crystal, 2007), who notes that "stimates show that the African continent has a large number of languages, roughly 2000, that is one third of the world's linguistic heritage." As a result, the linguistic situation in Africa is different from that which is in Europe and in the Americas. Some researches claim that more than 2000 languages and dialects exist throughout the whole continent of Africa (ibid). Perhaps, this may be due to the multiplicity of traditions of the numerous tribes and communities that live or had been living in Africa throughout history.

As being a part of the continent, the West African region has a collection of many language families. The major languages are from the Niger-Congo family:

Yoruba, Igbo, Fulfulde, Akan, and Wolof. However, the remaining language groups are well-represented in the continental sub-region where native speakers use over 500 languages. (anonymous, 2012) Nigeria, in particular, is rich in cultural diversity with over 250 ethnic groups; of which three groups stand out as being the country's largest and most influential ones (Harmon, 2001). The first of these groups is *Yoruba*, located mostly in the south western part of the country and around Lagos, the capital of Nigeria. The second is *Hausa*, who are located in the north, and the third large ethnic group is *Igbo*, who are dominant in the southeast region of the nation. Besides, there are of course undoubtfully other ethnic groups, but they are much smaller and less influential than the three above-mentioned primary groups.

As a result of this diversity in cultures, varieties in language are also great. In fact, nearly 250 distinct linguistic groups are found within the whole territory of the nation. (Phillips, 2004, p. 67) Though only few people speak the minor languages, but millions speak the main languages which are *Hausa*, *Ibo*, and *Yoruba*. Nevertheless, English is the true national language of Nigeria and used as the official language by government and businesses. It is also used in coursework in schools and universities. However, it should be taken into consideration that the English which is spoken in Nigeria borrows indigenous terms from local variant, creating a unique form of Pidgin English.

Also, the colonial influence in West Africa is quite obvious when talking about languages. Amedegnato Ozouf, who grew up speaking French in Togo, says that "In West Africa, the average number of people with exposure to colonial languages (English and French) is 30 %." Nevertheless, such languages are the official ones in all West African nations. For that reason, he argues that French and English should be dropped as official languages throughout sub-Saharan West Africa in favour of local African languages that are more commonly spoken in the region. "They get very angry. People in France think it's a privilege to speak French," adds Amedegnato. (Amedegnato, 2013)

Despite this fact, "only 15 % of the West African populations speak colonial languages fluently." For, only the elite use the colonial language "to maintain their political power," he adds. He claims also that turning to spoken African languages would bring great benefits to the continent. (ibid) He affirms that educating children in

their maternal language is not only a simple question of basic human rights but also a kind of showing respect to their ancestors. According to him, adopting African languages as official ones in West African countries would help increase literacy rates within the general population; reduce corruption and encourage public participation in civil life. (ibid)

1.2. **Oral Tradition in West Africa**

In general, the history of literature, either in Africa or in other continents, probably dates back to the earliest human species. People during their early lives had created stories and artistic pieces; sometimes to entertain themselves, sometimes to educate their descendents or for other several purposes. However, before the invention of the writing systems, such stories were transmitted orally from one generation to another. The term oral literature is therefore taken from this context. Afterwards, written texts became the alternative means for the tongues of the storytellers to transmit knowledge, arts and different means of communication. Works that were in oral form include: songs, epics, legends, religious texts and historical references.

Nandwa and Bukenya (1983) have tackled the development of Oral Literature in Africa. It is apparent from their analyses that the development of oral literature mirrors the historical and political developments in any society. They have deduced that oral literature in Africa suffered repression during the colonial domination. The real intention was to prevent all forms of traditional and cultural expressions as these latters were considered by the colonizers as the influential and mobilizing tools for the economic and political freedoms for African communities.

Finnegan (1970) summarises her research and her experiences about orality in Africa. Finnegan focused on orality in Africa and looked at the way people interact with words to "formulate and interpret the world." (Finnegan, 1970, p. 03) She remarks that "there is no good reason to deny the title of literature to African forms just because they happen to be oral" (ibid, p. 95). She asserts that oral tradition in Africa has a kind of hidden actors that could be seen in performances and interaction with audience. She says that she wants to share her interest for African cultures and to increase "the visibility and worth of African literary forms on equal terms with those from anywhere else" (ibid, p. 145) Also, she asserts that myths and legends capture the most valued

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history of a people by tracing how they began and how such beginning affected their lives.

The presence of oral tradition in the contemporary West African novel is an issue that was tackled by many critics. For instance, (Cooper, 1998) maintains that orality signifies a 'pre-colonial' culture. She suggests that 'oral' genres are 'pre-industrial and hence pre-colonial' in her study of some anglophone West African writers, including Okri and others. She states that: "It is almost irrelevant that the writers hive from very different backgrounds." (Cooper, 1998, p. 38)

According to her, the use of oral genres by those postcolonial writers aims at proving that "literature and art are not the preserve of the West'. In her words:

> "What is shared, however, is precisely a cultural milieu of borrowing, reading, and cross referencing; of Yoruba, Igbo, Akan or any other proverbs, tales or poetry; what is in common is a militant appropriation of devices, tools, narrative structures and poetic images, that will serve the purpose of proving that literature and art are not the preserve of the West, and that writing is not the sole form of literature. " (Cooper, 1998, p. 39)

Indeed, most of the African, and mainly West African authors and artists know that orality is the common denominator between them, so they make use of it as kind of unifying culture. I think that this is also another argument against the western canon. Because the European sees literature as only what is written, the African writer is responsible for making the African production categorized in the canon, too.

This is, however, a new kind of orality, an orality which is "modern and changing, but also a pure one." For West Africa's major writers try in their work to "excavate an African mythology, uncontaminated by Western influence" (ibid, p. 53). Cooper set up the contrast between the 'cultural nationalist' writers and the 'cosmopolitans.' In this respect, she argues that the former are conservative and nationalist in orientation; and the latter are well-travelled intellectuals who live abroad and reject nationalism in favour of irony and magical realism (ibid pp. 53,55). Nevertheless, Ben Okri is not among the latters. Though he is a cosmopolitan, yet he is a nationalist, too.

In addition , there are always some elements in the African novels which may be derived from from African oral traditions. Julien insists that the elements of oral

traditions are clues to the particular purpose . "They solve or help to solve a formal or aesthetic problem that the writer faces." (qtd in Cooper, 1998, p. 38)

Works of oral literature have some characteristics that can be found in almost all forms of such kind of expression including; 'memorization' and 'performance'. First, memorization is an obvious feature because oral works had to be memorized and transmitted across generations; otherwise, they can be threatened when elders die or when traditions and customs are disrupted. For example, many works of oral poetry, before they were scribbled down, were composed in specific meters in order to help their memorization. The most obvious example for this feature is Quran, the Holly Arabic text, in which the text had different recited versions; which helped preserving it over centuries of time.

Gikandi (2003) asserts the importance of orality in the African society in the sense that it protected the African heritage from disappearing, or being erased and replaced by the European one. Here are the words of Gikandi:

> "Despite the ravages of slavery and colonialism […] the continent's cultures and aesthetic sensibilities remain independent and vibrant, particularly in the orally based forms of cultural expression. Although African societies have developed writing traditions, Africans are primarily an oral people, and it is that tradition that has dominated the cultural forms created on the continent." (Gikandi, 2003, p. 579)

It might be surprising that with the temptations of imperialism, and with the different genres of writing that the African artist is still linked with oral tradition. Yet, oral literature is an effective media to convey the ideas and messages to the audience. it can be used also by the powerless people to criticize those in power. "Orature is a strategic communal tool for non-literate societies in their consolidation and socialization processes, and its spoken nature guarantees its widest circulation," Adds gikandi (p. 580)

Oral texts therefore can only be understood and interpreted within their social contexts. Such issue is quite obvious in the novel of Ben Okri, *the Famished Road* (1992), in which he gives more attention to the themes of orality in Africa. This will be explored, however, in the third chapter, where a deep analysis of the style of the novel is to be conducted.

2. **The Question of Language in African Literature**

2.1. **Historical Overview of African Literature**

Africa has produced four Nobel Prize winners in literature; including the Nigerian *Wole Soyinka* (1986), the Egyptian *Naguib Mahfouz* (1988), the South African *Nadine Gordimer* (1991) and J. *M. Coetzee* (2003). Whereas, presumably there are other African writers who have also produced influential artistic works, but only a small number actually reach a wide audience, within Africa itself or outside the continent. The reason for this might be due to different factors. Therefore, several problems exist along the 'writer-to-reader' cycle. Also, there are indeed obstacles in publishing, distributing, gaining a readership or being critically among the readership. The langauge used is also an important factor in gaining a readership.

Despite this fact, it is worth noting that African literature had flourished in oral form before the interference of the Europeans in Africa. More surprisingly, a kind of written literature was already being produced in Africa before the introduction of the Roman script by the white man in the nineteenth century. Gerard (2003) notes that Ethiopia, for example, possessed a written literature in its own languages, while the Arabic script was used in Swahili, Hausa, Fulani, Wolof, and other languages. (Gerard,1993, p. 03)

The attention towards African literature grew in the late 1960s to the early 1980s. During that time, theorists and critics tended to create a way of analyzing any artistic work coming from or talking about Africa. Thus, western literary critics, including European and North American, focused on everything from black writing as a whole. Before the written form, literature of Africa was passed to new generations through indigenous languages. Consequently, it was based on the culture and traditions of each ethnic group.

2.2. **Current Situation of African Literature**

Indeed, Oral culture reflects the African circumstances that provide the stepping-stone for the contemporary African literature. In West Africa, orality focuses on the construction of selfhood that is based on the *griot* customs. On the other hand, the written literature demonstrates a great reliance on oral culture that is derived from

African customs and traditions. So, African expression aims at recuperating the traditional forms and themes. Gerard (1993) describes the current state of creative writing in African languages as follows:

> "By the 1980s, creative writing had reached print in some fifty African languages. Several of these literatures were already established: in Nigeria, Yoruba writers have been increasingly active since the middle of the nineteenth century and most Hausa authors have now turned to the Roman script. Roman script and Western genres have also been adopted by Swahili writers in Tanzania; and Zimbabwe has produced a sizable amount of creative writing in Shona and Ndebele." Gerard (1993, p. 20)

Though it was recognized as part of world literature and its richness in themes, there is a big debate about the characteristics of African literature. In fact, there have been many debates and studies on African Literature. So what is african literature? Or what qualifies as african literature?

This question emerged firstly in *the African Literature Symposium* of June 1962, which was held at Makerere University. At that conference, different issues were raised. During the meeting, delegates wondered whether African literature was any kind of literature 'produced' *in* Africa or *about* Africa; whether it had to embrace the whole continent or only south of the Sahara, and whether it was supposed to be 'written in indigenous African languages' or whether it could 'include English, Arabic, French, Portuguese, etc.' (Achebe, 1975, p. 91). Nevertheless, the Participants left the symposium without a clear definition for African literature.

Yet, if one tries to define African literature, the following criteria would be very important: 'the setting', 'the racial origin of the author', 'the part of the continent', 'the theme', and '*the language used*.' That is to say, for any piece of literary work, in order to be categorized under the African heritage; it should deal with an African issue, written from or about North, South, West or East Africa, using an African indigenous language and produced by an author whose race is purely African. Despite this, Barkan (1985, p. 35) declares that "African literature continues to be in the process of defining," and for this reason (Jahn, 1968) gives another term for African literature. He prefers to talk of Neo-African literature, which is "the heir of two traditions: traditional African literature and Western literature." (Jahn, 1968, p. 22)

2.3. **The Burden of African Literature**

In Achebe's theory, the African artist occupies central posoition. An African artist must help the people regain their confidence and hope. (madubuike, 1974, p. 60) That is why for the African literature, in order to be called so, it should deal with issues related to the people's problems and with the future of the African communities.

Thus, In one of his articles, entitled *Commitment and African Writers*, Chinua Achebe (Achebe, 1970) talked about his 'mission' of portraying and examining the African society. He recognizes that writing for the African has different didactic dimensions. Such mission is not only a cultural or political one, but also a philosophical one. He believes that:

> It is impossible to write anything in Africa without some kind of commitment, some kind of message, some kind of protest... the whole pattern of life demands that you should protest, that you should put in word for your history, your traditions, your religious and so on." (Achebe, 1970, p. 18)

Such 'commitment' that Achebe is talking about is quite obvious in Okri's work, *the Famished Road*. As a writer, Okri states that " the world in which we live and the life that we live […] takes on th quality of art." (Okri, 2012) then he adds, "my life's journey has been to try to catch, all at once, as many levels of the mysterious and beautiful things that may cause human, as well as the tragic things, but trenscendentally." (Okri, 2012)

Chinua Achebe, whose fiction established a firmly Afro-centric indigenous basis for African culture, sees his primary role as that of a 'teacher' instructing the ignorant about the African cultures. "The worst thing that can happen to any people is the loss of their dignity and self-respect. The writer's duty is to help regain it by showing them in human terms what happened to them, what they lost ..." (Achebe, 1964, p. 159)

Thus, the real responsibility of African literature is not to entertain but to educate the world about the cultural heritage of the continent. African literature has a profound cognitive value. As (Ojaide, 1992, p. 44) puts it, "there is, culturally speaking, no art for art's sake in Africa." African Written Literature is concerned with reviewing the past, assessing the present and foreseeing a better future for the continent and for its

peoples. Also, any group of intellectuals or artists have undoubtedly something in common that unites them under a social or ideological norm. That is "Any group of writers must share a set of familiar ideas rooted in certain social norms." (Cook, 1973, p. 03)

2.4. Themes of African Literature

Ngugi insists that African writers must write the correct stories of their people in their native languages using African tongues so that future generations learn the true traditions that existed. Also, for him, the battle over language is an important part of the larger battle over western imperialism. According to Ngugi, though Africa in reality enriches Europe with its entire natural and human resources, "Africa is made to believe that it needs Europe to rescue it from poverty" (Ngugi, 1987, p. 28). He feels that the African intellectuals, who speak and write European languages, promote the idea of a needy Africa that requires aid from Europe to survive. It may seem contradictory, simply because Ngugi wrote his early novels in English.

Yet, after realizing the implications of his actions, he decided to produce his works only in Gikuyu, which is a purely African means of expression. In addition, Ngugi asserts that:

> "We, African writers are bound by our calling to do for our languages what Spencer, Milton and Shakespeare did for English; what Pushkin and Tolstoy did for Russian. Indeed what all writers in world history have done for their languages by meeting the challenge of creating a literature in them, which process later opens the languages for philosophy, science, technology and all the other areas of human creative endeavours." (Ngugi, 1981, p. 29)

Even when Ngugi's work is translated into English, he demands that Gikuyu terms remain in the text to maintain authenticity. "In 1977, I published *Petals of Blood* and said farewell to the English language as a vehicle of my writing of plays, novels and short stories. All my subsequent creative writing has been written directly in Gikuyu language [...] this book, *decolonising the mind*, is my farewell to English as a vehicle for any of my writings. From now on it is Gikuyu and Kiswahili all the way." Declared Ngugi (Ngugi, 1981, p. xiii) Moreover, he insisted that writing in African languages could improve the struggle against imperialism and "create a higher system of

democracy and socialism in alliance with all the other peoples of the world." (ibid, p. 30)

Though it had some negative effects on the production the African literary heritage, the culture of colonialism had a positive effect on the production of African literature because it introduced some positive mechanisms such as; the institutions of education, the printing press, and the readership that made the modern idea of literature an important aspect of African life. Gikandi (2003, p. 170) explains it more by saying:

> "Nevertheless, the negative effects of colonialism were numerous: it initiated a radical disorganization of traditional African societies, a denigration of African cultures and institutions, and a displacement of the norms and cosmologies that had shaped African identities."

However, it is worth mentioning that both the positive and negative aspects of colonialism were taken up by several generations of African writers. In addition, the colonial problem continued to be a major theme in African literature even after decolonization. For, it was difficult and unfair for Africa to have a literature of nationalism that did not treat issues of colonialism as its primary subject. A famous quotation is taken by *Isola* A in his famous article, '*the African writer's tongue*': "We spent all our money sending them to school, but when they became capable they stop talking to us." This was said by a head of an African village, complaining about a community meeting held in English. This is probably the most crucial issue in African literature, which the use of the language of the other.

2.4.1. Colonialism

Indeed, after most of the african countries gain their independence, the issue of colonialism became the major theme in African literature because of the historical circumstances. Since it was influential in shaping the culture of the continent, It was also associated with the ideas of modernity, culture, and art. The colonizers considered themselves as civilizing and educating the peoples of Africa. In this case, the responsibility of the African authors is to show the richness of Africa in its own civilization, cultural heritage and its own way of expression.

Since every literary work has a social function, African literature is firstly to deal with the African peoples' concerns as they change with the changing globe. As

being "the founding father of of modern African literature," (Achebe, 1958) and like most of the African writers, Achebe's artistic mission was impassioned by the desire to help his society regain belief in itself and put away the complex of the years of degeneration. (Achebe, 1988, p. 44). However, for Achebe, he had no choice in using English as the core of his works though he strongly criticizes those who write in the langauge of the colonizer, considering that as a betrayal to one's feeling. Achebe (1975) declares:

> Is it right that a man should abandon his mother tongue for someone else's? It looks like a dreadful betrayal and produces a guilty feeling. But for me there is no other choice. I have been given the language and I intend to use it. (Achebe, 1975, p. 62)

This 'duty' of having a literature that aims at educating is a task that most African writers believe that it is their holy mission. Yet, probably the paradox that most of those writers fall in is the means or the medium of that task. Everybody knows that the process of education in Africa should be based on the African linguistic behaviour; and not the use of the European and the western means in general. In carrying out this mission, language is seen as a powerful tool in a globalized world.

2.4.2. West African Literature and Colonial Influence

For several centuries, colonial rules have affected the establishment and the development of the literary culture in Africa, positively and negatively. Such effects are obvious in education and schools, universities and churches; where the model of these institutions is a purely western one. Another powerful evidence of the colonial influence in African literature is that it is produced in European languages.

Moreover, the use of any pre-colonial indigenous language was considered as dangerous as a sin. One of the African authors, Ngugi, who was born and educated in Kenya, described his early life at home and in school saying:

> "I was born into a large family father, four wives and about twenty eight children... we spoke Gikuyu in and outside home [...] there were good and bad storytellers. We therefore learnt to value words from their meanings and nuances. Language was not a mere string of words. It has a suggestive power well beyond the immediate and lexical meaning... and then I went to school, and this harmony was broken. The language of my education was no longer the language of my culture [...] English became the language of my formal education [...] It was the language and all the others had to bow

before it in deference. Thus one of the most humiliating experiences is to be caught speaking Gikuyu in the vicinity of the school. The culprit was given a corporal punishment_ three to five strokes of the cane on bare buttocks_ or was made to carry a metal plate around the neck with inscriptions such as I AM STUPID or I AM A DONKEY." (Ngugi, 1987, p.11)

This seems as the same as what happened in Algeria in its early years of colonial period in the nation. Indeed, the only thing that disturbs and disrupts the colonial authority is the link of the colonized community with its culture and linguistic heritage. The colonial powers knew this; therefore, they tried to cut such link by imposing their own norms and by 'suppressing the native languages as spoken and written', or by 'the destruction of a people's culture, their art, dances, religions, history, geography, education, orature and literature.'(Ibid, p.16)

In 'Moving the centre: The Struggle for Cultural Freedoms', Ngugi is concerned with moving the centre in two senses; between nations and within nations, in order to contribute to the freeing of world cultures from the restrictive walls of nationalism, class, race and gender.

Ngugi (1987, p. 95), shows that when Christian missionaries and other European colonizers entered Africa, they forced Africans to speak European languages as a means of enforcing their control and gaining support from the Africans themselves. They set up schools that taught children European languages while forbidding the use of any native language. Language was a means of separating children from their own culture and history; whereas, at home, children were taught about their ancestors through oral stories. For that reason, Ngugi insists that African writers must write the correct stories of their people in their 'native languages' using African forms so that, the future generations learn the true traditions that existed in their grandparents' lives. (ibid)

In addition, Ngugi argues also that when African writers produce texts in English, French, German, or any other European language, they are writing in the languages of their oppressors. (ibid, p. 07) He feels they are giving up their cultural independence and abandoning the languages used by the people of their nations. He wants the African indigenous languages to pass down to new generations, alongside with the traditions and customs of their cultures. "The modern world is a product of both European imperialism and of the resistance waged against it by the African, Asian, and South American peoples." Declares Ngugi (1993, p. 22)

2.4.3. West African Literature and New English

However, the dilemma that is confronting the African artist is getting the message across to the audience without losing the cultural values of the African linguistic behaviour; and having a wide readership at the same time. The last ambition, unfortunately, can only be achieved through using a global language such as English or French. For this reason, some artists have decided to take English to another level and include new features in it. Achebe, for example, has evolved a sort of African English; an English that mostly uses the English lexicon but whose usage have been invested with values, concepts and nuances of local patterns of everyday African linguistic patterns. It is a kind of an Africanized English. "The language is like the old wine of African ideas and expressions brewed in the new bottle of English language" (Achebe, 1973).

Such new English share the same characteristics with Standard English; yet, it includes some other terms from the African dialects. It can be said that this is probably the price that a English must pay to the African languages. In Okri's works, English terms are adapted according to the African context, in which he borrows from his racial community some words. Then, he coins them to appropriate African context.

Consequently, they try not to distance themselves from any of their two groups of readers, the local and the international one. They use the English language which is European while ensuring that the English language grammar is not terribly distorted. However, the problem with the use of English in creative writing by African writers is largely a problem of culture. (Igboanusi qtd in Coker and Mohammed 2013, p. 91)

It is a fact that a society's language is an aspect of its culture. African writers carry and transfer some of the cultural nuances of the indigenous African people into English. To be able to play this role effectively, the structure of native-speaker English has to be adjusted. For instance, Okri does not hesitate to use words like *ogogoro* (Okri, 1992, p. 18, 29, 32) that do not exist in the standard English of the western world or in the dictionary of speakers of English who live outside the Nigerian territory. Yet, he had to create a word for such context or borrow from his native language. Even the idea of the 'abiku' or the '*spirit child*' exists only within the African context, and more

particularly, within the West African one. To make the idea clear for his readers, he gave it a name, which is related to biblical names, *Azaro*, which is close to Lazarus.

Therefore, African literature seeks to project the challenges facing Africa from the colonial period to the post-colonial era. (Adedimeji, 2011) It also describes the practices of the African communities and shed light onn the traditional lives of the African tribes. It aims at analyzing the conflicts that colonialism left in the system, and tries to find solutions to the crises confronting the modern states of Africa. In doing this, the essence of this effort is the portrayal of Africans as peoples and to be recognized among other human beings and among the other communities; with their own dreams, values and customs. (Mahfouz A. Adedimeji 2011, unpublished master thesis)

Moreover, and along with the Kenyan novelist and critic Ngugi Wa Thiong'o, Achebe has called for representations of imperialism to shift from European perspectives to the perspectives of the colonized. As he remarks in an interview in 1989:

> "The moment I realized in reading Heart of Darkness that I was not supposed to be part of Marlow's crew sailing down the Congo to a bend in the river, but I was one of those on the shore, jumping and clapping and making faces and so on, then I realized that was not me, and that that story had to be told again." (Achebe, 1989)

This call, however, has been influential for the developing field of postcolonial studies. As a result, most of the postcolonial literary productions lie in this respect, that is to tell the story again, but in a different way. Such different way should be true and not misleading as the one presented by Conrad in heart of darkness.

Achebe's analysis of the other's view of Africa as a negative black continent draws on the psychoanalytic model of colonialism proposed by Frantz Fanon. (Fanon, 1963, p. 177) This analysis of the literary and cultural representation of non-Western cultures has received its fullest treatment in the work of Edward Said, who labels Western projections onto the Eastern Other 'Orientalism'. However, Achebe simply calls it 'racism.' (Achebe, 1978, p. 11)

2.4.4. African Literature and the Language Used

As African intellectuals, Soyinka and Achebe seem to have accepted the challenge as part of the realities of their location who evolved through an amalgamation

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of experiences from colonialism through neo-colonialism to the contemporary globalisation. However, Ngugi remains relentless in the struggle and seems to have taken the battle to higher fronts. In a recent article, (Ngugi, 2013) challenges African knowledge producers concerning the language issue. Thus, he claims that:

> "If we want to develop knowledge, philosophy, and other arts through African languages, then we have to learn how to listen to what African tongues are saying. The pen should work with the tongue; walk together; help widen, spread, and store the products of the tongue in productive spaces. Pen and tongue should journey together to search for education, knowledge and philosophy, help it grow and spread." (Ngugi, 2013, p. 02)

Indeed, what comes out from the above quoatation is that, Ngugi has deepened his argument for the use of African languages to convey the society's values. To say that 'the pen should work with the tongue' implies that, the writer and critic are both "aware of the moral dilemma" involved in knowledge production in Africa. (Adejunmobi, 1999) calls this "moral stigma". She elaborates that: "… at a time when the very existence of an African literature remains controversial […], a moral stigma was already attached to the fact of writing in European languages". (Adejunmobi, 1999, p. 583) It is remarkable that the language issue is a problem that has been difficult to resolve; and probably may remain so for long time in the African literary sphere.

3. **West African Literature**

3.1.**A Historical Overview of Literature in West Africa**

African Literature from the West region of the continent has gained new voices outside the continent. Yet, the beginnings of a vernacular literature in languages spoken in British West Africa date back for more than a century. Nigeria in particular has, at least, some literary roots going back to the 18th century. In fact, literary corpus of Nigeria includes works in a variety of languages, genres, and styles, with common genres such as poetry, drama, and prose fiction. For instance, Nana Asma'u is a well-known Fulani poet from the Sokoto Caliphate who wrote in the 19th century.

Besides, Nigeria is also home to the fascinating works of the *Onitsha* and *Kano Market Literatures*. The first is a form of literature with popular appeal that originated in the city of *Onitsha* in south-western Nigeria. It was mainly from the 1940s to the 1960s, in which works were written primarily in English. It was dominated by the

Western-educated Nigerian elite, whose works addressed the social change that came with independence. The other is a body of popular fiction written in Hausa language, sold in the northern cities of Kano, Kaduna, Katsina, and Sokoto. Both are similar to each other for that they both deal with the social issues and postcolonial changes brought by independence. (Woronoff, 2001, p. 212)

3.2. Early Anglophone West African Literature

There is no doubt that the development of literature by West Africans in European languages in general is a product of the colonial domination. Indeed, after the Berlin Conference on Africa during 1884-85, Europe turned its concerns towards Africa, not just for geographical territories of West Africa but also for the richness of the whole continent. The establishment of English as the official language in the region goes back to the early nineteenth century, when missionaries set up the European Colonization Society. The English-speaking countries of West Africa acquired English because of the British domination, and because of the efforts done by the British authorities to replace the local norms by all that is English, including the language of course.

The 1890s marked a very important turn in the African history, in which the Europeans claim for the whole control over the African territories. On the other hand, that period also marked the development of 'colonial' novels in English, in which European writers depicted Africa and the Africans as setting and characters in their different works. Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (1898) was the famous work that dealt with an African issue. It was also widely read by the Europeans and the Africans themselves, mainly the intellectuals.

West African literature in English saw three waves of development. In the first wave, mainly from the early eighteenth to the beginning of the nineteenth century, a limited number of themes emphasized colonialism and its clash with urban cultures and local life. To put it in precise terms, those works dealt with the conflicts between the colonial and the ethnic groups; and the debate on tradition versus modernism. Broadly speaking, works of this era dealt with historical, cultural, social, and religious issues. As an example, Tutuola's fiction has been unique in so far in depicting the issues of that era in which the West African peoples were struggling with the European norms.

In the second wave, the reverse was true. A large number of new writers entered the scene, and their audience was more diversified and distinguished. Their styles however reflected that variety in both the themes and the readership. Many West Africans saw that corruption was a disturbing issue and an obvious obstacle for development, and it was the source of violence that came to bother their life. Furthermore, the works focused on the disappointments with the outcome of the independence. Also in this era, women began publishing their works for the first time. Works of this stage discussed new subjects such as polygamy, supernatural involvements and the individual's role in the community.

The third wave is generally known among the critics as 'the third generation literature.' This is the main concern for that the corpus of the study is taken from such era. That is why it will be dealt with in the next section as a new title.

3.3. Third Generation Nigerian Literature

Okri explores themes like those of post independence, nationalism in Nigeria, and Africa's neocolonial history. Okri's depiction, on the other hand, is emphasized by the image of the *'abiku',* or the spirit child who cycles through birth and death in order to pain his parents. The primary influence for this cyclical image also comes from the way that Soyinka treats the repetitive nature of evil in his poems "Abiku," "Death in the Dawn," and "Idanre." Describing third-generation African writers, (Olusegun, 2011) says that:

> "They are writers, living within a grossly harassed socio-political reality of institutional corruption, nepotism and the atomizing blight of economic hardship. The bulk of new Nigerian writers are embattled within a riddled educational universe, the impossibly high cost of publishing, a depleted audience more drawn to film than to books and the inertia of spirited criticism in engaging with their literary wares."
>
> (Olusegun-Joseph, 2011, p. 02)

Indeed, these writers are living in a paradoxical status. Like one of the protagonists, these novels ask the urgent question: "What was the country I loved? What was the country I would fight for? Should it have borders?" (Atta, 2005, p. 299) in fact, although third generation Nigerian writer live outside their homelands, they care for their societies and communities. Krishnan (2010) says that:

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"Narratives of the third wave of Nigerian literature deal with themes of trauma, identity and community affiliation in postcolonial Africa, highlighting the fractured and displaced nation-state as the site of a radical aporia between individual fulfillment and communal harmony."

<div align="right">(Krishnan, 2010, abstarct)</div>

In other words, they are drawn by the temptations of globalization and linked back to their countries by nostalgia at the same time. From the above quotation, we deduce that third generation African writers "are products of peculiar circumstances." (Coker and Ademilokun, 2013) In other words, the circumstances of their emergence are a consequence of certain socio-political developments in the African scene. An african online magazine explains their description as they are:

"Writers of a disillusioned Africanist enterprise, who are not naïve about international realities but have become more hesitant about blaming outsiders because they have experienced a lot of enemies within."

<div align="right">(qtd. in Coker and Ademilokun, 2013)</div>

In other words, the circumstances of the emergence of the third generation writers are a consequence of certain socio-political developments in Africa. This is consequent upon experiences arising from socio-political instability and the overtaking of the military in governance in most post-independence African states. Therefore, the current African writing can be described as "a child of circumstances." (Coker and Ademilokun, 2013, p. 87)

Besides, the disillusionment that came because of the failure of the political leadership in some African countries necessarily results in the diversity of African literary productions. The political failure made any economic or artistic development difficult. Thus the writers are advocates of their people's ambitions. The best way to do this is from Diaspora.

In Nigeria particularly, even for those permanently located in the West like Ben Okri and others, their location globalised their artistic offerings. It gives an insight about Africa and about African traditions. The use of language shows the works as world literature, written in world languages, and thus accessible to a global audience.

To sum up the three waves of west african literature waves, as (Krishnan, 2010) says :

'the largely realist texts of the first wave project a version of Africa's "usable past" […] By contrast, the second-wave works […] distrust nationalism and disrupt realism'[...] Today, the third generation of Nigerian writers has returned to the thematics of first generation literature, but with a view to questioning the assumptions earlier literature made about Africa, Nigeria and the validity of historical realism when confronting the past. (Krishnan, 2010, p. 187)

What is important is that the third generation West African writers and have recognized the reality of using English as global language in their creative and critical imaginations. Furthermore, (Ayeleru, 2011) observed that:

"In their texts, they deploy, in a specialized manner, linguistic strategies like African orature, proverbs, translation/transliteration, pidginization, intra/intertextuality, euphemism, metaphor, and metonymy…The new generation of West African writers are daring in the subversion and appropriation of the European languages with which they produce their texts. They freely deploy different linguistic strategies to indigenize and domesticate the borrowed medium they employ." (Ayeleru, 2011, p. 03)

That is to say, writing in English is not odd or strange. Rather, the content and style of writing is incapable of portraying the actual experiences of the cultures that are being depicted in the literary works. Desei (1993) pointed out to another opinion in his publication, in which he said that English is capable of being appropriated and successfully Africanized. Therefore, the African writer can use the medium of English successfully to explore the secrets of language choice and cultural consciousness.

For that reason, Desei (1993) quotes Bakhtin's words in this regard to support the view that a world language can be indigenised once a writer "populates it with his own intention, his own accent, when he appropriates the word, adapting it to his own semantic and expressive intention" (Bakhtin qtd. in Desei, 1993, p. 06) This is probably what (Adekoya, 1997, p. 166) refers to as linguistic "experimentation" since "it is a register on its own right and works for its users as a medium of communication." In general, the climate of critical position seems to favour creativity in linguistic deployment in African literature.

Today, the third generation of Nigerian writers has returned to the themes of first generation literature, but with a view to questioning the assumptions which literature made about Africa earlier. In contemporary Nigerian fiction, the third generation literature "represents the hopes of a younger generation to remember the trauma of the

past and to make a sense of identity through their shared connection in community." (Krishnan, 2010, p. 187)

Third generation Nigerian literature therefore, marks the importance to the formation of the identity and its effects on the national imaginary. Concerning the thematic content, the third generation fiction considers the daily lives of individuals in post-independence Nigeria over the greediness of politicians. The movement that characterises the late of this period is magical realism; thus, "Magical realists inscribe the chaos of history not by way of unity, but by means of plots that syncretize uneven and contradictory forces." (Cooper, 1994, p. 36)

This paper will tackle one of the novels that marked this era of Nigerian literature, *the Famished Road* by Ben Okri (1992). Of course, there are other notable works, but I have chosen this novel for several reasons: First, the novelist has spent considerable time outside his native land, and is not currently living in Nigeria. This fact makes the rationale of the study. That is how can Ben Okri living outside the country and claims for national identity? How did he use English, which is the language of the oppressor or the ex-colonizer to defend his people's identity? Then, the novel occurred at very important time, where the world was turning to the imperial system of globalization. Moreover, the novel represents a turn in contemporary Nigerian fiction, as the writer seeks to make sense of the postcolonial tensions in the country through an interrogation of the past, putting special significance on the trauma of the present and negotiating the expectations of the future for the country.

4. **Postcolonial Theory in West African Literature**
4.1.**What is Postcolonial Literature?**

Critics often make difference between the hyphenated (post-colonialism / post-colonial) and non-hyphenated terms are not always used consistently. To most critics, the hyphenated term (post-colonial) tends to refer to the historical period after a nation has been officially recognized as independent (McLeod, 2000, p. 5); whereas the non-hyphenated (postcolonial) denotes the consequences of colonialism from the time of its first impact. In other words, it refers to 'disparate forms of representations, reading practices and values that can circulate across the barrier between colonial rule and national independence'. Yet, for historians, the hyphenated word refers specifically to

the period after a country, state or people cease to be governed by a colonial power such as Britain or France, and take administrative power into their own hands. Its aim is to challenge and revise forms of domination, the past and the present of a community or a nation.

But within the area of 'Postcolonial Studies', the term is more often used to refer to the consequences of colonialism from the time the area was first colonized. Such studies are generally concerned with the subsequent interaction between the culture of the colonial power, including its language, and the culture and traditions of the colonized peoples. And almost always, the analysis of those interactions acknowledges the importance of power relations in that cultural exchange, the degree to which the colonizer imposes a language, a culture and a set of attitudes, and the degree to which the colonized peoples are able to resist, adapt to or subvert that imposition.

Ashcroft et al, defined the postcolonial literature as writing which has been "affected by the imperial process from the moment of colonization to the present day" (Ashcroft et al, 1989, p. 02). In general, this includes novels, poetry, and drama that were written both during and after the colonial period up to the independence. This can be said to many places such as India, Nigeria, Jamaica, Pakistan, Algeria, South Africa, Singapore, Ghana, and other colonized nations that got their independence mainly in the second half of the twentieth century.

Thus, postcolonial literature shares some significant concerns and characteristics. Among these concerns are: reclaiming spaces and places, asserting cultural integrity, revising history, and promoting a culture of resistance. Probably the common characteristics that postcolonial literatures share is the Appropriation of the colonizers' language as the primary medium of their works. (Ashcroft et al., 1989) Also, The term postcolonialism is replete with contradictions owing to the varied forms of colonial rule and processes of decolonization.

In its most general sense, the label 'postcolonialism' is used in connection with any discursive contest against marginalization or subjugation. One may wonder that colonies no longer exist and yet how can the term 'postcolonial' survive? Timothy Brennan rightly observes that "the term, however, survived because it successfully euphemized harsher terms like imperialism or racism in professionally respectable

academic environments". (Brennan, 2004, p. 132). Another postcolonial theorist Ahmed has a similar view asserting that: "postcolonial is simply a polite way of saying not white, not Europe or perhaps not Europe-but-inside-Europe" (Ahmad, 1995, p. 30).

Postcolonialism was mainly developed by some theorists like Frantz Fanon, Aimé Césaire, Edward Said, Homi Bhabha and Gayatri Spivak. Fanon has analyzed the psychological aspects of colonialism and myths of racism in his works such as *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952), A *Dying Colonialism* (1959) and The *Wretched of the Earth* (1961). Indeed, he is one of the founding fathers of the post-colonial thought. In addition, Fanon's views on race politics and the effects of colonization have influenced several colonized and oppressed minorities around the colonized world. his major works are still important to the third world people's because they dealt with the oppression and the marginalization they suffered from during the colonization era.

He criticized and attacks the European savagery against the other non-white. He calls his fellow intellectuals:

> "Leave this Europe where they are never done talking of Man, yet murder men everywhere they find them, at the corner of every one of their own streets, in all the corners of the globe. For centuries they have stifled almost the whole of humanity in the name of a so-called spiritual experience."

It is an African, a man from the Third World. He adds: "Europe now lives at such a mad, reckless pace that she is running headlong into the abyss; we would do well to keep away from it." In other words, she's done for. A truth which is not pleasant to state but of which we are all convinced, are we not, fellow-Europeans, in the marrow of our bones?

Fanon called for the unity of the third world. Though it is a work in progress, that union should be after the independence, as it was during the colonial era. This is what Fanon explains to his brothers in Africa, Asia, and Latin America:

> "We must achieve revolutionary socialism all together everywhere, or else one by one we will be defeated by our former masters. He hides nothing, neither weaknesses, nor discords, nor mystification. Here, the movement gets off to a bad start; there, after a striking initial success it loses momentum; elsewhere it has come to a standstill, and if it is to start again, the peasants must throw their bourgeoisie overboard." (Fanon, 1963, p. 10)

In his books, Fanon tackles the issue of how black people behave in a white world towards their ethnic community. Fanon's study is concerned with black subjects living in the colonized countries. This can be applied to Ben Okri who is living in the United Kingdom. However, the influence of his works reached a great number of theorists from different regions of the globe.

Edward W. Said, on the other hand, was also one of the most prominent public intellectuals of recent decades. He was an influential literary critic theorist as well as a significant political figure, especially as an advocate of the rights of Palestinians. Beginning with his *Orientalism* (1978), which is often regarded as having established the field of postcolonial studies, his work focused particularly on imperialism and the interplay between the dominant West (or the occident) and the Middle and Far East (or the Orient).

Much of early postcolonial writing reflects this sense of hopelessness. In the era that followed, writers began reflecting the horrors of their countries following decolonization, and their writings were usually charged with a sense of despair and anger, at both the state and the leaders who replaced former colonial oppressors. This can be felt in *the famished road* by Ben Okri, and in most of his other works.

Critics, like Neil Lazarus, have proposed that this sense of disillusionment, reflected in the works of such authors as Ayi Kwei Armah, marked the beginning of a major change in African intellectual and literary development. Beginning by the early 1970s, Lazarus writes:

> "The direction of African fiction began to change, with writers forging new forms of expression reflecting more clearly their own thoughts about culture and politics in their works. The writing of this period moves away from the subject matter of postcolonial Africa into the realm of new and realistic texts that reflect the concerns of their respective nations."
>
> (Lazarus, 1999, p. 65)

Indeed, Postcolonial studies about Africa and Asia gained popularity in England during the 1960s with the establishment of Commonwealth literature, because postcolonial writers are studied and read by most of Western critics. Their works are also seen as being representative of the Third World; and therefore, proving much anthropological information as they works of fiction.

Huggan (20008) also comments on the fact that many indigenous African authors in the postcolonial era remain un-translated; therefore, they are unavailable to western critics. In the meantime, the translated European-language works that are available have come to define postcolonial literature and its critical response.

African writers are themselves aware of this gap between texts that are accessible to the West and those that remain in the bookstores of Africa. In fact, the language issue is a central concern with many African writers in the years following decolonization. In this response, some of them, like Ngugi, have chosen to reject English and other European languages in favour of native African writing. This is in contrast to other several African writers, including Chinua Achebe, Wole Soyinka, and others, who asserted the usefulness of using the European languages in their works, mainly English. Ngugi's argues that by writing in English or French and other European languages, African authors are continuing to enrich those cultures at the expense of their own. (Ngugi, 1987, p. 112)

Moreover, those who support African-language literature argue that European languages are unable to express the complexity of African experience and culture in those languages, in addition to the fact that they exclude the majority of the Africans, who are unable to read in these languages. Thus, this fact makes a real obstacle to the access of Their own literary production.

4.2. Post-Colonialism and the Idea of Resistance

Studies of post-colonial writers are categorized under the general scope of 'Post-colonial studies'. As a field of study, 'Postcolonialism' or 'postcolonial theory' has become concern of interest for many theorists and literary critics. The term 'postcolonial' refers to the period that comes after the end of colonialism. That is to say, the term implies the end of some empires like France and England. It marked also the emergence of the imperial period in which new powers come to lead the globe. Thus, "informal imperialism can exist without colonialism but colonialism cannot exist without imperialism." (Bush, 2006, p. 46)

Historically speaking, Post-colonialism in Africa in particular refers to the era between 1960 and 1970. This period also marked an era where many African nations gained their independence from European colonial rulers. Many authors, during that

time, considered themselves as artists and political activists at the same time because they attempted to mirror the concerns of the political and social conditions of their countries in their works. As the African nations fell one after the other and gained independence from the colonizer, each new state celebrated its independence from years of political and cultural domination. The term Post-colonial studies developed as a way of addressing the cultural production of societies affected by the historical phenomenon of colonialism. It aims at analyzing the strategies by which the colonized societies have engaged imperial discourse.

One of the founding fathers of the post-colonial thought is Frantz Fanon who was born in La Martinique (an earlier island French colony). Also, Fanon's views on race politics influenced the Algerian people and other colonized and oppressed minorities throughout the world. M.A.R. Habib describes Franz Fanon as 'a leading theorist and activist of third world struggle against colonial oppression', and 'one of the most powerful voices of revolutionary thought in the twentieth century. ' (Habib, 2005, p. 741) Influenced by his teacher Aimé Césaire and his movement négritude, Fanon's books included *Peau noire, masques blancs* (1952), translated as *Black Skin, White Masks* (1967), explored the psychological effects of racism and colonialism. (*ibid*.)

Indeed, the idea of resisting colonial rule is not new to the current generations. The early colonized communities or the pre-industrial nations have also known such notion. *"Colonialism then becomes a trans-historical thing, always present and always in process of dissolution in one part of the world or another,"* says Ahmad (1995) Ashcroft et al. dealt with many issues of the postcolonial theory. They claim that all the texts written by anti-colonial people, that is, writers who reject the premises of colonialist intervention, may be considered as post-colonial texts. (Ashcroft, et al. 2002)

To put it in a nutshell, postcolonialism was shaped and presented in literary works which reacted against colonization. Yet, by the end of the twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty first century, many notions and ideologies have been changed. Thus, postcolonial works then tries to resist the oppression of imperialism. It tackles the political, social and cultural independence of the societies formerly occupied by the imperialist power.

Besides, it tries to restore the identity of the ex-colonized subjects, and mainly their works, which have been marginalized and neglected by the European canon. In general, post-colonial theory investigates and examines the effect and legacy of the Western invasion, occupation, subjugation, colonialism and control of the non-western world (Rey, 2008). Furthermore, the post-colonial theory gives more importance to the decolonizing process. It aims at rejecting the assumptions imposed by the imperial forces and breaking the hierarchical order made by the colonial hegemony.

Ben Okri is a postcolonial writer who suffers the bureaucratic obstacles in his nation, Nigeria before he migrated to Great Britain. Okri is living now in Great Britain, which is considered the ex-colonizer of Nigeria. Though he claims in his writings the national identity and the urge to return to traditional customs of the Africans, he chose to write in English, which is the language of the colonizer. This is however puts him in a paradoxical question. One question comes to one's mind. How could the tongue of the colonizer reveals the sufferings of the african colonized people?

4.3. Postcolonial Theory and African Diaspora

The term 'diaspora' is taken from the Greek meaning 'to disperse.' Diasporas, on the otehr hand are the forcible movement of peoples from their homelands into new regions, mainly outside their nativenations. Probably the issue of diaspora has started by colonialism itself, which gave birth to the term afetrwards.

Aschcroft et al. State that : "The development of diasporic cultures necessarily questions essentialist models, interrogating the ideology of a unified, 'natural' cultural norm, one that underpins the centre/margin model of colonialist discourse." (Aschcroft et al, 2007, p. 62) It also questions the simpler kinds of theories of nativism which suggest that decolonization can be effected by a recovery or reconstuction of pre-colonial societies. (ibid) The most recent and most socially significant diasporic movements have been those of colonized peoples back to the metropolitan centres.

According to aschcroft et al. Countries like britain or France have some population minorities of diasporic ex-colonial peoples ; whose identity is a daiasporic one, and which is a positive affirmation of their hybridity. Virinder et al. (2005) note that :

"The contemporary significance of diaspora as an area of study that emerged alongside related intellectual movements in the academy such as post-colonial studies and the ubiquitous and poorly defined processes of globalization."

(Virinder et al. 2005, p. 08)

Generally, it focuses on the relationship between the homeland and the place of dispersal. In other words, what marks the diasporic understandings is the relationship between 'home and away' or inside teh nation and outside the nation. 'Away' denotes 'the writer is in loss'. However, the reasons why some groups or individuals leave their home nation is unknwon. They leave one place for another, subsequently settle and then have no formal relationship with their place of 'origin'. But, most of the time, they leave their home land unwillingly.

4.3.1. Postcolonial Theory and Hybridity

The term 'hybrid' has reoccurred in France under the term 'mètis'. Here again this term was given negative connotations, and people who were labeled as 'mètis', were marginalized and rejected by the others. That is to say, the pure community rejected the impure one. In this respect, Prabhu (2007) argues :

" Hybridity, then, is first and foremost a 'racial' term. Hybrid individuals in the colonies testified to real encounters between the white colonizer and the native (most often slave) subsequently required an active inscription in the laws and policies that managed and oversaw colonial activity."

Prabhu (2007, p. 12)

The Location of Culture (1994) is Bhabha's seminal work in which he gives many of the definitions of the notion of hybridity and accounts of the diverse aspects of this concept. The most comprehensive part of it concerning the definition of the notion of hybridity in Bhabha's works is the following excerpt from *Signs Taken for Wonders*, in which Bhabha says:

Hybridity is the sign of the productivity of colonial power, its shifting forces and fixities; it is the name for the strategic reversal of the process of domination through disavowal (that is, the production of discriminatory identities that secure the 'pure' and original identity of authority). Hybridity is the revaluation of the assumption of colonial identity through the repetition of discriminatory identity effects. It displays the necessary deformation and displacement of all sites of discrimination and domination ... The colonial hybrid is the articulation of the ambivalent space where the rite of power is enacted on the site of desire, making its objects at once

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disciplinary and disseminatory – or, in my mixed metaphor, a negative transparency. (Bhabha, 1994, pp. 112)

In this essay, Bhabha further defines hybridity as ―the name of […] displacement of value from symbol to sign that causes the dominant discourse to split along the axis of its power to be representative, authoritative. To elaborate more on this definition, Bhabha adds: "it is not a third term that resolves the tension between two cultures, or the two scenes of the book, in a dialectical play of recognition." (ibid, p. 113)

With regard to the African writings, May and Fink, (1999, p.03) say that :

> "Hybridity is an expression of everyday life. It continuously alters what we mean by both the national and the international. Hybridity draws on local and transnational identifications, including primordial as well as postidentitarian conceptions of the nation. It generates historically new mediations. They are "new" because they are located outside the official practices of citizenship, situated in the interstices of numerous legal and cultural borders, while being increasingly self-conscious of an international political economy of subjectivities. The proliferations of syncretic cultures has exploded the boundaries of aesthetic hybridity to the terrain of lived and performed spaces of cultural citizenship."

There are indeed many examples in the novel of Ben Okri depicting these characterizationd of hybridity. Habib (2005) refers to these tenets such as the undermining of binary oppositions, and an emphasis on language and discourse (p. 750). However, the history of the application of the notion of hybridity, in the contemporary theory, dates back to Bakhtin's *Discourse in the Novel*.

Moreover, many of the western studies is thought to have been influenced by Bakhtin's *Dialogic Imagination* (1981),whose works have inspired many post-colonial theorists, too. Bakhtin believes that the author, the work, and the reader are affected by one another. In addition, he claims that language changes dynamically; and it affects and is affected by culture that produces and uses it (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 294).

It is probably this Bakhtinian notion of hybrid utterances (ibid, p. 334) that influenced the other pillar of post-colonial theory, Homi Bhabha, who introduced his concept of hybridity and its use in the literary realm. Bhabha's contribution in Post-colonial studies is very considerable. He has produced several books and articles that are very influential to literary criticism.

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According to the *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism* (2001), Homi K. Bhabha is considered as one of the prominent figures in postcolonial studies, whose thinking is about 'nationality, ethnicity, and politics with post structuralist theories of identity and indeterminacy.' (p. 2377). Being influenced by the European theorists and philosophers, mainly Jacques Derrida, Bhabha's essay *'The Commitment to Theory'* (1989) revises conventional notions of nationality and the colonial subject and hybrid cultural constructions. Bhabha was born of an important constitutional lawyer, two years after India gained national independence from British colonial rule. Then, he traveled to England to earn his M.A and PhD from Oxford University. His life exemplifies some of the hybrid subject positions of the postcolonial world.

Another proponent of the post-colonial theory is the Indian Guayatri Chakravorty Spivak. Her famous essay *"Can the Subaltern Speak?"* (1988) is seen by critics as one of the basic texts in post colonial theory. Spivak accused some western critics of being Eurocentric in their views. She criticizes them for not speaking about the post-colonial subject's ill-treatment. In this regard, Janz (2012, p. 22) argues that:

> "…the single most important essay in the history of postcolonial theory, Guayatri Spivak's 'Can the Subalaztern Speak? maintains that neither can deal with history sufficiently to imagine a form of representation adequate to the subaltern."

Perhaps the two most influential figures in development of contemporary postcolonial theory were Edward W. Said and G. C. Spivak. Said's *'Orientalism'* (1978) is indeed a foundational text of postcolonial studies. He diagnosed the paths of cultural domination that projected non-Western people as the "Other"; whereas, Spivak's *'Can the Subaltern Speak?'* (1988) argued and shed light on the idea that postcolonial subjects have no voice under the dominant regime of colonial discourse. Thus, they need to be heard by the 'other' European.

Furthermore, through extending the work of Said and Spivak, Bhabha started with a deconstructive critique of the dichotomies of the West and the Orient, the center and the periphery, the empire and the colonized, the oppressor and the oppressed; and the self and the other. He adapts the method of Derrida's analysis of how binary oppositions structure Western thought, following the Saussurean notion of binary oppositions.

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Bhabha also argued that these dichotomies are too reductive because they imply that any national culture is 'unitary, homogeneous, and defined by "fixity" or an essential core.' Instead, Bhabha proposes that nationalities, ethnicities, and identities are dialogic, indeterminate, and characterized by "hybridity", which is one of his key terms and in the postcolonial theory in general. In *The Commitment to Theory*," he defines hybridity as "what is new, neither the one nor the other," (1994, p. 25) and which emerges from a 'Third Space.'

4.4. Postcolonial Discourse

Colonialism puts the native in a double bind: if he chooses conservatively and remains loyal to his indigenous culture, then he opts to stay in a calcified society whose developmental momentum has been checked by colonization. If, however, the colonized person chooses assimilation, then he is trapped in a form of historical catalepsy because colonial education severs him from his own past and replaces it with the study of the colonizer's past." JanMohamed (1983, p. 45) "What does need to be questioned, however, is the mode of representation of otherness." (Bhabha, 1994, p. 68)

The famous Marxist politician *Aimé Cesaire*, who studied medicine and psychiatry in France, where Lacan was one of his teachers, says:

> There is a fact: White men consider themselves superior to black men. There is another fact: Black men want to prove to white men at all costs, the richness of their thought, the equal value of their intellect. How do we extricate ourselves?
>
> (Cesaire, 1967, p. 10)

This is because "the real other for the white man is and will continue to be the black man." (Bhabha, 1994, p.60) Fanon states his belief that 'the fact of the juxtaposition of the white and black races has created a massive psycho-existential complex,' and his hope that an analysis of that complex will help to destroy it. He also declares that 'what is often called the black man's soul is the white man's artefact.'(Bhabha, 1994)

R.S. Sugirtharajah states that "Postcolonial studies emerged as a way of engaging with the textual, historical and cultural articulations of societies disturbed and transformed by the historical reality of colonial presence." (2012, p. 120) There have

been several attempts to define postcolonialism. Ashcroft et al. define postcolonial discourse as:

> "A way of reading and rereading texts of both metropolitan and colonial cultures to draw deliberate attention to the profound and inescapable effects of colonization on literary production; anthropological accounts; historical records; administrative and scientific writing."
>
> (Aschcroft et al. 2000, p. 192)

In addition, San Juan considers the postcolonial as the cultural logic of the mixture forms taken as the ethos of late modernity, a logic distanced from its grounding in the unsynchronized interaction between the civilizations of the colonial powers and the colonized subalterns." Later, he says that "postcolonial theory [...] can be read as metaphysical idealism masking its counter-revolutionary tools by denying its own worldly interest and genealogy."

According to Vijay and Hodge, "postcolonialism foregrounds a politics of opposition and struggle and problematizes the key relationship between centre and periphery." In the counter-relationship between the center and periphery, cultural critic Homi Bhabha defines the postcolonial discourse of cultural difference as "essentially ambivalent, liminal, hybrid, disjunctive, chockfull of ironies and aporias; unpresentable by definition, it refuses the logic of representation and all principles of intelligibility." then (Bhabha, 1994) adds:

> "Postcolonial perspectives emerge from the colonial testimony of Third world countries, and the discourses of "minorities" within the geopolitical divisions of East and West, North and South. They intervene in those ideological discourses of modernity that attempt to give a hegemonic "normality" to the uneven development and the differential, often disadvantaged, histories, of nations, races, communities, people. (Bhabha, 1994,p. 171)

In summary, postcolonial theory is an effort to create a critical discourse that contests the 'settings of modernity' with other forms of enunciation. In addition, postcolonial theory contains elements of deconstruction criticism as "an Attempt to radical decentring by unearthing and subverting the unquestioned assumptions on which the metaphysical tradition are based… that works by positing binary opposition…and by systematically affirming the superiority of the first over the second term." (Jobling, 1999, p. 510)

4.5. **Magic Realist Literature**

The term, in fact has mainly a long history in Latin American criticism. It was firstly introduced into theory by the german Franz Roh who considered it as an art category. According to Roh, magical realism was a way of representing and rsponding to reality and depicting the enigmas of reality pictorially. However, it was popularized when it was employed to characterize some contemporary works of the Latin American Gabriel Garcia Marquez. During the period of the 1960s and 1970s, some critics saw it as a defining feature of all Latin American writing. (Faris, 1995).

It was first used in the post-colonial context by Jacques Stephen Alexis in his essay, '*Of the magical realism of the Haitians*' (Alexis, 1956). For Alexis, it twas used by radical intellectuals in favour of social realism as a tool for revolutionary social representation, with a recognition that in many post-colonial societies a peasant, pre-industrial population had its imaginative life rooted in a living tradition of the mythic, the legendary and the magical.

Authors of such mode often regard myth and magic as integral. For Alexis,

> "The treasure of tales and legends, all the musical, choreographic and plastic symbolism, all the forms of Haitian popular art are there to help the nation in accomplishing the tasks before it." (Alexis, 1956, p. 12)

It is also used to interrogate the assumptions of Western narrative and to enclose it within an indigenous metatext, a body of textual forms that recuperate the pre-colonial culture.

Brenda Cooper's idea that "it is precisely the mix of authorial reticence with authorial irony that is a defining feature of the magical realist text." Cooper adds that "Magical realism often combines such concreteness and irony with a hint of mystery." (Cooper, 1998)

It can be also defined as "A narrative technique that blurs the distinction between fantasy and reality. It is characterized by mixing the ordinary and the extraordinary. Most magic realist writing examine the character of human existence with an implicit criticism of social norms. It was introduced in the 1950's in relation to Latin American fiction. It is one of three related terms (Bowers, 2004),

In Magical Realism, the supernatural is not a simple or obvious matter, but is an ordinary matter, and everyday occurrence; admitted, accepted, and integrated into the rationality' (Faris, 1995)

There are some characteristics that one finds in almost every magical realist work. Thses features are hybridity, irony, the supernatural and the natural. First, hybridity is a technique that is found in every magical realist work. Cooper noted that magical realists "do share a declaration of cultural hybridity 'a hybridity claimed to offer certain advantages in negotiating the collisions of language, race and art.' (Cooper, 1998, p. 20) For instance, it challenges some opposites loke life and death, the pre-colonial and the pots-colonial, the past and the present, the real and the fantastic… etc.

In the famished road of Okri, there are many magical realist features. Hybridity occurs very often in the famished road. For example, after Azaro assumed that a figure in the river to be the ferryman of the dead, he discovers that she was a hybrid woman, young in body but with an old woman's face. What is hybrid here may be the mixing of the ritual and the magical. (Okri, 1991, p. 250)

Secondly, irony is also a key feature in magical realists' works. The term magic relates to the fact that the point of view that the text depicts explicitly is not adopted according to the implied world view of the author. That is due to the fact that many authors of such mode are far away from their real societies, yet they tend to criticize their societies through the belief in the supernatural.

Thirdly, the supernatural is also one of the major characteristics of magical realism. For example, in the famished road of Ben Okri, the supernatural is not dispalyed as questionable or strange. It is depicted as being a fact, a living fact that the reader must accept and adapt himself to it.

5. **Conclusion**

After the nation gets its independence, the colonial presence still remain there. This reality creates many obstacles for the new independent community. Therefore, the members of society are under under the burden of charms and prodigies, and resistant to change. As a matter of fcat, any literature raised in a colonized nation should care of the concerns of the people. African literature is one of such kinds of literature. Particularly; Nigeria as an ex-colony of the british empire is still suffering from the british interference ion its policy. Post colonial literature deals with the idea of resisting the unnationalized item. It seeks to nationalize everything, starting from the land to the mind ; and including the literature, especially the language used in it. The issue of using a non African language in 'African Literature' is, for some intellectuals, a problem. Some are calling for the use of the indigenous langauges; while others stick to use a western, or the other's language, simply becaus eit helps gain a readership, and leads to international scene.

Chapter Two

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the relation between language and style; and how does a stylistic analysis comes up with an understanding of a literary text? Thus, the main concerns of the chapter will be about the stylistic framework for any study and how to draw a stylistic analysis of a literary work.

Any stylistic analysis of literature must examine the text either being in writing or in speech. Stylistics in fact aims at evaluating the quality of a text as well as the meaning of a text (Leech, 1981, p. 06). In addition, stylisticians seek to evaluate the effect of the message of the writer and the effect of the communication of the speaker within the text. However, the linguistic analysis of literature has to do with the examination of grammatical features of a written work; and the examination of discourse features in the story being told including situation of discourse, thought presentation, and speech presentation in discourse.

Habib (2005) in his *History of literary Criticism* says : "any stylistics capable of dealing with the novel must be a "sociological stylistics" that does not treat the work of literature as a self-enclosed artifact but exposes "the concrete social context of discourse" as the force that determines from within "the entire stylistic structure of the novel" (Habib, 2005, p. 666)

The fact that literature is made from and with language, also makes it the medium of literature and that helps the interpretation of the text at last. Literature is also a creative activity that would not exist without language. On the other hand, language serves also as the vehicle of expression of the imaginative world; and thus would extinguish if there were no scribled texts that could maintain it across different generations.

1. Literature and Stylistics

There are three major approaches to litearary texts. Therefore, stylistics has some sort of contact with such approaches. The late years of the twentith century have seen significant advances in linguistics, as well as in the literary and cultural theory. Such developments have provided an important background for text analyses using different methodologies. In particular, literary theory has embraced many topics, including the nature of the author's intentions, the character, the reader's responses and the specific textuality of the text.

Questions such as 'what is literature?' and 'what is it for?' have dominated different studies. On the one hand, some critics consider that the study of literature is the study of a number of great writers judged according to the canon. On the oither hand, there is the view that the notion of literature is relative and dependent on a given period.

For these reasons, different methodologies have evolved for text analyses. During the period from the 1940s to the late 1960s, literature was considered as dissimilar to the everyday communicative needs. However, in the 1970s and 1980s the growth of communicative language teaching methods led to a reconsideration of the place of literature in the language classroom with recognition of the primary authenticity of literary texts and of the fact that more imaginative and representational uses of language could be embedded alongside more referentially utilitarian output.

2. Stylistics as Methodology

As a methodology, the pedagogic importance of stylistics lies in its explication of how texts are understood and interpreted by the reader, mainly in terms of the latter's interaction with the linguistic structure of the literary text. Nevertheless, the adoption of stylistic approaches is not without its problems; as many critics see that stylistics is too reductive. The view also sees that it ignores some important issues about historical context or aesthetic aspects of the text. They argue that stylistics seeks a naïve 'objectivity' of the text; and claims for interpretations that are merely text-immanent (Fowler, 1986, p. 125)

A more considered view is that stylistics has contributed in diverse ways to methodology in the teaching of literature. Leech (1981), on the other hand, sees that linguistic studies are unable or unsufficient to provide a stylistic analysis of the text though he considers the discipline as 'the dialogue' between the reader and the linguist. He says:

> "It would be wrong to expect linguistics to provide an objective, mechanical technique of stylistic analysis. One major concern of stylistics is to check 'or validate intuitions by detailed analysis, but stylistics is also a dialogue between literary reader and linguistic observer, in which insight, not mere objectivity, is the goal. Linguistic analysis does not replace the reader's intuition […]; but it may prompt, direct, and shape it into an understanding." (Leech 1981, p. 05)

The intuitions that he is talking about is any attempt of the reader to decode the message of the writer, or any interpretation that could be after close reading of the text. Yet, this can not be achieved through the linguist's task. Then, Leech adds : "Stylistics builds on linguistics, and in return, stylistics challenges our linguistic frameworks, reveals their deficiencies, and urges us to refine them." In this sense, stylistics is an adventure of discovery for both the critic and the linguist." (Leech 1981, p. 06)

3. What is stylistics?
3.1. Definitions of Stylistics

Stylistics normally refers to "the practice of using linguistics for the study of literature" (Simpson, 1993, p. 03). Similarly, according to Short (1996), stylistics is an approach to the analysis of literary texts using linguistic description. It relates the linguistic features of a literary piece with its interpretation and synthesizes literary critics' observation with the linguists' literary intuition. Widdowson (1975) has also described stylistics as a mediating discipline between linguistics and literary criticism.

In other words, stylistics is concerned with the relation of the linguistic devices in a text with the generated meanings which is explored through it. The words and sentences of the text are examined critically and are studied in relation to its literary criticism. Stylistic analysis helps "foster interpretive skills and to encourage reading between the lines of what is said" (Carter, 1996, p. 05). According to Lazar (1993), it has two main objectives; firstly, it enables students to make meaningful interpretations

of the text. Secondly, it expands students' knowledge and awareness of the language in general.

Stylistics is concerned with "the study of style in language" (Verdonk, 2002, p. 03). Verdonk also points out that "style" in language is a distinctive linguistic expression. It can be said that style arises from the individual use of words and expressions of the author that are later to be decoded by the readers. A text attains its meaning through the interplay of form and function of language. Since language is a dynamic process; therefore, stylistics studies the relation between form and meaning in a text. Any cultural or cognitive context of the text are taken into consideration when when dealing with that text stylistically. Also, any stylistic analysis of a text should come up with the interpretation of it.

As Leech puts it, "Stylistics may be regarded simply as the variety of discourse analysis dealing with literary discourse." (Leech 1983, p. 15) If literature is not taken as being distinctive, however, then stylistics may be even more simply regarded as synonymous with discourse analysis in general. Moreover, if this is to be critical in the Critical Discourse Analysis sense, then stylistics is also essentially an enquiry into the socio-political significance of texts. (Widdowson, 2004, p. 131)

Another definition states that 'Stylistics is simply the study of style.' Historically speaking, it started with De Saussure's student, Charles Bally, and continued with other figures like Roman Jakobson, who called it 'poetics', Michael Riffaterre, Richard Ohmann, Geoffrey Leech, Henry Widdowson, Roger Fowler, Stanley Fish, Paul Simpson and many others. All of them, except Bally, have concentrated on the investigation of literary texts in a given context, and for a given purpose.

On the other hand, Widdowson (1975) provides the following definition for stylistics, in which he emphasizes the role of linguistics in the literary study of any text. He states:

> "By stylistics I mean the study of literary discourse from a linguistic orientation and I shall take the view that what distinguishes stylistics from literary criticism on the one hand and linguistics on the other is that it is a means of linking the two." (Widdowson, 1975, p. 03)

For Widdowson, stylistics is the link or the bridge between literary criticism and linguistics. Linguistics also serves as the framework for studying literary discourse. Probably, it is the diverse views towards language in general and towards literature in particular which gave rise to many methodologies and approaches.

The term stylistics is also sometimes used to describe critically reflexive development of linguistic tools through literary application, which is usually being called linguistic stylistics; or the use of linguistic tools to analyse literary or poetic features (e.g. metaphor) within naturally occurring language and non-fictional texts such as: conversations, advertisements and political speeches.

However, the dating of contemporary Stylistics is mainly a twentieth century notion, descending from the evolutions in approaches to language in literature within Structuralism, Russian Formalism, Prague School Functionalism, through Practical and New Criticism, and on through Reader Response Theory. Equally influential, though, are parallel advances from structuralist to poststructuralist notions of meaning and communication within linguistics, such as the move from descriptive grammars like Chomsky's generative grammar (which sought to define the 'deep' and 'surface' structures of all grammatical sentences) to Halliday's functional grammar (which emphasized the pragmatic dimensions of language in its communicative context)**.** Contemporary stylistics is influenced by the late twentieth century discourse pragmatic-oriented developments in sociolinguistics, pragmatics, and discourse analysis.

Stylistics selectively adopts, adapts and appropriates a range of concepts and models from philosophical, practical and socio-linguistics to investigate the interpretative impact of various linguistic features employed within literature. A few of the features sometimes are within traditional literary study, such as literary linguistic means of deviation and foregrounding **(**for example, sound pattering through assonance and alliteration, lexical deviation such as neologisms, semantic deviation in the form of metaphors, etc.). However, many other features can only be analysed using linguistic concepts and models.

Thus, the aim of stylistics is to provide a less subjective, more retrievable account of the interpretative effects of literary texts through a more textually sensitive, systematic and socio-linguistically informed analysis of their linguistic features.

Contemporary stylistics has many branches, too; of which 'cognitive poetics' is perhaps the most significant. Cognitive poetics has evolved as part of the late twentieth century scope of 'cognitive linguistics', artificial intelligence, and psycholinguistics. Within cognitive poetics, a stylistician can explore the mental processes behind interpretation of stylistic features.

Thus, within the general framework of stylistics, there are three main tendencies of stylistic investigation; linguistic stylistics, literary stylistics, and affective stylistics. This study however lies in the sphere of linguistic stylistics. This will be discussed in more details in chapter three, where a a practical task will be done. It will focus mainly on the presence of opposites in the text. The corpus is a novel by Ben Okri, the famished road (1992). The use of opposites or antonyms in the novel is not without an aim; and which is considered to have a background in the writer's mind, and which is seen as having an influence on the interpretation of the text.

3.2. Definition of Style

Styles are the product of social situation of a common relationship between language users. (Banjo, 1982, p. 01) views style as an exhaustive study of the use of language in literary works whereas (Crystal et al., 1979, p. 165) defines the term as 'the features of situational distinctive uses of language.'

It is also noted by some scholars that style is the medium that enables a writer to produce a piece of text with a specific pragmatic goal such as informing, or persuading. In order to achieve this goal, the author makes particular linguistic choices, decomposes rhetorical goals into lexical, syntactic and semantic choices. For this extent, the aim of this study is to look upon these strategies in one of the contemporary African literary work. It is the famished road of Ben Okri.

It is therefore, that any attempt to deal with the stylistic features of a literary work should deal with the text. Thus, one must give an insight about the term text and texture firstly. For this reason, Adejamre (1992, p. 06) defines a text as a unit of language that has been used in a specific context by a text producer with the purpose of communicating a message through the use of the linguistic signs existing within a language semiotic universe. This means that a writer uses a text to communicate a

message. The grammar of the text allows the recognition of the overall structure of a text and how it works to achieve a certain communicative goal. It is also observed that context of situation has to be involved before any text can be accurately interpreted.

According to Paul Simpson, There is popular misconception in literary critical circles that stylistics in some sort of impersonal mechanical device which is used to dismantle literary texts. Once stripper share, the texts are then scoured for any significant features of language that influence reading or interpretation. This highly erroneous view of stylistics is disseminated in different ways through the academic system. The Glossary of Literary Terms defines stylistics as:

> "A method of analysing works of literature which proposes to replace the 'subjectivity' and 'impressionism' of standard criticism with an 'objective' or 'scientific' analysis of the style of literary texts." (Abrahms, 2005, p. 305)

While Paul Fry in his theory of literature (2012, p. 332) defines both narratology and stylistics as '…the science of style and how one can approach it syntactically and statistically' relating it to the Russian formalists origins; and pointing out that they are derived from structuralism, especially for narratology. One of the prominent Russian Structuralits is Michael Bakhtin who gave more attention to the study of style in fiction and the importance of studying style in literature.

For Bakhtin, heteroglossia, or diversity of speech as he calls it sometimes, is what he singles out to be "the ground of style" (p. 592). It is 'the diversity of speech' and not the unity of a normative shared language that is the ground of style. To put it differently, and to invest the Saussurean terms, it is the diversity of parole and not of Langue. That is to say, in other words, 'the language of most of us is the language of many others.' (Fry, 2012, p. 213)

To put it briefly, the stylistic analysis of literature examines a text for patterns in writing (authorial style) and in speech (discourse style). Thus, it aims at evaluating both the quality of a text as well as its meaning. In addition, the effect of the communication of the writer and the effect of the communication of the speaker within the text are also evaluated. However, any linguistic analysis of literature should take into consideration the examination of the grammatical features of a piece of literature. This is for prose

fiction; whereas, for poetry, it examines the relationship of sounds and their effects in the piece of poetry.

Although 'stylistics' was popularized in the 1950s, and came to be thought of as a discrete field of linguistics or applied linguistics, but it gained more importance later on with the appearance of structural linguistics; which emphasized the structural properties of texts at different levels of linguistic organization (phonological, grammatical, lexical and prosodic). 'General stylistics' (Sebeok, 1960) however, was interested in all forms of language text, spoken and written, distinguished from the sub-field of literary stylistics.

Roman Jakobson is often credited with giving the first formulation of stylistics. That was in a famous lecture delivered in 1958 (Jakobson, 1960). Jakobson's theme was the relationship between poetics, or the aesthetic response to language and text; and linguistics. He argued that the investigation of verbal art or poetics is mainly a sub-branch of linguistics. He deduced that by establishing that the poetic function of language, we could come up with the stylistic feature of language. Thus, For jakobson, the poetic function is a general function of all language use, and it is not restricted to only poetry or any other literary texts.

In other words, the importance of Jakobson's paper lies in his attempt to list all the main functions of language. The poetic function stands alongside the referential function (the cognitive ordering of propositional meaning) and the emotive function (affective and expressive meaning). Other functions are the conative function (organising meaning relative to an addressee), the metalingual function (language 'glossing' or referring to itself) and the phatic function (language marking that people are in social contact).

While this is a structuralist view to the function(s) of language; however, the stylistic point of view towards the functions of language draws attention to the language used itself rather than the outside effects of texts. That is to say, the main interest of stylistics is to look inside the text. What makes a text so attractive to readers and what makes the producer or the author to use those stylistic techniques in his text.

On the other hand, Halliday has also another model of language functions. Though the linguistic function had been discussed much earlier, but it was in Michael Halliday's writing that the multi-functionality of language was theorized in most detail (Halliday, 1978). Halliday modeled linguistic meaning as being organized through three 'macro-functions', which he called ideational, interpersonal and textual. This is Halliday's basic model of 'meaning potential', or 'what language can mean'; and of language in use or 'how language means.' This model has developed into a general semantic theory of language called systemic-functional linguistics. But it could also be applied, Halliday thought, specifically to the analysis of language style (Eggins and Martin 1997).

Moreover, Halliday introduced an abstract distinction between dialect and register. Dialect is language organized in relation to 'who the speaker is' in a regional or social sense. Register is the language organized in relation to 'what use is being made of language'. In addition, he treats register as a plane of semantic organization, which can be specified through the concepts of field, or the organization of ideational and experiential meanings; mode, or the organization of textual and sequential meanings; and tenor, or the organization of interpersonal meanings.

So, a particular or way of speaking (register) would have distinctive semantic qualities, reflecting speakers' choices from the whole meaning potential of the language. Ideational selections will show up as topics, things, facts or reports, most obviously in the grammatical structure of nominal groups. Textual selections will relate to choices of communicative mode/manner, sequencing, deixis and so on.

Furthermore, the material basis of both 'inner' cognitive processes and 'outer' meaning-making, or semiotic, activity has been disjoined from our discourses about the mental like thinking and meaning like discourse and language. Another problem stems from the way in which semiosis is narrowly defined in terms of linguistically informed notions of text. One negative consequence of this restriction is the failure to see not only the continuities that link human semiosis with the semiosis of other species, but also the continuities that exist between perception, non linguistic conceptual thinking, mental imaging, consciousness, and semiosis.

3.3. **Linguistic Stylistics**

This approach is concerned with the linguistic description of stylistic devices. In other words, it is the pure version of the whole discipline of stylistics. That is to say, this model of stylistics derives from linguistics to put it in service of linguistics again. Its main principles can be traced back to the work of Ferdinand de Saussure, Course in General Linguistics (1916). Therefore, it contributes to the interpretation of literary texts, as Fowler declares during his controversy with Bateson: "A mere description is of no great use, except possibly as an exercise to promote awareness of language or of method" (Fowler, 1971).

By contrast, Pearce, who is another linguistic stylistician, claims that description in linguistic stylistics is an act of interpretation. He says: "Description of the facts is never separable from an interpretation of the facts" (Pearce, 1977, p. 38). He goes further to equate interpretation with description and analysis. Around the same era of the 1970s, another group of linguistic stylisticians, the Computational Stylisticians appeared, including Milic (1967) who did a computer study of Jonathan Swift's style; Gibson (1966) who did a statistical diagnosis of styles with application to to American prose; and Ohmann (1962) who studied Shaw's style. This is probably the same with the current notion of corpus stylistics.

3.4. **Contemporary Linguistic Stylistics**

The Precursors of linguistic stylistics are Burton's study of dramatic dialogue (1980) and Banfield's investigation of narrative discourse (1982). Other linguistic stylisticians include McHale (1983), Taylor and Toolan (1984) and Carter (1986). More precisely, this model is founded on the generative grammar of narrative sentences. Although more sophisticated, it is in some way a return to the generative stylistic model for its focus is on the purely linguistic forms of some narrative sentences. It draws its pricipales from generative grammar discipline and mainly from Halliday's theories. It is simply descriptive. However, Burton's model is more advanced and more ambitious, yet her main concern is with the mode of linguistic analysis and description more than with the stylistic functions of linguistic features and interpretation of texts.

Therefore, linguistic stylisticians and 'generative stylisticians' in particular, claim that this approach is objective. Their argument is that a linguistic stylistic analysis

does not involve the own intrusions of the stylistician. That is to say, it is more objective; and it ignores the critic's intuitions as Leech says above. In addition, anyone who applies the same analysis of the same material by using the same model must draw the same conclusions. Nevertheless, this model has been criticized, sometimes severely, both from inside and outside the camp of stylistics. For, Linguistic Stylistics has in fact earned the discipline of stylistics some hostility in the market of academic studies.

Ghazala H (1987, p. 46) considers that: 'Linguistic stylistic analysis offers systematic and scientific models for the description of language' and this by itself is a good contribution to the development of our awareness of language. 'Another strength of this model lies in its provision of one or two occasions of reliable criteria -Burton's model in particular- for discerning the important stylistic features,' he adds. The third merit is that it introduces both linguists and students of linguistics to new discoveries in linguistic analyses which, in turn contribute to the evolution of linguistic theory. (ibid)

It should be mentioned that the literary side of texts is outside the scope of this model. Halliday (1966, p. 67) holds the view that "Linguistics alone is insufficient in literary analysis, and only the literary analyst -not the linguist- can determine the place of linguistics in literary study."

In the same respect, Carter (1989, p. 121) says:

> The study of literary language by linguists has always promised two types of insight. The first is insight into the individuality of a writer's style; indeed the very name 'stylistics' reflects that concern […] The second is as a tool for the interpretation of individual works; here successes have perhaps been more sporadic and have been more dependent on the individual than on the development of useful techniques of analysis...

In a similar context, Carter (1979) mentioned another idea in support for this view by stating that a detailed linguistic analysis of literary texts does not automatically suggest what is significant or meaningful in it. He believes that a linguistic stylistic analysis of a text is incapable of providing a convincing analysis of it, especially concerning literary aspects of such text. Carter also gave some basic assumptions about the nature of written discourses.

Therefore, linguistic stylistics can have no legitimate claim to interpretation, and when it does, it either confuses it with something else, as claimed by by Pearce above,

or identifies it with description. Although linguistic description of a text is an act of interpretation, it is proportional and, therefore, incomplete.

Criticism of this model has been conceded even by some of its advocates. Pearce, to cite one example, admits that it is theoretically confused and has a perpetual concern about linguistics and has an uneasy relationship with literary criticism. He adds that it can be of some use to short texts only, since a detailed linguistic description of a long text like a novel is "problematic and tedious and probably unenlightening" (Pearce, 1977, p. 08).

3.5. Literary stylistics

In The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Language, David Crystal observes that, in practice, most stylistic analysis has attempted to deal with the complex and 'valued' language within literature, i.e. 'literary stylistics'. He say that the scope of literary stylistics is sometimes narrowed to concentrate on the more striking features of literary language, for instance, its 'deviant' and abnormal features, rather than the broader structures that are found in whole texts or discourses. For him, the compact language of poetry for instance, is more likely to reveal the secrets of its construction to the stylistician than is the language of plays and novels. (Crystal, 1987, p. 71)

Literary stylistics is simply the study of 'literary style'. Its concern is the interpretation and appreciation of literary texts in particular. The investigation of language organisation is its starting point; with the aim of seeking significant stylistic devices and their functions, and how these affect and contribute to our understanding of the literary texts. Leech and Short (2007, p. 11) identify its goal as "explaining the relation between language and artistic function", and that its big issues are not 'what' as 'why' and 'how'. Then short and leech gave the simple difference between linguistic and literary stylistics by saying that:

> From the linguist's angle, it is 'Why does the author here choose this form of expression?' From the literary critic's viewpoint, it is 'How is such-and-such an aesthetic effect achieved through language?'[...] Style being a relational concept, the aim of literary stylistics is to be relational in a more interesting sense than that already mentioned: to relate the critic's concern of aesthetic appreciation with the linguist's concern of linguistic description. (We use the term 'appreciation' to comprehend both critical evaluation and interpretation, although it is with interpretation that stylistics is more directly. (Short, 1983, p. 11)

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It relates the two essential, complementary factors, the literary/aesthetic of the critic, and the linguistic description of the linguist, which is done by the concern of the 'what', 'why' and 'how' of stylistic devices and effects.

Literary stylistics is, therefore, "bi-planar in principle, and multi-planar at the functional level" (Ghazala, 1987), hunting for the stylistic functions and effects of language patterning at different levels. The literary stylistician will not feel satisfied with the pure linguistic description of stylistic features. He will furtherly carry on to discover the functions produced; why produced, and how they can even change our perception of texts. Moreover, the cornerstone of any literary stylistic activity is based on intuition. In a similar fashion, Fowler (1981, p. 11) describes stylistics as "the venue where the linguist and the literary critic meet". It simply means "the application of theoretical ideas of analytic techniques drawn from linguistics to the study of literary texts."

Stylistics is the study of language in literature. It seeks to account for the interpretative effects of a text through close study of its linguistic details, such as the syntactic structures of the text, its semantic deviation, deixis, modality, etc. It uses models and approaches from various fields in linguistics and literary theory to find out how a specific arrangement of linguistic motifs and structures facilitates and generates certain aesthetic and hermeneutic effects, to analyse the textual features as triggers for and constraints upon interpretation.

As Leech puts it, "stylistics […] may be regarded simply as the variety of discourse analysis dealing with literary discourse" (Leech 1983, p. 122). If literature is not taken as being distinctive, then stylistics may be simply regarded as synonymous with discourse analysis in general. A significant direction that stylistics has taken over recent years is that it deals with 'literature' only as a kind of documentation of social values and beliefs. As Carter and Simpson (1989, p. 15) put it in their book Language, Discourse and Literature:

> Literary discourse analysis should seek to demonstrate the determining positions available within texts, and show how "meanings" and "interpretations of meanings" are always and inevitably discursively produced. (Carter and Simpson 1989, p. 15)

To analyse literature as discursive production is to examine what 'socio-historical, culturally shaped' positions are taken up in texts with regard to 'issues of class, gender, its socio-political context and ideology'. Such analysis 'takes us beyond the traditional concern of stylistics with aesthetic values towards concern with the social and political ideologies encoded in texts' (ibid, p. 16). Therefore, indeed it does. However, a number of rather problematic questions arise.

As Halliday tells us, Language is social semiotic; but it does not follow that in using it we are restricted to social conformity. On the other hand, literature, as Fowler tells us, is social discourse. Nbevertheless, it is not only that. It is very difficult to typify a text as expressing a particular set of social or ideological values. In fact, texts are not produced by ideologies but by the individuals of the community, and no matter what their socio-political background may be, those individuals vary. George Steiner has important things to say about this point:

> "Any model of communication is at the same time a model of translation, of a vertical or horizontal transfer of significance. No two historical epochs, no two social classes, no two localities use words and syntax to signify exactly the same things, to send identical signals of valuation and inference. Neither do two human beings. Each communicatory gesture has a private residue. The 'personal lexicon' in every one of us inevitably qualifies the definitions, connotations, semantic moves current in public discourse. [...] The language of a community, however uniform its social contour, is an inexhaustibly multiple aggregate of speech-atoms, of finally irreducible personal meanings." (Steiner 1975, p.47)

Indeed, Steiner here mentions a very important point about the evolution of any language through the different generations of its users. Since time changes from one era to another, it is undoubtedly that language changes too.

A stylistic analysis concerned with the 'social and political ideologies encoded in texts' would obviously focus attention on the contours of public discourse, and consider those textual features which are dealt with in relation to such communal values. Therefore, the stylistic analysis of Ben Okri's 'The Famished Road' is not complete if does not take into considerations the socio-cultural and the ideological aspects of the both the author and the reader.

The private residue of personal meanings would be irrelevant, and indeed a distraction, for the expression of these values in public discourse depends on people

ignoring the private residue. And of course the kind of literary discourse analysis that Carter and Simpson favour would ignore it too in its demonstration of the socially defined public positions and values which can be traced in literary texts. This approach to literary discourse has a long tradition and there have been innumerable studies which demonstrate how literary works reflect the 'social and political ideologies' prevailing at the time. This tradition has been revitalized over recent years.

According to (Weber, 2002), it is distinctive of 'most contemporary movements in literary criticism' that they aim at 'contextualizing and historicizing the literary text' and he cites as examples studies which show how Aphra Behn's play Oroonoko 'can be interpreted with reference to the succession problems of the Catholic King James II' and how Mary Shelley's novel Frankenstein 'relates to the "monsters" unleashed by the French Revolution' (Weber 2002). No doubt literary texts can be read in this way, and the tracing of their underlying socio-political significance can be very revealing.

Widdowson's 'Critical Practices: On Representation and the Interpretation of Text' (2000) is an attack on critical discourse analysts who isolate texts from their contexts. This was based on Fairclough's model which emphasizes the importance of the social conditions of production and interpretation (Fairclough, 1989) and included an intertextual dimension (Fairclough, 1992), and if we consider the more recent publications in critical discourse analysis such as Fairclough and Wodak (1997) or Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999). Thus Fairclough and Wodak insist that 'discourse is historical':

> Discourse is not produced without context and cannot be understood without taking the context into consideration ... utterances are only meaningful if we consider their use in a specific situation, if we understand the underlying conventions and rules, if we recognize the embedding in a certain culture and ideology, and most importantly, if we know what the discourse relates to in the past.
>
> (Fairclough and Wodak, 1997, p. 276)

But there seems to be no reason for supposing that this is their only, or even their primary, significance. A socio-political pretext for reading is no more or less valid than an aesthetic one. Both have their own justification. (Widdowson 2004, p. 131) Also, Simpson (2004) define stylistics as 'a method of textual interpretation in which primacy of place is assigned to language.' The main purpose is mainly to 'explore creativity in language use.' Which aims at last at a sufficient undefrstanding a the literary text.

3.6. Evaluative Stylistics

Generally speaking, evaluative stylistics tends to give a value to any piece of literature. Thus, the focus of evaluative stylistics is on the features of a piece of writing that make it stand out as good or bad. Literary criticism, for example, provides a variety of subjective stylistic observation and analysis. (Crystal, 1987) notes that evaluative observations generally imply "a degree of excellence in performance or a desired standard of production," saying: "Evaluative notions are an essential part of aesthetic approaches to language, and are implicit in such areas as elocution, oratory, and literary criticism" (Crystal 1987, p. 66)

3.7. Intuitive Stylistics

It refers mainly to the subjective reactions made by the reader to the literary work. Such reaction are resulted from the intuition of the reader. The analyst or the reader intuitively pays attention to the linguistic choices that the writer has made, and why he has made them. That is for what purpose, and what significance do they have to serve understanding the whole work ?

Carter (1982) observes that what the reader knows of the writing is only intuitive. He says: "We sense that what we are hearing or reading is odd or belongs to a special register or code of language." (Carter, 1982, p. 5) Since intuitive stylistics is too subjective. However, difficulty arises in the search for a method of systematic analysis of such intuitions or sense impressions. Carter (ibid) notes that the precise nature of the interpretative processes readers undergo tends to remain obscure to us. The implicit and intuitive nature of our operational knowledge of our native language is very much at the root of this obscurity.

By contrast, the rejection of evaluative stylistics is instead very important for the reason that the linguist's impressionistic reactions to a writer often result in the successful identification and eventual analysis of distinctive style markers. (Crystal and Davy, 1969) made an important note about the objective observations of style, saying that "... the first step in any stylistic analysis must be an intuitive one." . (Crystal and Davy, 1969, p. 12)

3.8. **Objective Stylistics**

On the other hand, the objective linguistic analysis excludes casual and any haphazard observation of language variation. The systematic and explicit results of such analysis are what distinguish stylistics from literary criticism (Carter 1982, p. 06).

The search for objectivity in analyzing the style is the concern of many critics. Some propose that for an analysis of style to be "non-subjective" or "objective", it must be quantitative. There are also those who maintain that objectivity is achieved through a *combination* of qualitative and quantitative observation, description, and analysis. "A stylistics predominantly concerned with static interpretation spends its time *recovering* meaning by close analysis of interrelated linguistic levels. " (Carter, 1989, p. 259)

3.9. **Descriptive Stylistics**

This has to do with observing the quality of the style. Therefore, the means of this investigation is describing and assessing the grammar of the text. Crystal and Davy (1969, p. 13) say that the "central requirement" of linguistic stylistics is to "provide a single, clear technique of description" within a given grammatical paradigm, saying: . . . the procedures for approaching stylistic analysis are no different from those made use of in any descriptive linguistic exercise: the primary task is to catalogue and classify features within the framework of some general linguistic theory (Crystal and Davy 1969, p. 60)

Nevertheless, there are limitations to descriptive analysis that may be overcome within the descriptive process itself, or (if not) they may be resolved by the application of quantitative methods. One general restriction is articulated by Durant and Fabb (1987, p 228), we do not have satisfactory ways of combining together things we notice about the formal structures of a text, the various functional significances we attribute to those patterns, and the expectations or knowledge we bring to the text to begin with.

A second problem is that the methodological task proposed by Crystal and Davy requires that features be present or absent in the text, yet style. For that reason, Labov suggests that the failure of qualitative analysis to account for linguistic variation can be overcome by recognizing variation as inherent to the grammar itself, i.e., as a property of linguistic rules and systems.

3.9.1. **Quantitative Stylistics**

Quantitative studies of written style assume that the grammar will describe the qualitative and the features of the norm, but (Crystal 1987, p. 67) maintains that only a statistical analysis of style and the norm will account for the continuous dimensions of stylistic variation. Statistical measures of style and computer techniques are quite useful in this field.

While linguistic variables themselves are qualitative in nature, it is possible to measure their frequencies of occurrence as well as the causes and effects of changes in those frequencies. (Leech and Short, 1981) say: 'the structural differences between any two styles of speaking or writing can be measured in terms of the frequency of occurrence of key linguistic features.'

Moreover, syntax may be a more productive level for stylistic analysis (Milic, 1966) pointed out that, "the grammatical or syntactical component of writing is the best source of information about a writer's style." (Milic, 1966, p. 83)

Yet, the criticism that may be said in reponse to the quantitative methods is that they are capable of measuring only the surface characteristics of language, and not the deep features of language form, or language function. There is strong practical and theoretical motivation to combine available methodologies in the analysis of style. Thus, some stylisticians have discovered the analytical strength of combining stylistic methodologies rather than using one in favor of another.

3.9.2. **Cognitive Stylistics**

Awareness of style is essential for understanding and appreciation of language in use, including both literary and non-literary texts. By focusing on use of language and stylistic features, researchers have sought to combine the approaches of the linguist and the literary critic in a particular interpretation and consider both poetic function and poetic form (Jakobson 1960). A linguistic approach to literature has generated innumerable approaches and studies since Jacobson's outstanding contribution to this subject. One of the greatest gains has been the advancement of a discourse-based approach to language phenomena.

4. **The Purpose of Stylistics**

Synthesising more formally some of the observations made above, it might be worth thinking of the practice of stylistics as conforming to the following three basic principles, cast mnemonically as three 'Rs'. The three Rs stipulate that: stylistic analysis should be rigorous, retrievable and replicable.

To argue that the stylistic method be rigorous means that it should be based on a explicit framework of analysis. To argue that stylistic method be retrievable means that the analysis is organised through explicit terms and criteria, the meanings of which are agreed upon by other students of stylistics. To say that a stylistic analysis seeks to be replicable simply means that the methods should be sufficiently transparent as to allow other stylisticians to verify them, either by testing them on the same text or by applying them beyond that text.

5. **Language and Representation**

The issue of what are the real features that qualifies of a text to be literary is very debatable. More generally, how does literary form hold of a text? Nigel Fabb, in his book Language and Literary Structure: The Linguistic Analysis of Form in Verse and Narrative (2004) proposes two different answers, which distinguish the variable from the invariant aspects of literary form. Both answers come from linguistics but from two different kinds of linguistics: generative metrics will explain the invariant aspects of form and linguistic pragmatics will explain the variable aspects of form.

In this way, literary form is seen to be a kind of meaning, a description of itself which the text communicates to its reader, and has all the complex characteristics associated with meaning: uncertainties, ambiguities and contradictions. The question 'What is literature?' is, undoubtedly, a complex and elusive question; thus, critics agree that there is no universal objective definition of the concept of literature. It is simply because notions of viewing literature have changed over centuries, depending on the different views of society. Prior to 1800 the term 'literature' meant 'everything written in a language, artistic or not'. However, In our modern use 'literature' appears more as a descriptive term which refers to good writing such as poetry, novels, short stories and prose which have the artistic features.

During the last decades, different scholars, especially literary critics tried to tackle the issue of literariness - the term denotes and differentiate the literary from the non-literary work. In fact, it was Roman Jakobson who introduced the term in 1921 when he said "The object of literary scholarship is not literature but literariness, i.e. which makes a given work a literary one." He suggests that literature is definable because it uses language in peculiar ways.

Thus, the search for a definition of literariness has developed in two directions. The first direction is the Russian Formalist's approach which assumes that there is a difference between literary and ordinary texts with features specific to literary language. For Jakobson and other formalists, the literariness of a piece of work lies in its defamiliarization or its estrangement from the ordinary speech. That is to say the language of literature differs from other modes by its deviation.

Nowadays, theorists disagree on the issue of what is understood by literariness. In the 1990s, a number of scholars reintroduced the model of formalism to define literariness. Theorists such as Van Dijk (1979) focus on the cognitive aspects of meaning representation and say that literariness must seek a basis not in linguistic theory but in a cognitive pragmatic one. Yet other scholars think that a theory of literariness is merely impossible. Because in this case, we omit what is linguistically right. That is to say, the linguist, or mainly the stylistician, will find nothing to deal with; since what is literary should not be like that of the everyday use of language; and which is said to be estranged and defamiliarized.

There is no hard and fast division between the literary and non-literary language. They are interdependent. The literary language constantly enriches its vocabulary and forms from the non-literary, which is said to be ordinary. Therefore, it is difficult to specify the characteristic features of the non-literary language because it does not present any system. Thus, the best way to understand it is to contrast the non-literary form to the existing form of the literary one.

Paul Simpson dealt with the issue of literariness in literary stylistics. With regard to the scope of stylistics, He says: "stylistics is interested in what writers do with and through language, and in the raw materials out of which literary discourse is crafted." (Simpson 2004, P. 98)

The example he gave as a presupposed to be literary by its form, is somehow the widespread criterion of what is literary. The poem of 'one perfect rose' by Dorothy Parker shows how people, or readers, may tackle to the issue of what is literary from what is not. Thus, it is a subjective attitude towards any work which makes its value. Though the last stanza does not include any strange words, which seem for a novice reader, like any ordinary speech; yet, it is determined as literary. So, here, it is a matter of canonization. Simpson said: "to claim that literary language is special, … is ultimately to wrest it away from the practice of stylistics." (ibid, p 99)

While literary stylistics is the study and interpretation of texts from a linguistic perspective, literary criticism encompasses a complex disciplines that deals with language. The main difference between literary and stylistic study is that literary criticism is an orgy of opinion, whereas stylistic analysis is a submission to the work itself. Literary stylistics and literary criticism are approaches to analyze and evaluate literature or a use of language. Stylistics refers to the study of style or patterns used in literary and verbal language whereas literary criticism is the practical implication of literary theory. Criticism follows object approach whereas stylistics has got a subjective approach.

The values a society assigns to its literature vary from society to society, from age to age, and thus the functions that literature serves in society, such as entertainment, moral didactics, national identity or social critique. Jonathan. Culler states, that defining literature as "whatever a given society treats as literature" is unsatisfying, as it leaves the definition of literature up to how somebody decides to read, not to the nature of what is written. He proposes to ask a different question: "What makes us (or some other society) treat something as literature?"

In fact, Stylistics and the teaching of literature have their roots in the works of Widdowson (1975), Collie and Slater (1986), Carter (1983), Carter and Long (1987), Short (1983), Lazar (1993); however, as is noted by Simpson (2004). Jakobson places stylistics at the interface between linguistic and literary studies. "Stylistics is about interrogating texts, about seeing a text in the context of its other stylistics possibilities," said Simpson. To understand a text, one needs to challenge it, and to play around d with it. "Literariness is," Simpson adds "a property of texts and contexts, and it inheres in patters of language in use as opposed to patterns of language in isolation."

In his frequently cited statement, Jakobson indicates the relationship between linguistics and literary studies stating that:

> If there are some critics who still doubt the competence of linguistics to embrace the field of poetics, I privately believe that …linguistics has been mistaken for an inadequacy of the linguistic science itself. All of us here, however, definitely realize that a linguist deaf to the poetic function of language and a literary scholar indifferent to linguistic problems and unconversant with linguistic methods are equally flagrant anachronisms.
>
> (Jakobson, 1960, p. 377)

With all communicative faculties intact, the stylistician, hearing the 'poetic function' while simultaneously able to interact with 'linguistic methods', emerges to occupy the central space between the two disciplines.

6. **The Nature of Meaning**

Max Hecht sums up the disciplinary position of historical-philological semantics (1888):

> Semantics is linguistically valuable to the extent that it chronologically classifies meanings in the interest of lexicography, and writes down the laws of semantic change in the interest of etymology. To the extent, however, that it derives these laws from the nature of the mind and that it writes a history of ideas, meanings are ideas; it falls within the realm of empirical psychology.
>
> (Hecht, 1888, p. 05)

This quotation can be well termed a definition of diachronic semantics, which is concerned with the classification of mechanisms of semantic change, an activity that links up with lexicography on the one hand and historical linguistics on the other.

At the same time, Hecht's quotation introduces an additional aspect of historical-philological semantics: it is an approach that assumes a psychological conception of meaning, one in which the linguistic phenomena under study are seen as revealing characteristics of the human mind. These two perspectives in fact demarcate the domain of historical-philological semantics. On the one hand, it produces a wealth of systems for the classification of semantic change. On the other, it engages in a thorough reflection on the nature of semantic facts.

7. Leech and Short Model of Stylistic Analysis

Short (1981) provides a checklist to support a model to analyze the stylistic features of narrative description. The model focuses on the lexis, grammar, cohesion and coherence. Lexis covers the meaning and use of words. Grammar focuses on the analysis of phrases, clauses and sentences, and cohesion includes cohesive ties that connect or bind up sentences in the text. Coherence makes the text compact and makes it function as a unified whole. To confirm the usefulness of this model, a statement by Sunderman (1974) may be quite interesting. Sunderman states that:

> "An interpretation based upon a close analysis of the interrelationship of syntax and semantics promises to be the most fruitful approach to the meaning; for it brings together the disciplinary contributions of both linguistics and literary analysis."

According to (Leech and Short, 1981), the aim of any stylistic analysis of a literary work is 'to find the artistic principles underlying a writer's choice of language.' (Leech and Short, 2007, p. 60) There is an important point, however, which should be taken into acount when analyzing a text. This is, a ccording to leech and short, that "All writers, and for that matter, all texts, have individual qualities." (ibid.)

Leech and Short placed the categories under four general headings: lexical categories, grammatical categories, figures of speech, and cohesion and context. For the semantic categories, Leech and Short did not list them under a separate heading. The reason for them is that we can arrive at them through other categories.

7.1. Lexical Categories

7.1.1. General

Is the vocabulary simple or complex? formal or colloquial? descriptive or evaluative? general or specific? How far does the writer make use of the emotive and other associations of words, as opposed to their referential meaning? Does the text contain idiomatic phrases or notable collocations, and if so, with what kind of dialect or register are these idioms or collocations associated? Is there any use of rare or specialised vocabulary? Are any particular morphological categories noteworthy (e.g. compound words, words with particular suffixes)? To what semantic fields do words belong?

7.1.2. **Nouns.**

Are the nouns abstract or concrete? What kinds of abstract nouns occur (e.g. nouns referring to events, perceptions, processes, moral qualities, social qualities)? What use is made of proper names? Collective nouns?

7.1.3. **Adjectives**.

Are the adjectives frequent? To what kinds of attribute do adjectives refer? Physical? Psychological? Visual? Auditory? Colour? Referential? Emotive? Evaluative? etc. Are adjectives restrictive or nonrestrictive? Gradable or non-gradable? Attributive or predicative?

7.1.4. **Verbs**.

Do the verbs carry an important part of the meaning? Are they stative (referring to states) or dynamic (referring to actions, events, etc.)? Do they 'refer' to movements, physical acts, speech acts, psychological states or activities, perceptions, etc.? Are they transitive, intransitive, linking (intensive), etc.? Are they factive or non-factive(iv)?

7.1.5. **Adverbs**.

Are adverbs frequent? What semantic functions do they perform (manner, place, direction, time, degree, etc.)? Is there any significant use of sentence adverbs (conjuncts such as *so*, *therefore*, *however*; disjuncts such as *certainly*, *obviously*, *frankly*)(v)?

7.2. **Grammatical Categories**

7.2.1. **Sentence Types**

Does the author use only statements (declarative sentences), or do questions, commands, exclamations or minor sentence types (such as sentences with no verb) also occur in the text? If these other types appear, what is their function?

7.2.2. **Sentence Complexity**

Do sentences on the whole have a simple or a complex structure? What is the average sentence length (in number of words)? What is the ratio of dependent to

independent clauses? Does complexity vary strikingly from one sentence to another? Is complexity mainly due to coordination, subordination, or parataxis (juxtaposition of clauses or other equivalent structures)? In what parts of a sentence does complexity tend to occur? For instance, is there any notable occurrence of anticipatory structure (e.g. of complex subjects preceding the verbs, of dependent clauses preceding the subject of a main clause)?

7.2.3. **Clause Types**

What types of dependent clause are favoured: relative clauses, adverbial clauses, different types of nominal clauses (*that*-clauses, *wh*-clauses, etc.)? Are reduced or non-finite clauses commonly used and, if so, of what type are they (infinitive clauses, *-ing* clauses, *-ed* clauses, verbless clauses)?

7.2.4. **Clause Structure**

Is there anything significant about clause elements (e.g. frequency of objects, complements, adverbials; of transitive or intransitive verb constructions)? Are there any unusual orderings (initial adverbials, fronting of object or complement, etc.)? Do special kinds of clause construction occur (such as those with preparatory *it* or *there*)?

7.2.5. **Noun Phrases**

Are they relatively simple or complex? Where does the complexity lie (in premodification by adjectives, nouns, etc., or in postmodification by prepositional phrases, relative clauses, etc.)? Note occurrence of listings (e.g. sequences of adjectives), coordination or apposition.

7.2.6. **Verb Phrases**

Are there any significant departures from the use of the simple past tense? For example, notice occurrences and functions of the present tense; of the progressive aspect (e.g. *was lying*); of the perfective aspect (e.g. *has/had appeared*); of modal auxiliaries (e.g. *can*, *must*, *would*, etc.). Look out for phrasal verbs and how they are used.

7.2.7. **Other Phrase Types**

Is there anything to be said about other phrase types: prepositional phrases, adverb phrases, adjective phrases?

7.2.8. **Word Classes**

Having already considered major or lexical word classes, we may here consider minor word classes ('function words'): prepositions, conjunctions, pronouns, determiners, auxiliaries, interjections. Are particular words of these types used for particular effect (e.g. the definite or indefinite article; first person pronouns *I*, *we*, etc.; demonstratives such as *this* and *that*; negative words such as *not*, *nothing*, *no*)?

7.2.9. **General**

Note here whether any general types of grammatical construction are used to special effect; e.g. comparative or superlative constructions; coordinative or listing constructions; parenthetical constructions; appended or interpolated structures such as occur in casual speech. Do lists and coordinations (e.g. lists of nouns) tend to occur with two, three or more than three members? Do the coordinations, unlike the standard construction with one conjunction (*sun, moon and stars*), tend to omit conjunctions (*sun, moon, stars*) or have more than one conjunction (*sun and moon and stars*)?

7.3. **Figures of speech, etc.**

Here we consider the incidence of features which are foregrounded by virtue of departing in some way from general norms of communication by means of the language code; for example, exploitationof regularities of formal patterning, or of deviations from the linguistic code. For identifying such features, the traditional figures of speech (schemes and tropes) are often useful categories.

7.3.1. **Grammatical and Lexical**

Are there any cases of formal and structural repetition (anaphora, parallelism, etc.) or of mirror-image patterns (chiasmus)? Is the rhetorical effect of these one of antithesis, reinforcement, climax, anticlimax, etc.?

7.3.2. **Phonological Schemes**

Are there any phonological patterns of rhyme, alliteration, assonance, etc.? Are there any salient rhythmical patterns? Do vowel and consonant sounds pattern or cluster in particular ways? How do these phonological features interact with meaning(xi)?

7.3.3. **Tropes**

Are there any obvious violations of, or departures from, the linguistic code? For example, are there any neologisms (such as *Americanly*)? Deviant lexical collocations (such as *portentous infants*)? Semantic, syntactic, phonological, or graphological deviations? Such deviations will often be the clue to special interpretations associated with traditional poetic figures of speech such as metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, paradox and irony. If such tropes occur, what kind of special interpretation is involved (e.g. metaphors can be classified as personifying, animising, concretising, synaesthetic, etc.)? Does the text contain any similes, or similar constructions (e.g. 'as if' constructions)? What dissimilar semantic fields are related through simile?

7.4. **Context and cohesion**
7.4.1. **Cohesion**

Under cohesion, ways in which one part of a text is linked to another are considered: for example, the ways in which sentences are connected. This is the internal organisation of the text. Under context, the external relations of a text or a part of a text are taken int consideration, seeing it as a discourse presupposing a social relation between its participants (author and reader; character and character, etc.), and a sharing by participants of knowledge and assumptions.

This part aims at answering such as : Does the text contain logical or other links between sentences (e.g. coordinating conjunctions, or linking adverbials)? Or does it tend to rely on implicit connections of meaning? What sort of use is made of cross-reference by pronouns (*she*, *it*, *they*, etc.)? by substitute forms (*do*, *so*, etc.), or ellipsis? Alternatively, is any use made of elegant variation – the avoidance of repetition by the substitution of a descriptive phrase (as, for example, 'the old lawyer' or 'her uncle' may substitute for the repetition of an earlier 'Mr Jones')? Are meaning connections

reinforced by repetition of words and phrases, or by repeatedly using words from the same semantic field?

7.4.2. **Context.**

Does the writer address the reader directly, or through the words or thoughts of some fictional character? What linguistic clues (e.g. first-person pronouns *I*, *me*, *my*, *mine*) are there of the addresser–addressee relationship? What attitude does the author imply towards his or her subject? If a character's words or thoughts are represented, is this done by direct quotation (direct speech), or by some other method (e.g. indirect speech, free indirect speech)? Are there significant changes of style according to who is supposedly speaking or thinking the words on the page ?

8. **Antonymy in Context**

In linguistics, one of the most important fields is semantic relations, in particular, lexical relation, which includes synonymy, antonymy, hyponymy, and other relations. Antonymy, or 'oppositeness of meaning', has been regarded as one of the most important semantic relations. Human thinking and language are closely related, and the significance of antonymy in human thinking is reflected in language. **Lyons (1968)** says that human beings have a general tendency to polarize experience and judgment to think in opposites. Jones (2002), however, has identified several discourse functions of antonymy. And each function is associated with a number of constructions in written English. This research explores some functions of antonymy in a novel written in English. Because binary oppositions in language has the ability to interact with the values and thought patterns of the author.

Antonymy is one of the semantic relations that are very useful. Antonym pairs are often used in texts, in proverbs and idioms to achieve rhetorical effects. No matter it is in common speech or in the literary writing. As a matter of fact, it is one of the important factors in those figures of speech such as oxymoron, paradox, and irony. In addition, antonymy plays a significant role in language teaching and learning, which can be shown in many definitions, for example, "tall" is defined as "not short", "bad" is said to be "not good". Just as **Jackson (1988)** notes that, antonymy ranks the second among the various semantic relations used in dictionary definitions.

9. The Definition of Antonymy

The word "antonymy" was coined by **C. J. Smith** as an opposite of "synonymy". Since 1867, lots of efforts have been taken to define "antonymy", but the problem is that the definition of antonymy tends to illustration rather than description. For example, if we would like to tell others what antonymy is, to give some examples like old/young, tall/short, open/close, bad/good, etc. will be more effective than to give a definition. However, finding a definition which could account for every example of antonymy is difficult, even problematic.

Lyons (1977) defines "antonym" as the words which are opposite in meaning and "antonymy" as the oppositeness between words. For example, "buy" and "sell" is a pair of antonyms and the relation between these two words is termed as antonymy. Leech (1981) puts forward the definition of antonym and antonymy in Semantics that the opposite meaning relation between the words is antonymy and word of opposite meaning is antonym. And a famous Chinese linguist Hu Zhuanglin (2001, p.164) simply says "antonymy is the name for oppositeness relation".

Traditional definitions of antonymy only concentrate on the oppositeness of meaning. Some traditional definitions are as follows: word of opposite meaning; (Leech, 1981); word of opposite sense; (Pyles and Algeo, 1970); words that are opposite. (Watson, 1976)

These definitions are only ideas. First, they don't explain the ways of oppositeness very concretely. The antonym pairs like hot/cold, dead/alive and lend/borrow differ from each other in the way of oppositeness. The pair hot/cold belongs to the gradable antonyms; the pair dead/alive belongs to the complementary antonyms; and the pair lend/borrow belongs to the relational antonyms.

Second, these definitions focus more on the discrepancy of the antonyms but they ignore the similarity of the grammar and usage of each of the antonym pairs. Just look at another three pairs, heat/cold, single/married, and beauty/ugly. Although either of them is opposite in meaning, they could not be regarded as antonyms in that they are not the same in grammatical units. Furthermore, people use the antonyms most of the time just for the effect of contrast. For instance, the juxtaposition of spring and winter

can constantly be found in the English literature, as is presented in Ode to the West Wind, "If winter comes, can spring be far behind?"

Taking the above factors into consideration, Lyons classifies opposition into three categories: antonymy, complementarity and converseness in Semantics (1977) and Introduction to Theoretical Linguistics (1968). Lyons only regards words that are gradable and opposite in meaning as antonyms. Cruse (1986) thinks the same way in his Lexical Semantics. So the term "antonym" only refers to the set of gradable opposites, which are mostly adjectives, for gradable antonyms reflect one distinguishing semantic feature: polar oppositeness. However, in our daily life, words like male/female, dead/alive, husband/wife are also considered as antonym pairs, for these words are also opposite in meaning. Therefore, the other two categories, complementarity and converseness, are included in the field of antonymy only in a very broad sense.

In general, there are two criteria in defining antonymy: semantic and lexical. Yet, not all semantically opposed words are antonyms. Cruse (1986) exemplifies this with the words tubby and emaciated. Almost all established antonyms have synonyms which could not constitute the antonym pairs, for example, the antonym pair of heavy and light is better than weighty and insubstantial; antonym pair of fast and slow is better opposites rather than speedy and sluggish; antonym pair of happy and sad is more reasonable than ecstatic and miserable.

Although both of the antonymy and synonymy link words together in the lexicon, Gross et al. (1988) argues that antonymy and synonymy are different. They say while synonymy is "a relation between lexical concepts", antonymy is "a relation between words, not concepts". Justeson and Katz (1991) also refer to antonymy as a lexical relation, "specific to words rather than concepts". As a matter of fact, the definition of antonymy must be lexical as well as semantic. Antonyms need to have "oppositeness of meaning", but they also need to have a strong, well-established lexical relationship with one another. (Jackson, 1988)

Egan (1968) makes a rather satisfying definition of "antonymy" based on her understanding of the nature of the antonymy: "An antonym is a word so opposed in meaning to another word; it's equal in breadth or range of application". This definition shows clearly what makes two words as antonyms. The antonym pairs are equal in

breadth or range of application but opposed in meaning. Therefore, we can draw a conclusion that Egan's definition of antonymy may be easier to be employed into the actual cases than the theories and definitions of antonymy. However, Jones (2002) provides another synthetic definition in which he claims that:

> Antonyms are pairs of words which contrast along a given semantic scale and frequently function in a coordinated and ancillary fashion such that they become lexically enshrined as 'opposites'. (Jones, 2002, p. 179)

By ancillary, he means the effect which common among opposites in the text.

9.1. **Categories of antonymy**

Antonymy, or oppositeness of meaning, is probably the most wellknown field of studying sense relations in semantics. A basic distinction opposes gradable, non-gradable, and multiple antonyms. (Geeraerts, 2010, p. 86)

The term 'antonymy' was coined in the nineteenth century to describe oppositeness of meaning. In semantics, it is also considered as the opposite of the word 'synonymy.' Some critics point that there are different typres of antonymy. For instance, Egan (1968) distinguishes between seven types of antonymy. After all, Egan (1968) suggests the following definition of the term: "An antonym is a word so opposed in meaning to another word, its equal in breadth or range of application, that it negates or nullifies every single one of its implications."

However, Cruse (2000, p. 167) distinguishes between complementaries, antonyms, reversives, and converses; yet, he used the term opposites to include all of them under the latter term. Typical complementaries are dead / alive, true / false, inside / outside, male / female… etc. Cruse (2000, p. 169) also listed five different types of antonyms: polar antonyms, equipollent antonyms, overlapping antonyms, reversives, and converses.

9.1.1. **Non-gradable Antonymy**

Non-gradable antonymy is the name given to antonymous pairs such as man / woman, alive / dead and married / unmarried…etc. Leech refers to this class as 'binary taxonomy' (1974, p. 109), but the majority of writers prefer to call it 'complementarity'.

Lyons (1977) and Cruse (1986) see that the label 'antonymy' should be restricted to gradable pairs.

9.1.2. **Gradable Antonymy**

Gradable antonymy differs from non-gradable opposition in that one antonym is not automatically debarred by the other's application. In other words, it is possible to be neither *good* nor *bad* in a way that it is not possible to be neither *happy* nor *sad*. Thus, *good* : *bad* are gradable antonyms, as are the majority of everyday 'opposites'. Because gradable antonyms are not always stable , they ccan be modified by other adverbs, generally called extreme adverbs. For example, we may have *quite happy*, *extremely happy*, *fairly happy*, etc.) and can take both comparative (*happier*) and superlative (*happiest*) form.

According to Leech (1974), gradable antonyms differ in some norms ; mainly object related norms, speaker-related norms and role-related norms. Leech concludes that 'it is largely because of this threefold variability of the norm that words such as *good* and *bad* are thought to be vague and shifting in their meaning' (1974, p. 110). Pairs like big/ small, old/ new, good/ bad and hot / cold are typical examples of gradable antonymy. (Cruse 1986, p. 204)

9.1.3. **Reciprocal Antonymy**

The distinction between gradable and non-gradable antonyms is the most fundamental categories of antonymous pairs. Neverthless, there are indeed other pairs which would be recognised as antonyms but can neither be gradable nor npn gradablle ones. They could be referred to as reciprocal antonyms. However, some semanticians call this phenomenon as 'converseness', but Leech prefer to speak of 'relational opposition'. For example, 'John gives Sam' entails that 'Sam receives from John', and vice versa. Other examples of reciprocal antonymy include *above/ below, borrow/ lend* and *buy/ sell*. Generally, reciprocal antonymy is found the field of kinship relations.for example, *parent* is the reciprocal antonym of *child*.

9.1.4. **Multiple incompatibility**

Another category of antonymy is that of multiple incompatibility. It is a collection of antonyms, including pairs such as *summer : winter* and *north : south*. Leech (1974) acknowledge the phenomenon, but he referred to it as 'multiple taxonomy.' Whereas Carter provides a clear definition of this category. Carter says: 'incompatibility refers to relational contrasts between items in a semantic field' (Carter, 1987, p. 19). This definition may seem similar to non-gradable antonymy. For instance, 'Seasons of the year' and 'cardinal compass points' are good examples. Also, numbers are incompatible because, for instance, if my age is twenty-seven, my age cannot be seventeen or thirty-seven at the same time.

To sum up, it is good to mention that Cruse has pointed out that all categories of antomyms share some common charasteritics. He listed five features that antonyms have in common. (Cruse, 1986, p. 204) First, most adjectives and verbs are fully gradable. Second, members of a pair denote degrees of some variable property such as length, speed, weight, accuracy, etc. Third, the members of a pair of antonyms move in opposite directions along the scale representing degrees of the relevant variable property. That means "they are counterdirectional in that one term when intensified denotes a higher value of the relevant property, while the other term when intensified denotes a lower value."(Cruse and Croft, 2004, p .169) Finally, the terms of a pair do not strictly bisect a domain. That is to say, there is always a range of values of the variable property, lying between those covered by the opposed terms, and which cannot be properly referred to by either term. (ibid)

10. Conclusion

We have seen in this part of the reserach paper the different methods of dealing with the literary texts. Stylistics is one of such methodologies. Different definitions of the term have been given according to some previous scholars specialized in the field of linguistics and inthe field of literary criticism. In addition, teh issue of the literariness of a particular text is also tackeled briefly. Then, since the model of analysis adopted here is mainly based on that of Leech and Short (1981), I tried to summarize thegeneral headings of such model, giving attention to the gist of each one. Finally, teh last part of this chapter is devoted to occurrence of some oppositional pairs intext, which is often refferred to as antonymy in semantics. Different categories of antonyms with someexamples are given above. However, teh function of each category will be dealt with in the next chapter.

Chapter Three

Introduction

This chapter serves as the practical part of the whole research paper. Thus, its purpose is to show how the linguistic description can be used in analysing the style of a literary text. Fo this sake, (short and Leech, [1981] 2007) provides a checklist of different categories that a stylistician must follow when analyzing a prose fiction.

Since style has to do with the choice of the author, the model of the stylistic analysis focuses on the structuring of the literary text. In other words, the task and the main purpose is to look at the reasons why some patterns of the text are chosen to be structured in the way they are; what functions they serve in the text and how does all this task contribute to the interpretation of that text ? And what does this mean in terms of stylistic functions ?

The other point of focus will be on the lexical choice made by Ben Okri in his novel, *The Famished Road* (1992). My concern is trying to find answwers to questions like: What are the significant lexical choices from the vocabulary of English? And how do these coices serve the African context ? What is the frequency of the recurrence of some of them, mainly the antonymous pairs ? How do they fit in the context of the novel ? And how do they refelect the ideology of the author ? To what extent do the lexical items combine together at the micro- and the macro- level of the context ? And finally, how does all this help one's interpretation of the novel ?

The Leech and Short checklist of features is also provided with a list of questions, and the answers to those questions would help interpreting the reasons and the effects of their choice in relation to the literary work. The aim of this model is to provide a stylistic interpretation of literary texts.

1. **The Works of Ben Okri**

Ben Okri is a one of the African intellectuals. He is a poet, novelist and short-story writer. He was born in 1959 in Mina in Northern Nigeria to an Urhobo father and an Igbo mother. After he was born, his father had won a scholarship to study law in England. The child Ben was among the family who travelled to England. Then, he spent his early years in Peckam in south London. Later, he attended John Donne Primary School, where he liked comic books. After his father had finished his education in the Inner Temple, the Okris returned to Nigeria. He continued his education in Ibadan and later in Warri, in Urhobo College. Okri grew up in London before returning to Nigeria with his family in 1968. Much of his early fiction explores the political violence that he witnessed at first hand during the civil war in Nigeria. Again, he left the country to study Comparative Literature at Essex University in England.

He found employment in the BBC's African service at Bush House and as poetry editor for the weekly magazine West Africa. In 1986, he published *Incidents at the Shrine*, which won both the *Paris Review's Aga Khan* prize for fiction and the Commonwealth writers Prize for Africa. Two years later, Okri published *Stars of the New Curfew (*1988*)*, which was a collection of short stories, and which was well received by the public. Later on*, The Famished Road* was published in 1991. Its style led him to win the prestigious Booker Prize in 1992. It was followed by publishing other novels like *Songs of Enchantment (1993)*, *Infinite Riches* (1998), Mental fight (1999) and *Astonishing the Gods* (1995).

Other significant works include *Flowers and Shadows (1980), The Landscapes Within (*1981*), Dangerous Love (*1996*),* and *In Arcadia* (2002). *Flaowers and Shadaows* is about an adolescent boy living a cocooned existence until he discovers his father's ruthless business dealings ; which had consequences for the entire family. Whereas*, The Landscape Within* deals with an artist whose protests in his paintings against the inhumanity rebound disastrously on him. (Stringer, 1996, p. 509)

This is probably what makes O'Connor describe him as "one of the most prolific African writers to come on the scene in the last fifteen years and his contribution to the forwarding of African writing has been paramount." (O'Connor, 2008, p. 07)

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Since the appearance of Okri's works in the world of literature, most critics have considered Okri's works within a Nigerian national school of literature. For example, (Quayson, 1997) categorized the Nigerian literatures written in English within the context of cultural nationalism. Thus, since Okri had grown up in Nigeria in his early age, his works are as a response to the wider cultural dynamics within the Nigerian nation-state. (Quayson, 1997, p. 164). Quayson also tried to show how Okri incorporates Yoruba linguistic and cultural resource base into his narratives. Yet, he ignored the hybridic nature of Okri's literary discourse which is a diasporic and a metropolitan pheneomenon. (O'conner, 2008)

Therefore, it is preferrable to see Okri as a diasporic African writer rather than considering him as only a Nigerian author. This has to do with the identity of the writer. Through exploring the stylistic features in one of his works, *The Famished Road*, it can be said that he is a cosmopolitan writer trying to reconstruct the national Nigerian identity from far away, or from diaspora.

This is quite obvious in most of the African schools of literature whose essential goal is 'the national cohesion of the African states.' This cohesion must not be a dominant ethnicity imposing itself upon minor ones. Situating Okri as a cosmopolitan and migrant writer makes him different from those African writers based in Africa.

(O'conner, 2008) notes that the diasporic experience can be metaphorically defined as an occupation of the liminal zone between the borders of nation, and this subjectivity is distinct to the organic hybridity of the African writer who, while enjoying sojourns in Europe or North America, always returns home. However, for Hall (1990), 'cultural practice is an ongoing production of identity that is never complete', which Okri is exploring as a new sense of identity through an African consciousness.

2. **Literature Review**
2.1.**A Summary of *The Famished Road***

The Famished Road is a story of the adventures of Azaro, an abiku child. Azaro lives in a town that is unidentified, but which is probably Lagos, and during the period of independence. His parents are very poor. His father is a load-carrier and a boxer. Ben Okri gave him the title of 'the black tiger.' (Okri, 1992, p. 351). Both of his parents have hard times trying to keep their child on earth.The story consists of eight books. In most of the

scenes of the whole story, Azaro journeys in the forests and in imaginary lands. Faris (2004) notes that it can be said that it is told in a hybrid scene place.

Since it is written in a magical realist genre, (Faris, 2004) notes that the novel presents the postcolonial cultures to an international reading public. Magical realism in the novel deals with the world of the spirits in an open manner. Azaro, who is the narrator, depicts the influence between what is concrete world and what is unseen. While Azaro remains in the world of the living, he can also see other *abiku* children in the spirit world. This what makes the novel as a hybrid in different axes.

Throughout the whole story, Azaro keeps falling into difficult situations and wandering off into the forest and into strange lands. In other words, the story is a string of dreams linked together by the struggles of humans and spirits. Azaro's spirit friends have tried to make him return to where he originally belongs in the land of spirits. Their master, 'the great king', sends messengers to him ; yet, his parents work to keep him on earth. Madame Koto, who works as a local bar owner, and who is one of the richest persons in the city, asks him to help her attract more customers and prosper her business.

Madame Koto's bar and the streets of the poor neighbourhood are the settings of some major confrontations between the Party of the Rich and the Party of the Poor. Throughout the story, it becomes clear for the reader that she belongs to the Rich. According to Azaro, that bar represents the fairyland in the human world. This may probably denote that in a poor country like Nigeria, no one cares for the political parties or what they promise their supporters. Azaro declares in book six: "I felt on the edge of reality. Madame Koto's bar seemed like a strange fairyland in the real world, a fairyland that no one could see" (Okri, 1991, p. 156).

Despiste this, the father of Azaro will have an important role in alerting the members of his community when the rich party had contaminated the milk (Okri, 1992, pp. 94,95) He even became the defender of the rights for the poor. After a tough fight with a spirit, he spends three days on bed, redreaming the world. The content of book eight of the story is in fact about this dream. According to (Sasser, 2011), the novel has probably roots in the nation of Okri's birth, Nigeria. It enacts an imagined return to origins for Okri, what the character Azaro might call a "homecoming" (Okri, 1992, pp. 18, 28). However, the narrative tunnels

refer backward in time not only toward Okri's own beginnings, but also that of independent Nigeria.

2.2. Characters of the Novel

Azaro is the story's narrator. He is an abiku, or a spirit child who has never lost ties with the spirit world. The story follows him as he tries to live his life, always aware of the spirits trying to bring him back.

Azaro's father is an idealistic labourer who wants the best for his family and the community. He suffers greatly for this, eventually becoming a boxer and later a politician. Azaro's father loves him deeply, but is often bitter at having an abiku and occasionally goes on angry violent tirades.

Azaro's mother works very hard selling anything she can get her hands on for the family. She cares for her family deeply and constantly gives up food and security for her family and their ideals. She is proud that Azaro is her son and goes to great lengths to protect him.

Madame Koto is proprietress of a local bar. She has a liking for Azaro, though at times is convinced he brings bad luck. She starts out as a well-meaning woman, trying to get along with everyone else. However, as the story progresses, she becomes richer, siding with the political party of the rich, and is often accused of witchcraft. She tries to help Azaro and his family on numerous occasions but seems to try to take Azaro's blood to remain youthful.

Jeremiah, the Photographer is a young artist who brings the village to the rest of the world and the rest of the world to the village. He manages to get some of his photographs published, but practices his craft at great personal risk.

3. The style of Ben Okri

In nearly all of Okri's short stories, we find the recurring image of a young, single, lonely and impoverished male who is victimised either by the elderly members of a community or is victim of a whole society dominated by one social class. Therefore, Okri, as a Nigerian-Londoner, forms an important part of this cultural transition and the developments in his writing reflect the urge he felt to bring West African epistemology to the centre of British literary discourse. Also, one of the most aesthetic choices that differentiates Okri's the Famished Road trilogy from his previous works is his choice of

narrator, Azaro. Azaro, who is considerd as 'an omniscient narrator, is the principal character in the novel, and at some extent, represents the African person that lives in different paradoxes. So, Okri wanted to do this in a magical realist way.

Indeed, many of the African writings are based on the fantastic. This tradition comes from tales and the oral literature that are transmitted from one generation to another. *The Famished Road* fits the description above. For example, some of the characters (Azaro and his father) feel that the world is very corrupt. The only way to climb up the social ladder is to join the detested Party of the Rich. (Okri, 1991, p. 280, 283) simply because they belong to the poor society and they want to have an influence on teh real world ; and to compensate for their poverty.

The Famished Road (1991) triumphed in this respect and successfully made the crossover from an 'exotic' African literature pigeon holed in specialised editions to a mainstream literature that sits side by side with other authors on most Western bookshop shelves. Becoming a 'Booker' also meant that this crossover was guaranteed, and it is significant that Okri was the first black African to be awarded this prestigious prize. The first impression that the reader comes away with on finishing The Famished Road is one of a cognitive unsettling nature.

O'cconner (2008) pointed out that Okri forms a strategic part of an artistic community that now directly challenges the authority of the old colonial discourses. The narratoive represents a resistance to the lies told about them during European imperial expansion. Then, O'conner defines Okri's works as "the resistance model of writing." ; and The Famished Road particularly as "a literary representation of a specific subaltern history that exploits the indeterminacy of the linguistic sign and highlights its hybridic nature." (O'cconner, 2008, p. 68)

Indeed, most of thepostcolonial authors are pushed by such need for the subaltern conscieoussness that should not rely on the given and ready-made epistimology of the West. Also, there is a kind of decolonization in Okri's narratives. Not a territorial one but a literary one. It is also a creation of a new trend of african literature, that is a literature which is the mixture of fantasy and reality.

O'cconner (2008) states that The whole story is bound to his imaginations and his lives with the spirit companions and with the human beings. Azaro's characterisation is framed within the abiku motif which is an accepted belief in southern Nigeria. It refers to the phenomenon of a child who is caught up in an unending cycle of births, deaths and rebirths agian, or 'one who is born, and dies' So, the abiku, before getting into his mother's womb, he has already possessed the trace of death. The abiku child in West Africa is often deemed as cruel and merciless. The earthly terrain for the abiku is often a vale of suffering compared to both the bliss of the spirit world and the companionship of one's fellow abikus who truly understand this unique condition. According Aldea (2005), Ben Okri uses 'magic against the established order', which often ultimately highlights the historical atrocities of the nation.' Thus, Okri's novel focuses on an emerging nation. However, others consider the *famished road* as a picaresque novel (Wawrzinek and Makokha, 2011, Aldea, 2005)

The story of the famished road deals with several themes. Povertry and politics are the major ones. It depicts the issues of politics and its dishonest procedures followed sometimes by the politicians trying to gain the support of the public. In addition, the vices of greediness, hatred, murder, and lies are also dealt with. The link of the African person with natural wild such as the forest, animals, trees and rivers are also other themes in the story. Thus, it treats the degradation that came with the modern urbanization.

In addition, the famished road depicts the theme of political struggle and corruption. For example, the character Mdame Koto is believed to represent the corruption of modern Nigerian politics. In general, the themes and motifs of Okri's novels show a clear commitment to national growth, and address an imaginary Nigerian citizen for a concrete change and a moral renovation in a society which is bound by corruption and poverty. Yet, the local colour of the narrative are directed towards a foreign audience. (O'conner, 2008)

To sum up, the text presents Azaro's visions in such a way that we question whether Azaro's own visions are told and produced by his own or are derived from the world his lives or by the people and the phenomena he encounters. Okri closes the story by a very brief expression : "A dream can be the highest point of a life." (Okri, 1991, p. 365)

For Killam (2004) Okri is concerned with "the quality of contemporary life in his country. " (Killam, 2004, p. 14) Thus*,* Okri in *The Famished Road* adapts the Yoruba belief

that there is no distinction between the living and the dead. And, the supernatural is a sustaining element in his writing. Within the framework of a magical realism scheme, he exposes the brutality of the Nigerian civil war and the leaders who ruled Nigeria after such bloody war. He is also concerned with the abuses of power in the hands of the politicians who act solely out of self-interest. (Killam, 2004)

Okri depicts an African state without responsible leadership. This state for him is more obviously Nigeria. Okri's fictional world is characterized by fear, violence, terror, greed, mistrust, and brutality. This depiction is also full of images of disease, death, hunger, suffering and deformity, which is clearly a metaphor for the real state of his nation. The use of images in the novel, like the road and the abiku, is a source of terror and pain for its family, to portray the political transitions in Nigeria and other African countries. Therefore, *The Famished Road* uses 'poetic, incantatory, descriptive, and local language to realize its unconventional use of such images.' The sociopolitical and economic situations of many African countries, are also represented in the novel. (Killam and Kerfoot, 2008)

4. **Magical Realism in *The Famished Road***

Durix (1998) points out that Okri is considered as "The most brilliant example of this type of writing (magical realism) in recent years has been Ben Okri; whose *The Famished Road* (1991) explicitly inserted itself into the tradition. " (Durix, 1998, p. 152) Indeed, *The Famished Road* is significant in the African magical realism. Thus, Okri employs the magic to construct a strategy of belonging which foregrounds its humanist view for a better future for the nation of Nigeria. Magical realism is practised by authors from the colonized countries, seeking a model of national identity and which is totally different from that imposed by the 'dominant culture'.

Whether they follow nationalistic objectives or not, those authors search for this common heirloom of humanity, postcolonial writers cannot evade facing the complexities of a modem world whose cultures are all engaged in complex interaction. Most post-colonial cultures are now the result of hybridization. The New Literatures show that it is difficult and even dangerous to locate artists too systematically within one environment. (Durix, 1998, p. 153) Also, in the novel, there is a double function of domination combined with a degree of social responsibility, and which is reflected in the two political parties, the Party of the Rich represented by Mdame Koto, and the Party of the Poor represented by Azaro and his father.

We have seen in the first chapter that traditional art in Africa is based mainly on the fantastic. This tradition comes from the local tales and the oral literature that are handed down from one generation to another. Also, realism in Africa is not important ; fantasy and magic are the main ingredients. In the same meaning, (Gérard, 1985) noted that unlike the western ones ; third world societies, including Africa, 'function in small scale'. That is to say, they are living in small tribes, where people inside the group are bound by that social constraints. The only verbal medium for them is the spoken word. Thus, they cannot account for the realities of their environment except through magic.

In talking about intertextuality in contemporary African novelists, Kehinde (2003) claims that : "The use of the convention of Magic realism in the novel is a postcolonial writer's strategy. Okri probably uses the novel as an anti-imperial tool and a re-working of a historical moment. In the novel, the reader encounters codes and co-texts from different sources, and mainly from from African myths of reincarnation and recurrence." In *The Famished Road*, the author uses the myth of "Abiku" as a metaphor for the multitude of socio-political and economic problems facing the postcolonial nations. As a result, despite their political independence, the majority of the nations are still encumbered with pains and conflicts. Thus, it has asociopolitical and economic significance. (ibid)

5. **Stylistic Analysis of the *Famished Road***
5.1.**A Checklist of Linguistic and Stylistic Categories (**Short and Leech, 2007, p. 61**)**

Leech and Short (1983, 2007) provides a checklist to support a model to analyze the stylistic features of narrative description. The model focuses on the lexis, grammar, cohesion and coherence of the literary work. Lexis covers the meaning and use of words. Grammar focuses on the analysis of phrases, clauses and sentences. Cohesion however, includes cohesive ties that connect or link up sentences in the text. Coherence makes the text function as a unified whole.

Leech and Short placed the categories under four general headings : lexical categories, grammatical categories, figures of speech, and cohesion and context. For the semantic categories, they did not list them under a separate heading. The reason for them is that we can arrive at them through other categories.

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5.2. **Lexical Categories**

Indeed, the choice and use of words in any text reflects its underlying meanings and ideas. The words in particular make the text produce its meaning. In the next few examples, there is no obvious separation between the first part of the sentence and the second part. Sometimes, the sentence presents contradictory use of words. For examples, 'We found he had fallen asleep standing up' (p. 329), 'How can you be hungry with that small stomach' (p. 57)

In the first example, it would be more appropriate to say: *we found him sleping on his feet*. And for the second, a more 'acceptable' structure would have been : *How can you possibly be hungry ; your stomach is so small !*

Besides, another example of language shift in *The Famished Road* is the personalisation of 'Trouble'. It is a thing you can 'give someone' or which can move from one place to another: "I don't know but your compound people gave them trouble" (p. 160), "Anyone who looks for my trouble will get enough trouble for life" (p. 199), "Trouble has arrived" (p. 392) and "I am tired of your trouble" (p. 351) The examples above indicate that trouble is a very common notion in the society of Azaro. And interestingly, in all four cases I have quoted, 'trouble' means 'problems'. This is probabbly a depiction of the the African persons's daily life which generally full of malpractices and full of troubles.

We can also notice structures like :" We will bring business to you" (p. 221) and "That ugly boy will destroy your business for you." (p. 224) In the first example, the speaker wants to say that he will help increase the business activity in Madame Koto's bar, because he is in power. In the second example, 'for you' probably means that Azaro will take Madame Koto's business away from her.

In West Africa, when a woman is pregnant, it is usually believed that she is carrying the baby for someone which implies, the baby is not hers. That is why they say that she is pregnant 'for someone'. Consider the following two examples: "I hear that she is pregnant." "for who?" The grammatically correct form here would be 'for whom?' The question 'for who?' means: "Whose baby is she carrying ?" This is the question Azaro's Dad asks him when Azaro tells him that Madame Koto is pregnant : "Is she pregnant for you ?" (p.227) In other words, Azaro's father is asking the boy : *Is she carrying your child?*

The text analysis in this chapter reveals that the language use in the novel is very different from traditional use. Indeed, such words and sentences add a West African flavour to the novel. Such features are becoming more and more prominent in African literature and form an integral part of the style of the novel.

5.2.1. **General**

Ben Okri's language has been described as 'simple, lucid, and image laden' (Killam, 2003, p. 03). His use of language indicates two things: that he has a great mastery of the English language and this is explained by the fact that he has spent most of his life in London; at the same time, he asserts his belonging to Africa in his choice and use of local words, mainly from oral tradition. It is worth noting that most of his deviations of the English language occur in the form of lexis rather than syntax. Nigerian English is often present in the novel within the context of post-colonial literature. There are many examples in *The Famished Road*, especially single lexical units. A subtle switch between standard and non-standard usage can be noticed throughout the novel.

The local cosmology and the ontology are an important part of the local system. When a man is sick, a herbalist has to fortify his body while his spirit wrestles for his life in "the Land of the Fighting Ghosts" (p. 295). Sirens and chimeras wander abroad in full view of humans. People believe in Christ (p. 12) but still cling to local deities like the Priest of Roads. And after they die, they are transported to the land of the dead by 'the ferryman' (p. 250).

The author also mentions some concepts which are strange to Standard English, so he has to make new words for them, enriching the English language in the process. Tunca has described Ben Okri's style in the following words : "A projection of hopes for the world based on the release of mankind's as yet untapped mental and physical resources." (Tunca, 2004, p. 02)

There is no dividing line between the world of the living and the world of spirits. Human beings intermingle with ghoulish creatures. In one scene, Azaro is walking home when he sees a messenger of 'the great king' (p. 66). This messenger is unnaturally hairy and his face sits upside down on his neck. In another scene, we meet the 'boy-king' who has a palace of 'turquoise mirrors' (p. 184). Symbols also play a major role. The Nigerian nation is described as an 'Abiku nation' (p. 360). It has not settled on one face and Azaro himself is a

symbol of survival and the struggle between men and gods from one side and between men and the struggles of nature.

While Madame Koto and the Landlord represent the new elite that has replaced the colonial master and goes to the poor only when they need votes, the Party of the Poor, Black Tyger (Azaro's father) and The International Photographer represent the the poor. What is important is that all the rich characters are on the side of the antagonists : Madame Koto, The Landlord, and the Party of the Rich.

Besides, (Moh, 2000) notes that Ben Okri's style is based on the urban narrative technique, the criticism of the government's shortcomings, and finally on magic and fantasy (Moh, 2000, p. 71). It can be read like an allegory, a battle between good and evil. One scene in particular (pp. 120-125) captures the battle between good and evil. Politicians come to a desolate part of town to campaign for the Party of the Rich. After having their campaign, they distributed milk to the poor people. The impatient crowd fights to gain every drop of it. The milk poured on people, but discovered later that it was contaminated. The entire poor people of the town fall sick. Azaro and his father are the ones who discovered that the milk was bad. This incident is the defining moment of Azaro's father's life. After that, he became the champion of the poor. He challenges the government agents, who represent the forces of evil, every time he gets the opportunity.

Azaro's father is constantly arguing with The Landlord. The latter, who is not happy that Azaro's father has not joined his party, looks for the slightest chance to confront him. This wish comes when some tenants harassed Azaro's mum and asked for the money that his father owes them. Azaro's father threatens them with a beating. When The Landlord comes, he says :

> Tell your husband…that if he repeats what he did last night, I will throw him out. I don't care if he is called Black Cricket. I myself am a lion. If necessary, I will send my boys to beat him up. If he gives me any more trouble, if he borrows money from anybody in this compound again, if he threatens to burn down my house, he better go and find himself another landlord, you hear?' (p. 73)

In the spirit of most allegories, the physical portraits of the characters are not really developed. Importance is placed on what they represent as concepts rather than on what they represent as human beings. Throughout the story, no character's physical description is

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developed, not even for Azaro, the mai character. Even the trem 'Madame' of Madame Koto, the bar owner is not described well.

One of the most decisive reasons *the famished road* is considered as a magical realist novel is its use of language. Okri's language is imaginary, which is full of abstarct words. Okri uses words of the other world, mainly the adjectives, to create fantastic sensation and visualize the scene. He often aims at creating a kind of virtual journey in the reader's mind. For instance in the following sentence, Okri uses many adjectives modifying the woman (bedraggled, strung, wet, distracted, strung, bare) but without using the verb to be; "There was a woman standing in the doorway, her hair bedraggled and wet, her eyes distracted, her neck strung, her feet bare." (p. 18) Also**,** "The sun was merciless on our flesh." (p. 34

In fact, Okri followed many West African writers who used indigenous lexical features in their works. Thus, The *Famished Road* has been read as "heir to a tradition of Nigerian writing […] which represents the advent of a postcolonial postmodernism in African writing ; and as sharing commonalities with the projects of a global set of writers who engage non-realist narrative strategies, especially magical realism, in their writings." (Warnes, 2009, p. 124) This engagement of non-realist narrative led many Okri to use some abstarct lexical words to depict the fantastic world that he is dreaming. The lexical categories that are present mostly in the novel are the following.

5.2.2. **Nouns**

Throughout the whole novel, there is probbaly one word that is repeated most, Azaro. We have seen before that theword is probabbly derived from the name Lazarus that is in the Bible. It is also related to the word Abiku, which refers to children who keep 'oscillating between both worlds' to use Okri's words (1991, p. 08). 'Both worlds' denotes the world of the living and the world of the dead. The term Abiku indicates that the writer is probably referring to his native nation, Nigeria. Azaro said it, stating that he lives in an abiku nation : "ours too was an Abiku nation, a spirit-child nation that keeps being reborn" (p. 360).

In addition to teh word Azaro, Okri also used some rare and unknown words that are not common to the British reader. Words like 'ogogoro, eba, garri, dogonyaro, egungun, agbada, mallam… etc. Others give the African flavour to the English that is used in the novel. Okri used these words to make the world perceive the African cultural heritage. Okri also

used borrowed words that denotes that the story of the novel is based in a place where Muslims exist; such as 'muezzin' (someone who calls people to prayer in the Muslim religion), and 'mallam' (a teacher of Arabic or the Qur'an), and Allah (God).

Other borrowed words include words of more than one part or more than one morpheme, like 'house front, barfront, roomfront, palm wine, …etc.' such words probably denote how the West african house or room is shaped and framed.

Okri's use of nouns inlude both abstact and concrete ones. The first category deals with the spirit world and the dreams of Azaro, death and the unssen horizons, such as sirens, ghosts, dead, etc. Most of them refer to the reader's perceptions. However, the second category include nouns of dishes, trees, forest, working tools …etc.

Concerning the proper names, Okri did not use many proper names since the protagonist of the novel is the basic character in the whole story. In addition to Azaro, there are other proper nouns like Madame Koto, Jeremiah. The other characters are known by their functional nouns like, mum, dad, the ferryman nad the landlord.

Besides, there are also many compound nouns used in the novel. Most of them already exist as nouns in West African English and are used daily in the region. These word formation consists of two words which are commonly used in English and combining them to form a new expression. These words are usually made up of two nouns as in 'compound women', or a description as in 'bad-luck boy' and 'the international photographer'.

In the novel, there are different compound nouns like 'compound people, compound women, hausa perfume, kola-nuts, jollof rice, fried plantains, bushmeat, the international photographer… etc. For instance, Okri uses some of them to depict traditional ceremonies that are held in the region. "The international photographer" may denote an expert or 'first class' because in West Africa, 'international' does not mean that it has to do with the outer borders of the country. In *The Famished Road*, the photographer gives himself the title 'international' because he has caught some corrupt politicians on film, thus making him a first-rate photographer. (p. 120, 173)

5.2.3. **Adjectives**

Most of the adjective used in the novel are frequent adjectives except some new ones that are strange at some extent. These are wods like : sleepwalking, bad-luck… etc. Many adjectives are visual ones, and about colours and natural scenes like forest, animals and the countryside.

There is also another remark and which is quite important. Throughout the novel, there is an excessive use of adjectives ending with the suffix 'less' ; which may imply that the characters and the scenes are deprived of things. Since the suffix 'less' generally denotes 'not having or acquiring the characteristic', the author uses it to show that everything in Africa is in need of vital and important things.

Besides, oppositional items are also used alot in the novel. For exmaple; the antonymous pair of black / white is used 139 / 211; new /old is used 177/ 235; good / bad is used 95/ 94; dead/ alive is used 76 /18.

Pairs	occurrence in the novel	category
Good/ bad	95 /94	Adj
Fast / slow	32/ 15	Adj
Easy / uneasy	01/ 03	Adj
Easy / difficult	01/17	Adj
Black/ white	139/ 211	adj
blackeness / whiteness	03/ 09	Noun
colonial/ anticolonial	03/ 00	Adj
free / slave	35/ 05	Noun
freedom/ slavery	10/ 01	Noun
hard/ soft	85 / 38	Adj
death/ life	630/ 20	Noun
dead/ alive	40/ 86	Adj
new / old	76/ 18	Adj
natural/ unnatural	177/ 235	Adj
real/ unreal	05/ 13	Adj
magic/ real	65/ 02	Adj
	21/ 65	

5.2.4. **Verbs**

Most verbs in the novel are dynamic verbs referring to actions and depicting the conflicts and struggles that took place during the different scenes of the novel. For instance, when Okri describes the the 'black tiger', Azaro's father, he uses verbs like 'run, jump, retur, took, follow… etc.) Yet, there are also other verb categories because teh author gives more attention to magic and fantasy. Therefore, it is obvious for him to use verbs such as: 'think, see, dream, flew, imagine, etc.'

5.2.5. **Adverbs**

The Okri's use of adverbs vary from one section to another. That is to say, he uses the adverbs according to the needs of the scene. When the scene is about description, he uses adverbs of manner. "Dancing wildly, it dragged them towards the rioting." (p. 07); "They stared at me imploringly. " (p. 08) Azaro here is describinghow the women are talking to him. There are other adverbs f manner like: impassively, slowly, wildly, safely, nervously, leisurely… etc. More strikingly, Okri uses adverbs of time more than any other adverb types. Adverbs like early, immediately, suddenly, instantly, finally… etc. are used a lot in the whole novel. And adverbs of manner, such as; fearfully, peacefully, dreadfully, carefully, powerfully, cheerfully,… etc.

5.3. **Grammatical Categories**

When dealing with the grammartical categories in literary texts, one should see how words are combined together to form phrases and sentences. This is also referred to as syntax. Bradford (1997) states that syntax studies the level of language that lies between words and the meaning of utterance ; that is, sentence structures. The following are the syntactic features in the *Famished Road* that are identified and discussed.

5.3.1. **Use of Sentences and Phrases types**

A phrase is usually a group of words that denote a single idea and form a separate part of a sentence, but with no subject and predicate. It is a string of words that form a grammatical unit, usually within a clause or sentence. The *Famished Road* contains prepositional phrases used possibly to draw the attention of the reader on distance and time in history.

> We disliked the rigours of existence, the unfulfilled longings, the enshrined injustices of the world, the labyrinths of love, the ignorance of parents, the fact of dying, and the amazing indifference of the Living in the midst of the simple beauties of the universe. (p. 02)

In this example, Okri has used many clauses and he used the comma to differentiate between each clause. "We were rowing across the water when a strangled cry rose from the shrine house and gathered volume all over the island." (p. 09) The phrase (from the shrine house and gathered volume all over the island.) is not necessary for the the first idea. Yet, Okri continues the idea by adding this phrase just to give insight about the place of the fact. Also, there are many senetnces which are started with an adverbial clause such as: "Seared by the agony of their melodies, I stumbled across a road and I suddenly saw them all, spirits in full bloom on a field of rainbows, bathing in the ecstasy of an everlasting love." (p. 12.)

In the novel, phrases are stylistically used by the writer, possibly to colour the story and to ensure the attention of the reader and create a curiosity that will make the latter carry on till the end of the story. The prepositional Phrases in the above examples depicting distance and time.

Furthermore, special use of phrases can also be seen all over the story. For example, "She came down, dragged the bench back to its position, and stood in front of me. "Eat it !" she said. " (p.60) another example shows the use of short simple sentences ; "The third creditor ran to our room, dropped the boots, and came out. Dad stood in front of him, feet solidly planted. There was silence. The cocks crowed. Then Dad threw his money on the floor, and the third creditor picked it up without any fuss and hurried back to his room and locked his door." (p. 72)

The prepositional phrases "in front of me" and "in front of him" show a physical relationship between teh characters and what is around them. "in front of me" for instance shows a relationship between the narrator, Azaro, and Madame Koto. This indicates that Okri puts and imagines himself in teh scene that he is writing about. It is as if it happens to him in reality though it is onlt fiction.

Relative clause are often used numerously such as: "One road led to a thousand others, which in turn fed into paths, which fed into dirt tracks, which became streets, which ended in avenues and cul-de-sacs." (p. 84) also, "I heard stories of politicians, who were members of secret societies, who tried to hold back the rain because of the grand rally which they had to

keep postponing. " (p. 255) and; "Dad's modest party had been overrun by tramps *whose* hair was the breeding ground of lice and sprouting rubbish, and *who* stank; by the wretched and the hungry and the homeless, all of *whom* had such defiant and intense eyes that I felt they would pounce on anyone *who* dared ask them to leave; by the deformed, *whose* legs looked like the letter K, *whose* mouths always seemed to be dribbling, *whose* rickety feet were turned somewhat backwards; by weary ghetto-dwellers, people I had seen sitting outside mechanics' workshops dreaming about sea-journeys, people I had seen in the streets or at the markets, faces worn, eyes yellowish" (p. 304)

The third sentence is very long. And it would not be so if the writer had not used many relative pronouns (who and whose). The us eof relative pronouns gives more details about the scene and thus, lengthens the description of the characters.

5.3.2. **Sentence Complexity**

A complex sentence is one that has a main clause and one or more subordinate clauses. The main clause normally contains the most important information on which the subordinate clause or clauses depend. The use of complex sentences is found in a text such as the one that we have seen and discussed above. Furthermore, it can also be seen in another text how complex sentence is used as follows: "One road led to a thousand others, which in turn fed into paths, which fed into dirt tracks, which became streets, which ended in avenues and cul-de-sacs." (p. 84) In this sentence, which is complex in nature, there are many relative pronouns, because it is the most effective types of sentence structures in the English that reduce the monotony of using 'and' or 'but'.

Another example : "People dreamed of statues that walked, bringing gifts to the area; they dreamed of birds and butterflies, of hybrid animals, of antelopes with jewelled necklaces, of beggars who were princesses, of a rain of gold dust, of the land suffocating with plenitude while the majority starved, of a cornucopia two decades long with darkness to follow, of miracles on hungry roads, of the wise man who would emerge from nowhere to rule and transform the future agonies of the land." (p. 255) and ; "Madame Koto came out of the room and ordered one of her women to call her driver, who had been seen driving up and down the place, terrifying women, drunkenly threatening people who crossed the street, blasting his horn, and shouting insults at those who moved too slowly."

We can come up with the ideea that this is a clever depiction of how upperclass people treat other lower class ones. In this passage, okri describes how that driver, even he is only a driver, but he seems very angry towards everyone that come across to him in th strret. Through using a long compex sentnces, Okri could give the full depiction of the scenes. The author has also used a great number of prepositions, particularly prepositions of place and direction, such as *on* and *to*, and the preposition *of*.

In fact, a large part of the syntactic complexity of the sentence comes from the use of prepositional phrases. The role of *of*, in particular, is to relate two noun-expressions together, and the former of these expressions is always an abstract, and collective nouns such as 'The blankness of death came up on me', 'the figure of a king'. What this suggests is that perception and cognition go hand in hand in african literature.

5.3.3. Clause Types and Clause Structure

Clauses are group of words containing a subject, a verb, a modifier and sometimes with an object. We may have an independent and a dependent clause. The independent clause sometimes called a principal or main clause which is actually a simple sentence, a complete sentence. On the other hand, the dependent or subordinate clause, is joined by a conjunction to the principal one. It depends on the principal clause in order to fully communicate.

A simple sentence may have one clause beginning with a noun group called the subject, one finite verb, which may be followed by a noun group or an adjective or a noun group and an adverb called the predicate, **(Ewuzie**, **2009**). These kinds of sentences are stylistically used by writers, because it is often short and straight to the point. They are simply recognized by the number of verbs they contain and not by length. The simple sentence expresses an assertion, a question, a command, a wish or an exclamation that usually begins with a capital letter and ends with a full stop, a question mark or an exclamation mark.

In the famished road, the use of simple sentences is very common. Okri sometimes moves from using a very long and complex sentence to a very simple one, because he gives attention to the reader who could not be an African. For example:

'Where have you been?' 'I was lost.'
'How did you get lost?'
'I played and got lost.' 'How?'
'I don't know.'

'What about Madame Koto?'
'I don't know.'
'Shecamelookingfor you last night.' I said nothing.
'You didn't tell her where you were going.'
'I can't remember.'
'Have you eaten?' Mum asked.
'Don't ask him such questions,' Dad said, loudly. 'First he must tell me where he has been.'
'Let him sleep.'
'That's how you women spoil your children.'
'Let him rest, then he will talk.'
'If he doesn't talk he won't rest. He has prevented my going to work. I want to know what he has been doing.'
'Azaro, tell your father where you've been.'
'I got lost.'
'Where?' Dad's voice rose. He sat up straight. His chair wobbled.
'I don't know.'

5.3.4. **Verb Phrases**

The author has used the past simple too much. This because the story is imaginative and he wants to put the reader in the scene; so that the reader may bare in mind that the scene happened earlier in time.

'I am going to die soon,' he said.
'Why do you say that?'
'My time has come. My friends are calling me.'
'What friends?'
'In the other world,' he said. We were silent.
'And what Are you two whispering about, eh?' Mum asked.
'Nothing.'
'What happened to him?'
'He's not well.'
'What about his father?'
'I don't know.''God save me,' Mum cried.
The candles went out. Mum shut the door and searched for the matches.'This life! No rest. None. A woman suffers, a woman sweats, with no rest, no happiness.

In the dialogue above, we find that the writer shifts from using the present continuous to the present perfect then a mixture of the past simple and the present simple.

'Trouble is always coming. Maybe it's just as well,' he said. 'Your story has just begun. Mine is ending. I want to go to my other home. Your mother is right; there is too much unnecessary suffering on this earth.'

'My time is coming. I have worn out my mother's womb and now she can't have any more children. Coming and going, I have seen the world, I have seen the future. The Koran says nothing is ever finished.' 'What will happen?' I asked him.

Quivering, biting his lips till he drew blood, he said: 'There will be the rebirth of a father. A man with seven heads will take you away. You will come back. You will stay. Before that the spirits and our ancestors will hold a great meeting to discuss the future of the world. It will be one of the most important meetings ever held. Suffering is coming. There will be wars and famine. Terrible things will happen. New diseases, hunger, the rich eating up the earth, people poisoningthesky andthewaters,peoplegoingmadinthenameofhistory,theclouds will breathe fire, the spirit of things will dry up, laughter will become strange.'

He blamed them for not thinking for themselves, he lashed out at their sheep-like philosophy, their tribal mentality, their swallowing of lies, their tolerance of tyranny, their eternal silence in the face of suffering. (p. 307)

5.3.5. **General**

He joked less the more he lost (p. 23) Everyone had much less food than suggested by the size of the boar.(p. 30)

Okri's style is based on mixing the real with the fantastic as we have seen earlier in this thesis. The sentences vary from declaratives to questions. But the declarative form is more used than other forms. Exclamations are also present in the novel but The novel includes both dialogues and passages of only statements. The following are some chosen sentence structures:

> 'Is your husband not in?'
> 'No.'
> 'What about my rent?'
> 'When he comes back he will give it to you.'
> 'He didn't leave it ?'
> 'No.' (p. 147)

In this excerpt, it is the landlord who is trying to find out whether Azoro's father is at home or not. He asked Azoro's mother in a way that we may describe as politely. We can see also that teh landnord's sentences are grammatically wrong but their serve communication

since she could understand him and give him answers. However, after he couldn't get what he

wanted, he started to be very angry.

Exclamations are also used in the novel and have the function of elipsis.

> 'Catch him! Catch him!' the thugs shouted.
> 'Hold him! Hold the traitor!'
> 'Thief! Thief!

The following is a superb passage between the father of Azaro and Madame Koto:

> 'You are a wise woman. Politics spoils business,' said Dad. 'They are
> all corrupt. They are all thieves. With the Party of the Rich everyone
> knows they are thieves. They don't pretend.'
> 'NO POLITICS!'
> 'But I won't vote for them.'
> 'They have...'
> 'NO POLITICS!'
> 'Money and . .'
> 'NO POLITICS!'
> 'Power. They can help. If you support them they support you. They
> give you contracts. A poor man has to eat.'
> Madame Koto got up and snatched away the carpenter's bowl. 'Didn't
> you hear me? I said NO POLITICS!' (p. 159)

As we can see, the answers of Madame Koto are almost one word, 'NO POLITICS !'

though he continued complaining and talking about the corpution of the persons in the

government. Madame Koto is trying not to be involved in the subject as her bar is the refuge

of those people in power, and whom the father call them as corrupt. Although the answer is

verbless, but it carries a lot. It is obvious that she does not want to ruin her business by

agreeing with him ; otherwise, no one will come and and drink in her bar.

The following sentences are also examples of Okri's style in the novel. Azaro's father

is happy that he has beaten up some thugs, so he asked his son this question; because to show

somebody pepper is to teach someone a lesson, after having some trouble with him.

> 'We showed them pepper, didn't we?'
> 'Yes.'
> 'That's how to be a man.'
> 'How?'
> 'When people fight you, toughen up, study them, wait for the right
> time, and then fight them back. Fight them like a madman, like a
> wizard. Then they will respect you.' (p. 225)

'If you're so powerful, why don't you join the army !' (p. 72) This is an imperative denoting that soldiers are usually considered to be the strongest people in the community. So when someone is considered to be a bully, people would ask him to take his energy to the Army where it can be put in a good use.

> The man went down and the two thugs set on him and kicked him and slapped him around and hit him in the stomach. He collapsed on his knees and the two men went on unleashing a barrage of blows and kicks on him. He folded himself into a ball and still they went on, inventing new forms of beating, new kinds of hand-chops, knuckle-cracks, jabs and elbow attacks, enjoying their **invention**. (p. 164)

In the novel, insults are used a lot, especially against the young Azaro.. In some cases, people are called animals names. Azaro is called a rat (p. 147) by an angry customer. Another angry customer (p. 209) calls him a 'small goat'. The Landlord calls Azaro's father Black Cricket (p. 100). This is an obvious mockery of the nickname Black Tyger. Azaro's father calls one of his neighbours a "thief" (p. 99). This does not mean that the man is a thief. He just wants to show the man that he is not happy with him. Azaro's eyes are called "bad-luck eyes" (p. 305) when he stares at someone's stomach. He is also called a "bad-luck boy" (p. 325), a "stubborn spirit child" (p. 321), and an "ugly boy" (p. 240).

5.4. Figures of Speech and Metaphors

"He smelt of overwork, sadness, and ash" (Okri 291)This is ametaphor denoting that the character depicted here is very tired. Moreover, it seems that he is not happy with his work. Thus, this can be easily seen on his face. The author describes all these sensations as smell.

"…and then I wandered. I wandered for a long time in the forest") (p. 182) On his way home and often gets into situations from which he has to hurry off or flee. In the passage that comes later, Azaro explicitly reflects his strong desire for mobility and his restlessness in an assertion that could easily be transposed onto the heroes of the picaresque novel. Azaro later says : "My feet started to itch again, and I resumed wandering the roads of the world" (p.109).

"My husband is mad but e is a good man." (p. **327**) This is a paradoxical statement which shows that she does not want to tell them that he is totally mad, or she wants to threaten them. It may also mean the rufusal of the man to meet them.

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5.4.1. **Phonological Features**

There some phonological deviations in the novel. For example, the word 'Sheeze' (p. 31) : This is the word that usually said before a photo is taken. The spelling does not exist in Standard dictionaries of english, yet Okri makes use of it. Another deviation is given as a question : "What kind of question is dat ?" (p. 237) any reader, either being an expert or a novice, can easily understand that the word 'dat' is 'that'.

There is also some onomatopic terms in the novel, such as: 'Kokoro', ' Ogogoro **'.**The novelist intends for this word to stand out because it begins with a capital letter. A kokoro is an ant that feeds of beans (195). The name of the insect comes from the sound it makes when it feeds. '**Ogogoro'** is used approximately 47 times in this novel. It is a local gin that has a more intoxicating effect than palm-wine. It is also more expensive than palm-wine. Ben Okri does not begin the word 'ogogoro' with a capital letter. Probably for him, that there is nothing difficult about this word, and it would be easy to be understood by the reader.

5.4.1.1.**The "eh" Particle**

It is noticed that 'Eh' is not listed as a word in most of the English Dictionaries. However, it is used for rhetorical questions by Okri and to replace questions like 'aren't you' and 'isn't it.' This is also known in grammar books as question tags. "Eh" is used many times in the novel. On page 238 alone, it is used six times:"You think you are powerful, eh?" "Why did you break their window, eh?" "Don't you see how poor we are. Eh?" "Do you know how much glass costs, eh?" "You use the spirits as an excuse every time you do something bad, eh?" "So you went and broke the windows because the spirits stoned you, eh?"

'Eh' is not new to the standard English. It is listed here because of its frequency in the West African's language and because it is pronounced differently. In West Africa, it is pronounced like 'hien' in French. This question particle (Platt et al, 1984, p. 128) is used about 50 times in the novel. It usually comes at the end of a statement or question. It can be compared to 'Hey' in Black South African English. In most cases, its subtitutions are : Isn't aren't they, isn't it, don't you think so, okay? Alright?

> 'Do you think of us, eh? How we sweat to feed you, to pay the rent, to buy
> cloths, eh? All day, like a mule, I carry loads. My head is breaking, my
> brain is shrinking, all so that I can feed you, eh?' (p. 90)

The above passage was said when Azaro returns home, after wandering away from home, causing anxiety in his parents. The father does not really expect the boy to say anything. Teh series of questios here implies that he is fed up with all the sacrifices he has to keep the boy happy. However, Azaro's mother asks a series of rhetorical questions:

> 'Why did you break that window, eh? Do you want to kill us, eh? Do you
> see how poor we are, eh? Have you no pity on your father? Do you know
> how much glass cost, eh? (p. 238)

At this stage Azaro's father tries hard to conceal his anger. He shows how angry he is only after the broken window has been repaired. These tags are not unique in African English. It is more natural for people to use such forms rather than structures like 'are we', are you' and 'isn't it' that do not exist in African languages.

Sometimes 'eh' takes a different dimension and changes the statement to a *why question*: 'Why do I have to come and pester you for my rent, eh? 'Why are you so different, eh? (p. 147) In this episode, the landlord wants to confront Azaro's father about two things: non-payment of rent and refusal to join his party, which is the party of the rich. In the two questions above, 'eh' replaces 'tell me'. This is the same role that it plays in the question that Azaro's father asks the little girl who keeps staring at him in madame Koto's bar: Why are you looking at me, eh'

In the next two examples 'eh' means 'are you'? Stealing ogogoro, eh? Hiding in the bush and drinking, 'eh' (235)

5.4.1.2.**The 'O' particle**

There is also a special use of calling. The author uses the letter 'o'. for instance: 'Clear the way–O (p. 117) The 'O' suffix, added to an utterance is usually meant to emphasize what one is saying. The stress falls on the complete utterance. In the example above, it is attached to the word 'way' for reasons of representation. Here, it is a suffix of warning. The girl is carrying a hot water, and she intends to pour it on the politicians who contaminated the milk that had already been distributed to the poor public. So she asks people to clear the way so that they wouldn't get hurt.

Another use of the 'o' particle is as follows: "Run! Run! –O!" (p. 168) 'O' in this context also means "run, otherwise you will be beaten!". A thug has just told Madame Koto

that he is going to marry her. This upsets her and she goes out. The people in Madame Koto's bar urge the thug to run, otherwise he is going to be beaten up by Madame Koto. In most of other scenes, 'O' does not refer to danger or warning in all situations. It can be used to show intensity in a positive way. 'I like that car – o' means 'I love that car very much'.

5.4.1.3.Suspension Sign

Though the suspension is not an invention of the post-colonial world it is also used in the standard English. It is part of New Englishes because it is used very often and so falls under the category of new meaning. 'If you move from thus room today or tomorrow you might as well stay lost, because when I finish with you…' (p. 118)

In this episode, Ben Okri adds a sentence of explanation: "He deliberately didn't complete his sentence for greater effect." The silence which comes at the end of the sentence (indicated by the suspension sign) is a threat which Azaro's father stops short of saying and if completed, would have read something like this: "You can not begin to imagine the things I will do to you if you dare disobey my orders."

'IF YOU VOTE FOR US...'
'...we are finished,' someone added.
'...WE WILL FEED YOUR CHILDREN...'
'. . . lies.'
'...AND WE WILL BRING YOU GOOD ROADS...'
'. . . which the rain will turn into gutters!'
'...AND WE WILL BRING ELECTRICITY...'
'.. . so you can see better how to rob us!'
'...AND WE WILL BUILD SCHOOLS...'
'to teach illiteracy!'
'... AND HOSPITALS. WE WILL MAKE YOU RICH LIKE US. THERE IS PLENTY FOR EVERYBODY. PLENTY OF FOOD. PLENTY OF POWER. VOTE FOR UNITY AND POWER!'

We can perceive from the above excerpt from the novel how is the relation between the citizens and the politicians. It seems that nobody care s about what they say. The politicians remember the fellow citizen only during the period of the election campagins, and the citizens are also fed up with those speeches that give them no reward but worsen their living conditions. Beaurocracy is really disturbing and confronting development. During every speech, people try to mock the politicians. Words like 'rob', 'gutters', 'lies' …etc. are said ironically to describe the real situation.

5.4.2. **Tropes**

The writer makes use of different tropes in teh novel. Example are different such as: "The men, covered in sweat, so that it seemed they had just emerged from steaming rivers, had bits of foam at the sides of their mouths." (p. 201)

"The road began to move. It behaved like a river, and it flowed against the direction of our journey." (p. 242) "Isolated trees were a cluster of giants with wild hair, sleeping on their feet." (p. 259) "She had a new walking stick with a metallic lion's head" (p. 331) also, (… of miracles on hungry roads, of the wise man who would emerge from nowhere to rule and transform the future agonies of the land.) (p. 255)

There are many figures and metaphors of hunger and famine in the novel. The above example is one of them. Okri in his novel tries to symbolize that hunger and food are common topics that people struggle about in Africa in their daily life. Other descriptions show a capitalistic greed, because food is conceived as a powerful system of communication and domination by the rich.

The ropes used in the novel are generally about greediness, dishonesty, violence, hatred, lies …etc. therefore, they represent a negative connotation about Nigeria. It deals also with the contrasts and confrontations between the poor and the rich classes.

5.4.3. **Proverbs Idiomatic Expressions**

Proverbial expressions and wise sayings are one of the strong cultural ties that exist along the cultural heritage of the African literature. They have great significance in the present day African society. Genererally, such proverbs are well stored and transmitted from the aged and handed to the younger generations. Proverbs are well-known phrases or sentences that give advice or say something that is generally true. In *the famished road,* proverbs are used predominantly by Okri to depict the rituals of the west african society.

The use of proverbs by Okri in his nove lis very profound ; for that he used some proverbs and sayings to promote the cultural values of African literature. Although the language of proverb is not an African language, its significance remains African; and thus it is grasped without respect to time and space.

Okri mentions different proverbs which are mainly African in their origin. For example, "A river does not travel a new path for nothing" (p. 327) This proverb means that when an important person comes to visit you, there is usually a reason for it. Thus, it is obvious that Azaro's father is an important person where he lives. The presence of terms like river, forest, bush, trees… etc. in thedaily life of the African person is very common. Therefore, we find many uses of these proverbs ion the novel.

An idiomatic expression is defined as "an expression whose meanings cannot be inferred from the meanings of the words that make it". The utterance takes a new meaning in the context in which it is used, and in the case of *The Famished Road*, reflects the influence of the indigenous way of thinking on the language:

"They are hiding behind their wives' wrappers." (p. 70). This means to duck for cover in the face of trouble. Azaro's father accuses his creditors of being scared to face him. In this episode, the men hide in the safety of their homes. Only the women go around, trying to find out what is happening.

5.5. Context and Cohesion

Finally, we take a look at features which wich have to do with the cohesion and context. Under cohesion, ways in which one part of a text is linked to another are considered: for example, the ways in which sentences are connected. This is the internal organisation of the text. Under context, more attention is given to the external relations of the text seeing it as a discourse presupposing a social relation between its participants (author and reader; character and character, etc.), and a sharing by participants of knowledge and assumptions.

Cohesion is also referred to as the realization of discourse connectedness in texts. According critics and linguists, the writer's skilful use of cohesive devices throughout the text can play a significant role in creating powerful aesthetic implications for readers (Leech and Short 1981, pp. 243-254). Below I shall try to review some influential stylistic observations which are basically inspired by the principles of cohesive relations within text.

For Leech (1970), there are two ways of explaining literary texts: "linguistic description and critical interpretation". Concerning cohesion, he discusses how cohesive patterns are related to foregrounded elements in a poem; and notes that cohesion is the way in which independent choices in different points of a text correspond with or presuppose one

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another, forming a network of sequential relations" (p.120) however, In Halliday and Hasan's (1976, p. 299) terms, "cohesion expresses the continuity that exists between one part of the text and another". Technically speaking, cohesion is characterized as "the formal means by which connections are signalled" *(*Leech and Short, 1981: 244) Also for (Carter and Nash, 1990, p. 245), "the demonstrable pattern of the text's integrity, the marks of its hanging together" . For widdowson, it is "the overt, linguisticallysignalled relationship between propositions" (Widdowson, 1978, p. 31), and "the actual forms of linguistic linkage" (Quirk, et al., 1985, p. 1423).

In all types of cohesion, there is a kind of "backward looking" relation; that is, we look backwards fo the elements in te texts. This type of relation is often called "anaphoric". However, in addition to anaphoric relations, texts may provide us with a different type of relation, "forward-looking", or what is generally referred to as "cataphoric" relations, where a presupposing element comes first and its interpretation is possible with reference to the coming elements within the text.

5.5.1. Cohesion and Coherence

According to Halliday and Hasan (1976), cohesion is a semantic relation that exists within the text. Cohesion "occurs when the interpretation of some element in the discourse is dependent on that of another. The one presupposes the other, in the sense that it cannot be effectively decoded except by recourse to it" (Halliday and Hasan, 1976, p. 04). Cohesion is realized partly through the grammar of the text and partly through vocabulary. The use of explicit cohesive links such as "but", "an", "afterward", "in the end", "moreover", "for", "finally", etc. are found in the text. The explicit cohesive link "but" is used to express the contrast of the previous statement or point;

In the novel, "and" and "but" are very frequently used at the discourse level which asserts the dilemma and the confusion of the narrator. The narrator pauses and starts again, thus showing the continuity in a discontinuous structure. The contradictory stance of the narrator and his confusion is explicit. The text is held together by a number of 'lexical chains' in which words from particular 'semantic fields' are repeated. Analyzing these semantic fields can not only help us to see how the text is held tougher, but can also help us to notice the main 'topics' of the text and how they relate to one another.

Cohesion means the connection of ideas at the sentence level which makes ideas coherent. It refers to relations of meaning that exist within the text, and that define it as a text. There are two types: Grammatical and Lexical cohesion. For Halliday and Hasan (1976), cohesion expresses the continuity that exists between one part of a text and another. Cohesion is one of the internal cues that speakers/writers use to create desired meanings. It refers to the ties and connections that exist within a text (Yule, 2006). Cohesions are commonly considered and described in terms of specific syntactic units.

This implies that there are ties or connections which exist in the texts that aid the understanding of the meaning of the text. In the Famished Road, there are some lexical items that are used as cohesive devices. For example, the author usaully repeats words like 'famished, road, river, other world, spirit… etc.' in different chapters of the novel to remind the reader and to make reference to the imaginative feature of the story, and how it is linked with teh African context.

Analysis of the texts in the corpus has shown that reference is prevalent. Reference cohesion shows the relations which holds between an element of text and something else by reference to which it is interpreted in the text. Cohesion is a dimension of linguistic description which is particularly important in the study of literary texts. It denotes the way in which independent choices at different points of a text correspond with or presuppose one another, forming a network of sequential relations.

Lexical cohesion in *the Famished Road* is more marked than the grammatical cohesion. The most obvious kind of lexical cohesion consists in the repetition of the same item of vocabulary: and many other items occur more than once. But apart from this, choice of vocabulary is largely restricted to items which have a clear semantic connection with other items in the text.

Coherence is established in this text through the borrowing of conventions from a number of genres which are likely to be familiar to readers. This format has two functions. It helps to hold the text together, and operates ideologically by 'framing'. The principle of Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar deals with this issue. We will see in the next issue how the writer has used some ways to make the text coherent, including the use of antonyms along the story.

6. **Antonymy in the *Famished Road***

It is undoubtedly that every novelist has a good master of using antonyms. Jones (2002) provides us with a number of functional categories of antonym cooccurrence within English texts. (Jones et.al, 2009) in which they identified several discourse functions of antonymy, each of which is associated with a number of contrastive constructions in written English. That is because binary opposites has the potential to interact with the values and thought patterns of different cultures. The study of Antonymy is divided into three different types by the linguists. That is, gradable antonymy, complementary antonymy and converse antonymy. Antonyms play some important roles in English texts, especially in literature ; and they contribute to achieve characterization and scene description. It helps also to set the cohesion of the text.

In this study of antonyms, a nove lis under analysis. The novel is the *famished road* (1992) by Ben Okri. This paper seeks to find out what are teh motivation behind using antonyms in teh novel, either being cognitive or ieological. Jefferies (2010) notes that the structural and semantic mechanisms for creating local textual opposites are the same, whether the text is literary or not. However, the in-text effect of any oppositional terms is dependent on a range of local factors including the genre and the topic as well as the individual preferences of the writers concerned. There is less unconventional opposition created which challenges naturalized ideologies of how the world works, and more which set up the oppositions which will be relevant to the narrative to follow.

pairs	occurrence in the novel	category
Good/ bad	95 /94	Adj
Fast / slow	32/ 15	Adj
Fastly / slowly	00 / 57	Adv
Easy / uneasy	01/ 03	Adj
Easy / difficult	01/17	Adj
Black/ white	139/ 211	adj
blackeness / whiteness	03/ 09	Noun
blacken / whiten	06/ 00	Verb
colonial/ anticolonial	03/ 00	Adj
free / slave	35/ 05	Noun
freedom/ slavery	10/ 01	Noun
hard/ soft	85 / 38	Adj
back/ forward	630/ 20	Adv
death/ life	40/ 86	Noun
dead/ alive	76/ 18	Adj
new / old	177/ 235	Adj

natural/ unnatural	05/ 13	Adj
real/ unreal	65/ 02	Adj
magic/ real	21/ 65	Adj

Table 01: Ococcurrence of some antonym pairs in *the famished road* (1992)

Employing antonyms in texts reveals and produces the strong sense of comparison. Therefore, writers are fond of using them and are good at employing the antonyms in their literature works. Thus, the stylistic study of antonymy in texts helps the readers understand and appreciate authors' intention easily. Revealing the literary functions of some antonyms in a literary work is indded a way to interpret such text, and a way to know the ideology of the author.

We can see in (table 01) above how Okri cognitively uses some pairs that are naturally rekated to the African scene. If we take, for instanbce the (black/ white) and (new / old) which occur many times in the novel, we can feel that the author is depicting African themes unconsciously. 'Blackness' and 'whiteness' are terms which existed for centuries creating an everlasting conflict between aAfrican and the west.

Conclusion

This chapter offers a Cognitive Semantic approach to antonymy in language and thought. I analyzed teh use of antonymous pairs by Okri in his novel, The *famished road* (1992). My main purpose was to provide a theoretical framework for the functional use of antonymous pairs in a literary text and why some pairs are preferred than others.

Antonyms are meanings that are used in binary opposition through a construal of comparison. The implications of the investigation are assumed that antonymy is basically a conceptual relation, or a cognitive relation. Most of the antonyms used in teh novel are adjectives and nouns, but less verbs. The reason why the frequency of occurrence of some pairs is probably that one item calls upon the other congnitively.

Some opposites are used more than other ones, which may indicate that the use of antonyms in a literary text is culture related and not a language related. Thus, Okri uses english to write his novel, but the antonyms are mainly African. That is to say, he focuses on issues related to African matters.

General Conclusion

Most of the literary works in Africa are based on the fantastic. This tradition comes straight from the fireside tales and oral literature that are handed down from one generation to the other. In these tales, realism is not important; fantasy and magic are the main ingredients (Gérard, 1985, p. 23). *The Famished Road* fits this description. Also, some of the characters (Azaro and his father) feel that the world is very corrupt.

Despite the use of some concepts which the writer mentions are strange to the English language, he has to make up new words for them, enriching the English language. Tunca (2011) has described Ben Okri's style in these words: "A projection of hopes for the world based on the release of mankind's as yet untapped mental and physical resources. (2004, p. 02) His novel reads like a mystical piece. There is no dividing line between the world of the living and the world of spirits.

In the novel, symbols play a major role. The Nigerian nation is described as an 'Abiku nation' (p. 494). Azaro himself is a symbol of survival. The Party of the Rich, Madame Koto and the Landlord represent the new elite that has replaced the colonial master and goes to the poor only for the sake of their votes. On the other hand, The Party of the Poor, Azaro's father and The International Photographer represent the champions of the poor who will do everything to make sure that their fellows could survive and confront the bad circumstances of life. Since Okri's style is based on the urban narrative technique, the criticism of the government's shortcomings, and finally on magic and fantasy (Moh, 2000), *The Famished Road* can be read as a battle between good and evil. Generally speaking, *The Famished Road* is written in English, which is a foreign language to the context. Yet, the English used in the novel is simply not standard. It can be described as a variety of English. Such non-standard usage features are obvious in novel.

Okri's use of the English language indicates two things: that he has a great mastery of language; at the same time, he asserts his belonging to Africa in his choice and use of local words. It is worth noting that most of his deviations of the English language occur in the form of lexis rather than syntax. He adds some new words to Nigerian English within the context of post-colonial literature.

Also, the ideology of the author which is based on the postcolonial theory, has influenced the shaping of the text. As we have seen in the first chapter that postcolonial works tend to tackle paradoxical issues and works on oppositional terms as a means of resisting the dominant and what has been imposed. The *famished road* is full of oppositional words, which contribute cognitively and unconsciously in the output of the literary work.

The stylistic study drawn upon the whole novel reveals the struggle between the use of the colonizer'slanguage as a means of express and the call of the mind to remain a native African. Thus, Okri used English as an international language so as to promote his African rituals and traditions. He gained a worldwide readership and made the latter know more about what they are reading about the Nigerian society, which represent one of the African communities that exist alongside the Western ones.

Finally, Okri is considered as a nationalist Nigerian literary person trying to depict some realistic settings. Remarkably, too, he appears to judge conventional setting as it is artistically agreeable with the dominant imagery figured by major characters. Besides, Okri is the first modern Nigerian author who fuses the magical with the fantastical, the improbable with the visionary, and the imaginary with the real. In addition, this can be shown in the excessive use of antonymous pairs. He also adopts new terms and concepts in response to the social, economic and political exigencies of the time. created out of linguistic and socio-historical contexts and not necessarily as a result of contact with English.

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