**Pragmatic strategies in Soyinka’s *The Lion and the Jewel—***Morning

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**Introduction**

Wole Soyinka’s The Lion and the Jewel is a projection of cross-cultural counter concerns through the voice of Sidi, Baroka and Sadiku who represent colonized African natives, and Lakunle who represents the European cultural hegemonic propagandist in the African world. Sultana (2016) opines that the play can be analysed on the platform of Post-Colonial cultural criticism in the global context because it criticises the Anglo-African cross-cultural encounter. It, in reality, talks about the peoples and cultures of a land, colonial Africa which has emerged from subjugation, disfigures and domination of British imperial rule. The conflict between Sidi and Lakunle is a conflict between colonial and post-colonial consciousness, a clash between European and African culture; the conflict between Lakunle and Baroka is a conflict between the colonizer and the colonized, and between the white and the black. The ultimate triumph of Sidi and Baroka over Lakunle is the triumph of African traditional culture and the defeat of European imperialism. Sultana (2016) maintains that the play occupies an interesting footing of counter cross-cultural discourse in the galaxy of Soyinka’s literary criticism.

Soyinka presents the difference in the attitudes of these major characters. The characters differ in their ideas and acceptance. Their way of thinking is different from each other. The aspects like generation gap, communication and perceptions are the major factors for their conflicts. LeBaron (n.d.) as cited in Latha (2017) holds the view that “culture is inextricable from conflict, though it does not cause it—when differences surface in families, organizations, or communities, culture is always present, shaping perceptions, attitudes, behaviours and outcomes”. Soyinka presents a young man who is a caricature of a modern human being representing vulgarity and superficiality. Baroka is the mouthpiece of Soyinka expressing his love for traditional culture of his country. His love is not the uncritical patriotism or romantic nostalgia but a strong and deep understanding of Nigerian heritage, which has permanent values. Soyinka manages to expose societal mistakes focusing on youth and the problem of self-definition. The play challenges and criticizes the African life through European conventions. The objective of this study is to explore the pragmatic strategies that play up in the morning section of the text *the Lion and the Jewel* through a combination of insights drawn from van Dijk’s (2006) socio-cognitive approach to critical discourse analysis (CDA) and Serle’s (1969) speech act theory. These theoretic perspectives will help us to see the pragmatic strategies utilized in the text and the speech acts through which the pragmatic strategies are realised.

**Literature Review**

This review has been captured from two standpoints: works that have focused on gender issues in Soyinka’s *The lion and the Jewel* (e.g. Kara, 2015; Kigbote & Koukposi, 2015) and those that have paid attention to cultural conflicts in the play (e.g. Nasreen, 2017; Sultana, 2016). These are captured bellow.

Kara (2015) is a third world feminist approach to the reading of Wole Soyinka's *The Lion and the Jewel*. The paper argues that feminism, as a social and political phenomenon, has been controversial in all terms, for there are various types of it and each type is associated with a certain group of people, culture, or society. It maintains that while the first wave and second wave feminism types are totally Eurocentric and are concerned with the emancipation of the white middle class women in Europe and in the USA, the third wave feminism has based its arguments on the emancipation of the women in the Third World countries since they are abused twice as much as those in the First World countries by the political and patriarchal system, which, apparently, is an unstraightforward definition of double colonization. In the light of these arguments, this article analyses Soyinka’s play, *The Lion and the Jewel*, with reference to third world feminism, which is a harsh protest against the colonial political design on the underdeveloped countries. The paper insists that Soyinka has been critical of both the colonizers and the colonized people in the third world countries since he believes that while the colonizers are liable to benefit from the virgin and wealthy sources of the colonized territories, the colonized are entrapped in their dreams of the manipulations of welfare, modernization and the Westernization processes, which are believed to have been brought by the colonizers who pretend to be well-intentioned. The researcher opines that the play is considerably significant for the analysis of the Third World feminist theory, for it is a life-like and concrete exemplification of cultural differences between the Western countries and Nigeria.

Kigbote and Koukposi (2015) is an attempt at probing the language used by male and female characters in Soyinka’s The Lion and the Jewel to see how gender issues are grounded in the in the play to let it play its didactic role. The aim of the study is to pinpoint the ways male and female are presented through a lexico-grammatical analysis with a specific focus on its transitivity system as suggested by Halliday (20040 to enter Soyinka’s characters’ inner and outer world as they use language to enable them to build a mental picture of reality; to make sense of what goes on around them and inside them. The researchers argue that Soyinka considers or does not consider women or just recounts the situation of women in Yoruba traditional societies is what is at stake in the study. The result of the investigation in the light of transitivity and critical discourse analysis reveals that Soyinka consciously or unconsciously has represented male characters as strong, powerful and metaphorically as a lion —a symbol of irresistible power. The researchers further argue that the male characters are also presented as initiator, doer of something and commander in chief while their female counterparts are represented as goals and/or beneficiaries of men’s actions and associated with the processes of sensing and emotions.

Nasreen (2017) is a contrapuntal reading of cultural conflict in Soyinka’s *The Lion and the Jewel.* The paper is an attempt to examine of how Soyinka’s play— *The Lion and the Jewel* traces the conflict between cultures in Nigeria and Western society. The paper argues that Soyinka with his most radical and powerful voice played a significant role in sketching the consciousness of the world through the creation of characters who can challenge themselves with the defenders of modernity on one side and with those who are deeply rooted in the tradition and the customs on the other side. The researcher opines that a society builds it dignity only through what culture it followed. Culture, she insists, is the main thing which is responsible for the people’s identity and dignity and Soyinka depicts the customs and values of traditional Yoruba culture against the westernized creations or innovations. The researcher maintains that Lakunle, an optimistic school teacher fails to follow his own native culture and strongly believes in modern ideas and accepts them without clearly understanding of it while, on the other side, Baroka, the village bale sticks to his old tradition and thinks that modernity will have a negative effect on their tradition. . the researcher writes that these two contradictable thought brings out the two sides of the prominent social and political issue in Africa. The central idea of the study, the researcher concludes, is to show how Soyinka through his themes, plot and characters demonstrates the conflict between the traditional Yoruba culture and the western culture.

Sultana (2016) is a critique of cross-cultural counter discourse in Wole Soyinka’s *The Lion and the Jewel.* The issues of cultural domination and displacement, colonial ramifications of the indigenous native culture, legacies and values and clash between colonizer and colonized; the superior and the inferior and the subversion of the alien intrusive culture lead to a critical counter discourse analysis in the play. The paper is an analysis of the hegemony of British cultural paradigms in African context and the peripheralisation of African national history, culture, tradition, and values as well as indigenous resistance against cultural hegemony on the mode of post-colonial literary and cultural criticism. In other words, it discovers the cultural encounter between the hegemonic and the inferior, between the east and the west, and vis-a-vis, local counter resistance against the European cultural hegemony and dominance based on the context of the play. The paper concludes that Cross-cultural resistance and counter subversion, in Soyinka’s *The Lion and the Jewel,*comes into being through an attempt of establishing Africanness by subverting and resisting Eurocentric hegemonic power, culture and values. The counter discourse, the paper insists, is the consequences of European colonization and cultural domination and perversion in Africa that define the trajectory of change, the nature of colonized cultures, national cultural consciousness and anti-colonial resistance at the hands of local Africans.

**Theoretical Framework**

This work taps from a combination of insights from van Dijk’s (2004) socio-cognitive approach to critical discourse analysis and Austin Searle’s (1969) speech act theory. Out of the twenty-seven analytic categories provided in van Dijk (2004), nine of these categories have been found to be relevant to the present study. The nine categories are “actor description” ―the way actors are described in discourse; “comparison‟— evaluation of the strength and weaknesses of two or more characters; “implication” —the meanings that are deducible from certain utterances or actions; lexicalization” ―the use of specific lexical items to express underlying concepts and beliefs; “metaphor”—direct comparison of entities that differ in nature but share certain striking similar qualities; “self-glorification‟ —positive description of ‘self’ and negative description of the ‘other’; “norm expression” —reference to norm as justification for certain action or proposition, “authority” — citing authority to substantiate one’s claims, and “counterfactuall” ― the act of opposing and neutralizing another character’s position by countering their points. The categories shall be followed in the analysis of the morning section of Soyinka’s *The Lion and the Jewel.*

Searle (1979) has also proposed five classes of speech acts that will be utilized by the researcher in the analysis of data. They include:

• Representative/assertive speech act—commits the speaker to the truth of what s/he has said i.e. the expressed proposition. The speaker may, through his/her utterance; assert, conclude, describe or suggest something. For example, one can utter a sentence like *I love football* as an instance of a representative speech act.

• Directive speech act—occurs when the speaker attempts to get the hearer to do something as a response. It involves making a request, asking a question, issuing an invitation, or issuing an order/command. Example includes expression like: tell us your father’s occupation.

• Commissive speech act— an utterance form in which the speaker commits to a future course of action. This could be expressed as a warning, threat or promise.

• Expressive speech actoccurs in conversation when a speaker expresses his/her psychological state which is demonstrated when the speaker appreciates or thanks, apologizes, complains, welcomes, condoles, or congratulates the listener.

• Declarative speech actbrings about immediate change of status or condition to an object by virtue of the statement itself as soon as it is uttered. It involves excommunicating, declaring, christening etc. These theories will help us to see the pragmatic strategies utilised in the text and the speech act types through which they have been realized.

**Analysis and Findings**

Several pragmatic strategies have been identified in the text. Out of these strategies there is a preponderance of “actor description” and “lexicalization”. ‘Actor description” is largely utilized by both Lakunle and Sidi as they try to present each other negatively in their efforts to advance their respective arguments. However, “lexicalization” as a pragmatic strategy is mostly utilized by Lakunle and hardly used by Sidi. This is attributable to the fact that Lankunle is educated and overtly influenced by western ideals as against Sidi who is evidently uneducated and treasures the Yoruba traditional orientation. The use of the above pragmatic strategies is represented diagrammatically, thus:

**Table 1. The use of actor description and lexicalization in the text**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Actor  descrip-  tion | User | | Frequency | Example |
| Lakunle | | 10 ( 34% ) | If now I am misunderstood by you and your race of savage... |
| Sidi | | 15 ( 52% ) | ...with your fine airs and little sense |
| Baroka | | 2 ( 7% ) | **...**our man of knowledge |
| First girl | | 2 ( 7% ) | **...**the clown who fell in the river for you |
| Lexicali-  zation | User | Frequency | | Example |
| Lakunle | 16 (100%) | | rejected, denounced, accursed, archaic, degrading  humiliating, unspeakable, redundant, retrogressive |

The above table captures graphically the use of actor description by characters in the text. Of critical discourse effect is the use of lexicalization which appears to be Lankule’s exclusive reserve. This is in tandem with Lakunle’s status in the text as a teacher and by implication the only educated character in the text driven by the impulse of his western orientation. The characters have also utilized other pragmatic strategies in the text as shown in table 2.

**Table 2. Other Pragmatic Strategies Utilized in the Text**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| s/n | Pragmatic strategies | User | frequency | examples |
| 1 | Comparison | Lakunle | 2 (6%) | As a woman you have a smaller brain than mine |
| Sidi | 4 (12%) | I am more esteemed than Bale |
| 2 | Implication | Lakunle | 2 (6%) | ...arguments that go above your head |
| Sidi | 4 (12%) | These thoughts of future wonders...do you buy them? |
| Baroka | 1 (3%) | It is five full months since last I took a wife |
| 3 | Authority | Lakunle | 3 (9%) | The scientists have proved it... |
| 4 | counterfactuals | Sidi | 3 (9%) | Is it a weaker breed who pounds the yam? |
| Lakunle | 1 (3%) | Wise men have been called mad before me... |
| 5 | Metaphor | Lakunle | 4 (12) | I poured the water of my soul to wash your feet |
| Sidi | 2 (6%) | Is the bag empty? Why did you stop? |
| 6 | Self glorification | Sidi | 4 (12%) | ...Sidi is more important than even the Bale |
| Lakunle | (6%) | ...what is a jewel to a pig |
| 7 | Norm expression | Sidi | 3 (9%) | But my bride price must first be paid |

Table 2 shows that Lakunle is the only character that uses authority as a pragmatic strategy, most likely because he is the only educated character in the text; Sidi is, on the other hand, the only character that uses norm expression as she continues to defend traditional norms. The table also shows that it is only Lakunle and Sidi that use “comparison”, “counterfactuals”, “metaphor” and “self glorification”, while “ implication” is used by three characters. These pragmatic strategies are realized through specific speech acts as shown in table 3.

**Table 3. Speech Acts Utilized in the Text**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| s/n | Speech act | user | frequency | Sub-acts | examples |
| 1 | Assertives | Sidi | 21 (27%) | Asserting, concluding | Your action deceives me. |
| Lakunle | 15 (20%) | Asserting, describing | This is for the children. |
| 2 | Commissives | Lakunle | 11 (14%) | Promising, warning | I will stand against earth, heaven and... |
| Sidi | 5 (7%) | Warning, threatening | If you ever dare to stop me... |
| 3 | Expressives | Lakunle | 8 (10%) | Apologising | Please, don’t be angry with me. |
| Sidi | 4 (5%) | complaining | You talk and talk and deafen me |
| 4 | Directive | Sidi | 13 (17%) | Requesting, ordering | Give me the pail now |

The preponderance of representative/assertive utterances as used by both Sidi and Lakunle points to the level of verbal challenge they have engaged themselves in a bid to pose superior arguments through the sub-acts of asserting, concluding and describing. Lakunle obviously uses the commissive acts more than Sidi as he continues to make promises of how he would transform Sidi’s life along the western ideals should she agree to marry him without her bride price being paid. Conversely, the few commisives used by Sidi weren’t promises but warnings and threats. This seems to suggest that Sidi enjoyed a level of bragging advantage over Lakule in the clash between culture and modernity. This claim is further substantiated by the fact that it is only Sidi that uses directive speech acts in the text as she orders and commands Lakunle to carry out certain functions in the text. Evidently, none of the characters uses declarative speech act as the use of such speech act would have only passed as infelicity given the participant role-relation of the characters.

**4.3 Conclusion**

This investigation reveals that the conflict between Sidi and Lakunle being a conflict between colonial and post-colonial consciousness, a clash between European and African cultural ideals is advanced through a number of pragmatic strategies realized through specific speech acts. Precisely, nine pragmatic strategies utilized in the text are identified to include “actor description”, “comparison”, “implication”, lexicalization” , “metaphor”, “self-glorification”, “norm expression”, “authority”, and “counterfactual” . There is a higher preponderance of the use of “actor description” as the characters try to present each other negatively in their efforts to advance their respective arguments. These pragmatic strategies are realized through such speech acts as “assertives”, “commissives” “expressives” and “directives”. The assertives enjoy a higher number of occurrence in the text while the use of directive speech act is overtly absent as such would likely amount to infelicity given the social statuses of the characters in the text.

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