Stylistic Analysis of "Xuma" and "Leah" in Peter Abraham's *Mine Boy*: A Verbal Transitivity Process

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Abstract

This study is an application of Michael Halliday's Transitivity theory in the depiction and portrayal of personality. The paper confined itself to the verbal transitivity process of two main characters- Xuma and Leah- of Peter Abraham's 'Mine Boy'. The findings hope to reveal the fact that the words given to characters reveal a lot of who they are (as replica of human beings) and that the transitivity analysis of their verbiages and interactive nature of the receivers and targets of their verbiages are very telling of their epistemic, emotive and social nature.

The essay consists of six sections. Section one is a brief introduction about linguistic analysis within the framework of social and functional construction of meanings to reveal speakers' personality. The second section is review of literature in which stylistic analyses have been carried out with transitivity theoretical framework as a guide. The third is the transitivity theoretical framework for this study as presented by various scholars. The fourth section is a brief account of Peter Abraham's "Mine Boy" by different reviewers while section five is presentation of the findings featuring analysis of the verbal processes of Xuma and Leah. The sixth and last section is a conclusion to the study.

Keywords: Language, Transitivity, Process, Verbal, Sayer, Verbiage, Receiver, Traget

1. Introduction

Stylistic analysis is concerned with the uniqueness of a text for delivering the message. To arrive at the linguistic features of this variety of language, there are various linguistic options or approaches that could be explored. These include the Text linguistic approach, Discourse Analysis, General and Linguistic Stylistic approaches and so on. It is in this respect that Crystal and Davy (1969) stress that stylistics aims at "analyzing language habits with a view to identifying, from the general mass of linguistic, features common to English as used on every conceivable occasion. For Halliday (1985) language is a semiotic system, that is, a "meaning potential", which are of three sorts, and every utterance encodes meaning on three levels: ideational, interpersonal and textual. These broad types of meaning are in fact called "metafunctions", used by speakers use a) to represent experience, b) to achieve interpersonal goals, and c) to structure information as efficiently and effectively as possible. Thus for Halliday "meaning" means "function", more specifically, "function in context". The kinds of meaning we communicate can be overt, as in the words we use and what we say, or covert, in that the structures we employ indirectly also convey more abstract kinds of meaning.

Our major focus is largely on ideational meta-function where language serves for the expression of content, i.e. of the speaker's experience of the real world, including the inner world of our own consciousness (Webster, 2002:174). Additionally, this meta-function is concerned with communication and interlinking of ideas and may itself be broken into the experiential and logical functions (Morley, 2000). The former is focused on relating experiences whereas the latter is on describing experiences.

This experiential function is manifested by transitivity system. The main argument of the transitivity system is that the experiences we go through in life consist of 'goings-on' – happening, doing, sensing, meaning, being and becoming' (Eggins, 1994:106), which are shared by people through clauses that constitute language they use to communicate. In the Original Hallidayan (1975) simplified system shown in Figure 1 below for transitivity (categories of experience), three semantic options are available: material ('doing'), mental ('sensing') or relational ('relating').
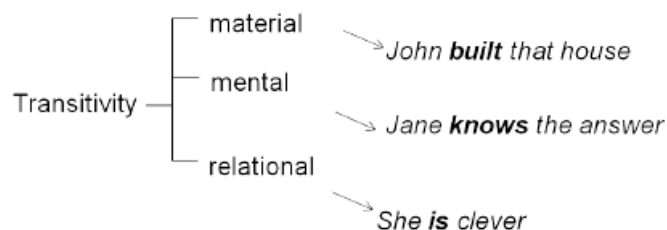

Figure 1. Major components of transitivity processes (source: Halliday, 1975)

Later on other three processes were added: verbal, behavioral and existential so that we now have six processes. In other words, as attested by Stewart and Vaillette (2001), people can perform acts by using language. Such activities include conveying information, requesting information, giving orders, making requests, making threats, giving warnings, making bets, etc.

In applying transitivity theory a good number of textual stylistic scholars have embarked on making analyses of different texts as presented in section 2 below.

2. Literature Review

In this section I review empirical studies in which Syestemic Functional Grammar (SFG), notably the theory of transitivity, has been applied in the stylistic analysis of both literary and non-literary texts. We will begin with literary texts.

Iwamoto's (2007) stylistic analysis of a literary text used systemic functional grammar; using some process types e. g., material process, mental process and participant functions e. g., Actor/Agent, Senser, Carrier in Halliday's transitivity theory. He made a comparison of two main characters: Stefan de Vaux and Claire. He found that that Stefan de Vaux is involved in material processes mainly as an Initiator or an agent in a goal-directed material process, who affects and takes control of what is happening. He also acts as a sayer in verbal process, a participant who voices and can influence others. By contrast, Claire is mainly associated with goal /medium in material processes, senser in mental processes, behaver in behavioral processes and carrier or token in relational processes or an actor in a non-goal directed material process, that is, medium.

Another study in this aspect is Tiejun's (2007) analysis of mental processes in *cat in the rain* by Ernest Hemingway so as to demonstrate how certain theories of Hallidays SFL can analyze the implicit subject of the short story. He noted that compared with the percent of mental process among the four characters the percent quantity of the wife occupies the first position which shows her explicit and strong affection in the process of catching the cat.

Cristina (2006) carried a study on the language used by the main male and female characters in the play 'Pygmalion' by Bernard Shaw (1913) by applying Halliday's (1985) lexico-grammatical category of transitivity theory. The two characters were Eliza Doolittle and Henry Higgins. The results showed that the male's characteristics portrayed men concerned with rational matters, while the female character represented women as being more concerned with the emotional side in their relationships.

A further example is Opara's (2000) transitivity processes in Emecheta's narrative discourse to describe events and experiences. The analysis foregrounded gender themes and the meaning making potentials of transitivity in systematic theory.

Furthermore, Dooga (2009) made a contrastive examination of Alpha Emeka's *The Carnival* and Razinat Mohammed's *A Love like a Woman's and other Stories*. The findings showed that female characters are presented as so strongly disadvantaged, marginalized and oppressed, males as selfish, savage, brute, unthinking and unfeeling beasts. In *A Love like a Woman's and other Stories*, the author, a female, also is more forceful in casting female characters in positions of servitude, perhaps to press home the point that African women are marginalized, deprived and oppressed.

Nguyen's (2012) transitivity analysis of *Heroic Mother* by Hoa Pham sought to explain how the main character's personality is portrayed and represented through language used. He

noted that that the main character, known as a heroic mother, is suffering from the loneliness, boredom, and inadequate consideration from her family.

The final example in the literary aspect of transitivity analysis is Krishnamurthy's (2011) study of the story in Ngugi's "*A Grain of Wheat*" focusing on *material, action, intention* processes (emphasis original). He noted that in the mental processes, he characters are of the type, *internalized, perception, affection* and *cognition* (emphasis original) as focused on the three main protagonists in the novel: Mugo, Mumbi and Gikonyo, whereas relational processes illustrate the character traits of the main characters of the novel along with the effects their action have in the course of the novel.

As for the non-fictional texts, we have examples of two texts. The first is Figueiredo's (1998.) analysis of transitivity choices in five appellate decisions in rape cases. She noted that the judges, or the Court, appear as agents of different kinds of processes: material, mental, verbal and relational. However, most of these processes are mental, verbal or relational. This constructed a picture of the trial mainly as a non-active, abstract and static situation.

The second is a study by Yaghoobi's (2009) systemic analysis of news structures in two selected printed media, namely *Newsweek* and the *Kayhan International*. By identifying processes and the role of participants involved in those processes, Yaghoobi's study proved that the representation of the same news actors, Hizbullah and Israeli forces, by two different and ideologically opposed printed media were opposite to each other. We will now focus on the text which is the object of analysis in the present study as detailed in section three.

3. The Book under Study

The book that was studied is Peter Abrahams' *Mine Boy,* a novel in South Africa during apartheid era. According to Jones (2008), 'Mine Boy' is a novel of cross-racial solidarity along class lines. To Oneya (2012), **'**Mine Boy' is a *'country come to town story'* that takes on the transition of Xuma who comes with his very own romanticized ideals and holds the thorough view that the white man is his enemies but comes to realize that the white man is merely a victim of the Apartheid system. Oneya further posits that Peter Abrahams examines the impact of the South African City life on Xuma , and of the impression he has about the people he meets, beginning with matriarch Leah whom he becomes inextricably involved with from the beginning who then introduces him into urban survival and challenges he will face, to the alienated Eliza who wants to be " like white people", to the gay , kind and loving Maisy and finally Paddy who teaches Xuma the philosophy of liberation from colour; *"I am a man first. I want you to be a man first and then a black man" p. 172.* As for Korletey (2012), Xuma's maturation is in its climax when he takes a stand on what he knows to be right: Talking the mine boys in to striking until the mine owners fix the mines after two of Xuma's close friends die in a collapse. Jackson (2007) focuses on the way characters confront and deal with somatic, psychological, and psychosomatic diseases in ways that highlight the racist society of colonial South Africa.

What one notes right away is that the scholars who have attempted to study Mine boy have confined themselves to literary appreciation notably on setting, characterization and themes, a

paradigm strongly held by formalists. This study, however, as described below in the theoretical framework, is hinged upon transitivity theory which is within Systemic-Functional perspective of stylistic analysis.

4. Theoretical Framework

As stated in the introduction section, the current study was guided by Michael Halliday's The transitivity theory, which allows an analysis of the meaning of clauses through the study of 'choice of process types and participants roles seen as realizing interactants' encoding of their experimental reality: the world of action, relation, participants and circumstances that give context to their talk' (Eggins, 1994:220).The term 'transitivity, in Hallideyan Systemic-Functional Grammar, generally refers to how meaning is represented in clauses so as to reveal certain worldview "framed by the authorial ideology" in a text (Fowler, 1986:138). It is part of the ideational function of language, and therefore, an essential tool in the analysis of representation.

In other words, transitivity can show how speakers/writers encode in language their reflection of the world and how they account for their experience of the world around them. Transitivity is manifested in six processes, namely i) material processes i.e processes of doing; ii) mental processes, i.e of sensing, iii) relational processes, i.e. of being, iv) verbal processes (of saying), v) behavioral processes (physiological and psychological activities) and vi) existential processes (of existing or happening). These processes' interconnectedness was best summarized in Figure 2 below
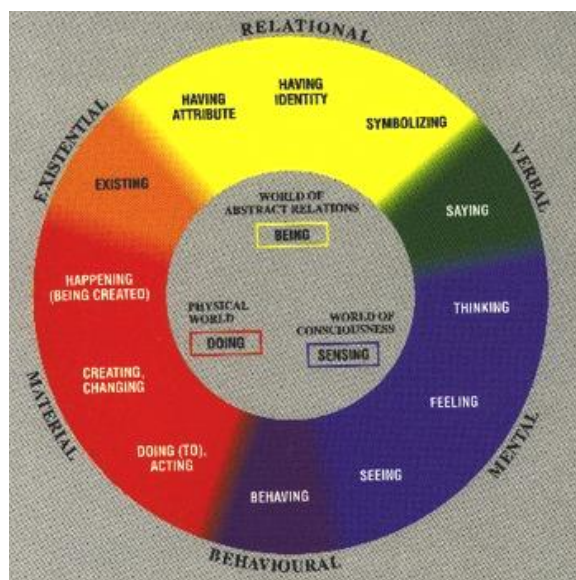

Figure 2. Interwoveness of transitivity processes (Source: Haliday, 1994: cover page).

However, only the verbal process was the focus in this study. Verbal processes is said to be between mental and relational processes and they generally represent the art of saying and its synonyms such as grumbling, arguing, shouting, whispering, jeering, to mention but a few. Usually three participants are involved in verbal processes: the *sayer,* who is responsible for verbal process; the *receiver,* who is the person at whom the verbal process is directed; and

the *Verbiage,* which is the nominalised statement of the verbal process (Nguyen, 2012). Ignatieva (2011) further argue that, depending on the nature of the text, verbiage may be the content of what is said or the name of the language. He further adds that what is said may be presented in direct or indirect speech. When that is the case, the content becomes a "locution" (direct and indirect) but it is not analyzed as a participant since it is found outside the verbal clause (Ignatieva, 2011).

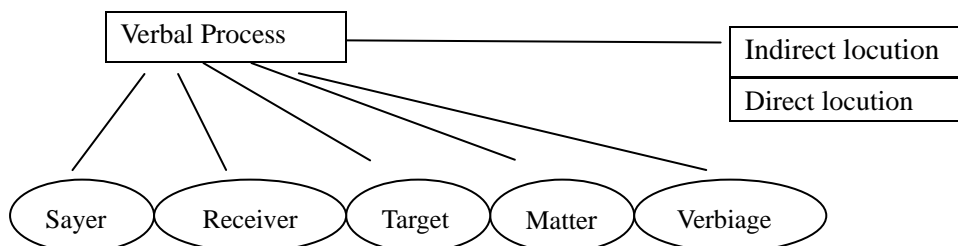The scope of verbal processes are as illustrated in Figure 3 below:

Figure 3. Components of verbal process (Ignatieva, 2011:458)

The components are all interrelated such that they make up what Thompson (2004:103) refers to as 'a single complex unit". Verbal process, according to Sun and Zhao (2012), also involves one other type of verbal process, in which the sayer is in sense acting verbally on another direct participant, with verbs such as: insult, praise, slander, abuse, and flatter. This other participant will be referred to as the *target*.

Emphasizing on what the participants in the story, functional or non-functional, are saying, Bloor and Bloor (2004:2) claim that "when people use language, their language acts produce – construct meaning", Kroger and Wood (2000:4) add that language given to or used by characters or participants in the discourse is taken to be not simply a tool for description and a medium of communication but as a social practice, a way of doing things.

Verbal process has recently been applied in textual stylistic analysis. Jordens and Roberts (2005) made refinement of the verbal processes into positive, negative and neutral and applied those in a corpus of 50 news texts from "the UK Times". The aim was to uncover linguistic strategies used by strategies used by journalists to encode their own world view in what they write and hence to subtly push their readers' perceptions of the meaning of a text in a particular direction. Ignatieva (2011) also presented functional analysis of verbal processes in students' academic process, based on question-answer and essay genres.

In this study verbal processes are applied to a literary piece of work, a novel by Peter Abraham called *Mine Boy*. So the sayers were essentially fictitious though, arguably, what they say could be a replica of really happenings in the real, natural material, cultural and social world. This is essentially through the process of characterization- a process where the writer reveals the personality of a character directly (in which she/he tells the audience what the personality of the character is) or indirectly (by showing things that reveal the personality of a character) (NCTE, 2004)).

5. The Methods

The first step in the analysis of the novel was to read through the whole novel. Then we read page after page of the novel, focusing on the two main characters'-Xuma and Leah- noting utterances that they say, isolating those by typing them out in a spread sheet of the excel. While doing that, we were separating each sentence into the three parts of verbal processes: the sayer (xuma and Leah), their recipients and the verbiages. We then sorted the sentences according to the desired variables such as the verbiage recipients and quantified the frequencies of occurrence of the verbiages according to the recipients. The aim was to make a contrastive analysis of the two characters in terms of their verbiages (both in terms of quantity and in the types and patterns of the verbiages). Lastly, verbiages were further re-classified according to sentence types and speech act categories to get deeper insights of the dynamisms of the two characters' verbiages.

6. The Findings

We present the finding beginning with analysis of the receivers after which dynamism of the verbiages is analysed.

6.1 The Verbiage Receivers

The first task was probing into the aspect of gender in the aspect of receivers of the two characters' verbiages, the contrastive pattern of which is presented in figure 4 below.
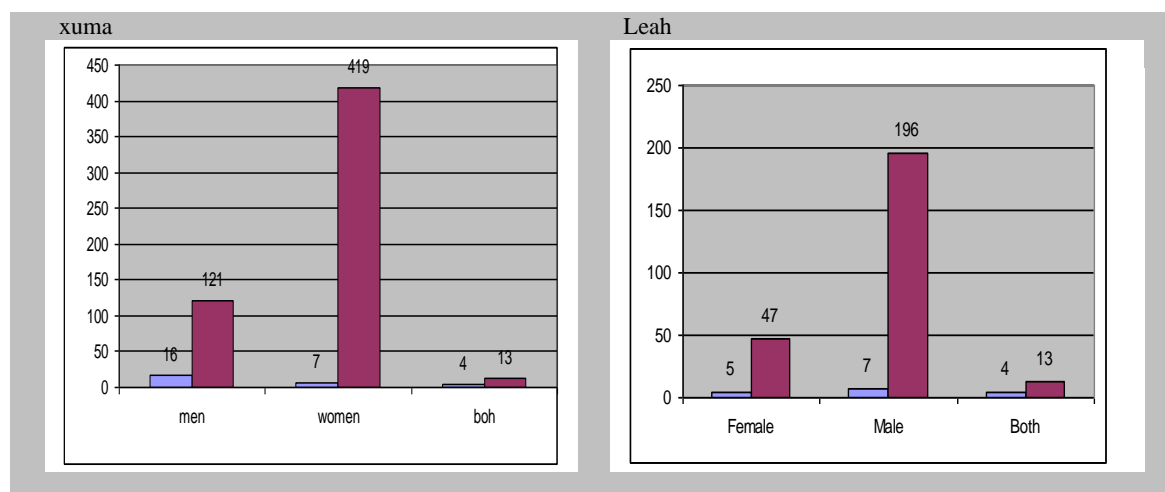

Figure 4. Gender aspect of Xuma and Leah's verbal receivers

From Figure 4, we note that Xuma has more female receivers of his verbiages than male. Conversely, Leah, a female character, has far more male receivers of her verbiage than females. While it is clear that Xuma is predominantly more of a sayer than Leah, the two are similar in having comparatively fewer receivers involving both sexes but Peter Abraham, the author, might have gender reciprocity in mind by having a male central characters having more female receivers as a sayer and the reverse for a female character.

Having presented the gender dimensions of the receivers of two characters' verbiages we

now go to details of verbiage receivers of each character.

6.1.1 Xuma's Verbiage Receivers

Xuma has as many as 21 receivers of his verbiage but with differing frequencies as presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Xuma's Verbiage Receivers

Eliza	164
Maisy	104
Leah	52
Maplank	36
A woman	36
Johannes	35
Paddy	34
Di/Paddy's wife	20
Daddy	11
Miners **	11
Nana	7
Self	7
Police	5
the whiteman/men	5
Doctor Mini	4
Mine manager	4
a little boy	4
Chris	3
Nil	3
Joseph	2
the man	2
Neighbour	2
TOTAL	**551**

The pattern is such that Xuma's having female receivers of his verbaiges commences with his arrival to Leah's compound on the first evening to the city and his meeting with three ladies that were to characterize his urban social life throughout. The first is Leah, his host to whom he speaks 52 times, mostly responding to her prompts and challenges as a son wanting to learn from a powerful strong and experienced mother. Examples of Leah being the receiver of xuma's verbiage are shown in table 2 below.

Table 2. Examples of Xuma's verbiages to Leah

S/n	PROCESS
1	Sister do you know a place where a man can rest and may be have a drink?
2	it is very late
3	I have no matches
4	Nothing
5	No
6	Xuma.
7	I come from the north?
8	put on the light'
9	it is dark, woman
10	what do they call you?
11	who is he?
12	your man?
13	I came for wok. There is no work where I come from.
14	In the mines. It is a man's work.
15	all work is like that
16	I have no money
17	yes
18	may be
19	you are a strange woman; I don't understand you. the only thing I can understand is your kindness
20	'good morning'
21	asked: is she very sick?
22	Yes, yes. I see.
23	no, your people are from the south
24	nodded, doubtfully
25	yes
26	You like him?
27	yes?

As already explained and now illustrated in Table 2 above, Xuma talks quite significantly to Leah and the complexity of his verbiage ranges from single word responses like 'yes' or 'may be' to signal his readiness to accept her advice or directive or any other viewpoint to a longer discourse comprising of a number of sentences either strung together as one complex sentence or a series of independent sentences, largely appreciating Leah, his host. In a few examples Xuma engages in non-verbal verbiage such as nodding.

Xuma also engages in talking to Eliza, a love of his life, to whom he speaks 164 times (the highest frequency of Xuma's verbiage). Most of Xuma's verbiage to Eliza is words of endearment and intimacy as illustrated in Table 3 below:

Table 3. Xuma's verbiages to Eliza

S/N	VERBIAGES
1	what do they call you?
2	it is a good name
3	(I am) from the north
4	it is very good
5	it is good. did you cook it?
6	very beautiful
7	it is nothing
8	it is nothing
9	it is where the fool police man hit me
10	you are good
11	I have only seen white women smoke
12	yes
13	you are beautiful
14	why do you say that (I am lonely?)
15	what are those?
16	just sand?
17	it must have taken along time
18	have you been near them?
19	what do they look like?
20	what colour?
21	that is funny
22	a mountain of white sand made by black men
23	you are beautiful (he said sternly)
24	you do not like me
25	why don't you like me?
26	it is nothing (he said)
27	what is it to you? (angrily)
28	I am not angry
29	I love you
30	you did no want me
31	it was nothing
32	why did you come for me to take you?
33	I love you
34	I did from the start
35	Did you know that?
36	you are beautiful
37	but it is true

As can be seen in Table 3 above, Xuma's verbiages to Eliza are largely around his admiration of her beauty and confession of his love for her and all other verbiages are made to zero

around that and they are largely of expressive and phatic orientation.

The third of Xuma's receivers of his verbiages is Maisy, a young woman who loves Xuma truly but he does not reciprocate the love since he is in love with Eliza. To her, Xuma speaks 104 times largely appreciating her friendliness and ease to socialize with, unlike Eliza. Examples of his verbiage to Maisy are in Table 4 below.

Table 4. Examples of Xuma's verbiages to Maisy

you have never been on the farms/
don't you long for the farms sometimes?
and you are not unhappy, like those others?
I am tired. I began work at the mines today and I must rest.
it is ever good (to be happy)
let us join the ring again
only for a little time, heh?
I am not a child
I feel good
you are kind
she Eliza) is gone
you are fool to bother with me.   I am a fool to want Eliza. Such a woman.
you are a strange one
have you ever been to the farm?
that is why I laugh. when you talk about it one can seeit is strange to you.
yes I will come.
I will (catch you)
Maisy! (he called)
you are good
you should belong to the farms
it is very good
I am drunk
I like you too Maisy, very much, but…
No, you don't .you think I want her but it is not..
..but I do like you, Maisy. You are the one who makes me laugh.

A careful observation at the data in Table 4 above points to the fact that Xuma's verbiages to Maisy are largely about her ease to reach out to in the moment of social need, on the one hand, and about him and other people or events, on the other. So it is as if Xuma's need for Maisy is for individualistic social and emotional gratification with no sense of commitment.

Other two receivers that are also women and members of Leah's household are Maplank, an old lady living at Leah's, and another unnamed woman, to each of whom Xuma talks 36 times. In the world of work, Xuma talks more with his mine senior and mentor, Johaness (35 times), his boss, Paddy (34 times) and his (Paddy's) wife, Di (20 times) and the miners whom he leads as head mine boy (11 times).

In all these two things emerge. One, Xuma is more of a family man, talking more to the people in the social web of his life (the Leahs) and comparatively less with those in the occupational world. Secondly, he ranges his verbiages across different receivers as defined by their social and occupational statuses in relation to his own while at the same time, his verbiages show his growing from a simple Xuma from the rural north not knowing anything of the city to a leader in the mine, able to make independent analysis and take stances as well as emancipating others to demand their right of safety.

6.1.2 Leah's Verbiage Receivers

Leah is also a sayer though not as much as Xuma. Her receivers are summarized in table 5 below.

Table 5. Receivers of Leah's verbiage

s/n	Receivers	Frequencies	s/n	Receivers	Frequencies
1	Xuma	139	10	Lena	5
2	The Fox	20	11	Assistants	4
3	Maplank	16	12	Dladla	3
4	Daddy	15	13	Joseph	1
5	Eliza	15	14	Women (fighting)	1
6	Johannes	9	15	Xuma & Joseph	1
7	Maisy	9	16	Xuma& Maisy	1
8	Black Police	8	17	Xuma & Eliza	1
9	All	7	18	Eliza and Maplank	1
				TOTAL	256

Table 5 shows that Leah is less of sayer when contrasted with Xuma as she has a total of 256 verbiages of which 139 (which is over 54%) are directed to Xuma, her sudden visitor one late evening who later becomes an integral member of the family. She, too, proves a family person by having most of her verbiages directed to family members: maplank (16 times, which is 6.3%), Daddy-Maplank's soul mate- and Eliza to whom she speaks 15 times (which is 5.9%) each. The only other person that Leah largely speaks to, who is outside her household, is The Fox, a white policeman, to whom she speaks 20 times (7.9%) which makes him rank second, after Xuma, among Leah's verbiage receivers. We will now give examples of the Leah's verbiages to the first five, who Leah speaks to more than 10 times.

The first and the most predominant receiver of Leah's verbiage is Xuma, the examples of which are given in Table 6 below.

Table 6. Leah's Verbiages to Xuma

VERBIAGES
it is late
make a light for me to see you
what have you?
And you want to rest and drink when it is so late?
have you money?
you are a queer one
what are you called?
Are you new here?
Well Xuma from the nothrh with a light
May be you can have a rest and drink and may be you cannot but stand here.
well Xuma from the north, I am going to a light on you
I warn you for your eyes. It issharp
Alright. You can have your rest and drink.
so big and you are afraid
come'
here. Come in
that is Dladla
eat!
yes
yes (softly), my man,he is in jail.
he is strong, my man
you are a man xuma, you are strong.
a woman gets lonely for a playing thing
What are you going to do?
Where will you work?
Mines are no good. Later on you cough and then you spit   blood and you become weak and die.
You are a man with a numbness of a man
Come, I will show you where you can sleep
no, but you are strong and you will work and pay me later, heh?
…and may be I will need a strong man sometimes and you will help.
This is where the teacher sleeps but she will not come till day after tomorrow.
Listen to me Xuma from the north; don't think because I do this I am soft or easy and you can chat me….
You are alright (she said softly..)
No xuma. listen xuma I like you, I can make you powerful.
If you become my head man you will be powerful too
..but the city is a strange place. good night.

Leah predominantly talks to Xuma more than she does all other characters. She speaks to Xuma 104 times mostly directing, educating, challenging and sensitizing Xuma into not being 'a fool with the people', i.e. fitting into social complexities of urban life with its racial

discrimination resulting in economic alienation and social stratification. What is also worth noting is that Leah's verbiages to Xuma are more complex compared to Xuma's (although there are a few single word utterances) and they are more directive to Xuma to do something and assertion of what she can do for Xuma and others.

Leah also talks to a white policeman whom the people of Malay camp have nicknamed 'Fox'. The frequencies of Leah's verbiages to Fox ranks second to Xuma though only 20 times when compared to Xuma's 139 times. Table 7 below summarizes examples of Leah's verbiages to Fox.

Table 7. Leah's verbiages to Fox

VERBIAGES
you look well too; what do you want?
I have heard
I have not heard
I have been told
No
I was told
a friend
I am not stupid
he works on the mines
they are young. Let them be.
take the light off me
yes, you have got me.
how did you set a trap?
that was clever
there is one thing,..these others were what I told them…..
they can go?
thank you. You are a good man.
give me a little time.
I am ready, Fox
You are a fool.

Leah's strong and defiant personality is most evident in her verbiages to Fox, a representative of the white, oppressive and discriminative regime of the day. As Table 7 illustrates, her verbiages are such that she refuses to yield and show meekness even when she is caught breaking the law by selling illicit drink. She even dares telling Mr Fox '*you are a fool*' or dictating to the police to '*take the light off me*'. She proves so in charge of the situation that when it is time for being arrested, the very last exit from and the end of her 'Leah's place' she tells Fox, '*I am ready, Fox*'.

Leah's verbiage to her loving adopted daughters-Eliza and Maisy- are those of a mother nurturing, encouraging but also chastising them when they go wrong. Table 8 below is an illustration of such verbiages to Eliza.

Table 8. Leah's Verbiages to Eliza

VERBIAGES
give him food   and let him stay here
there is much to be done. They will come digging in the morning
they will not come. so we will sell much and take the rest out later
it it (Xuma's wound) bad?
let him (Xuma) sleep. You will help us to take out the tins and clear up the place.
look after your man, teacher.
you are happy now?
good. then let us talk
you listen to me, Eliza, but remember that is not your talk.
now it is you…tell do you love Xuma…?
that is good. if a woman loves a man she does that which is good for him..
he is a good man.

As Table 8 illustrates, Leah proves a mother to Eliza as she gives pieces of advice, advising and directing her, ensuring her happiness but also asking her for her role in family business, particularly in burying the tins containing the illicit liquor to avoid being caught by the police.

As for Maplank, an elderly woman in Leah's family, playing the role of wisdom of grandparents in African family, Leah talks to 16 times, and to Daddy, the intimate friend of Maplank, 15 times. Her verbiages to these two are illustrated in Table 9 below.

Table 9. Leah's verbiages to Maplank and Daddy

To Maplank	To Daddy
And sky will give us money, I suppose…..	Daddy, come here.
it is the same one who betrayed my man and who betrayed Joseph…	Come here ,Daddy
Where is Daddy? Did you get a drink for him?	Tell Xuma about the custom and the city
Yes. I will set a trap for this dog.	She repeated: tell him about the custom and the city
I did not speak to you, old woman	No, Daddy (she interrupted)
No man is a fool who takes the woman he wants, old woman	Did you do it, Daddy?
You are foolish, ma plank. You cannot go to a man and say 'this is a woman for you, love her'.	Daddy, come here.
Let them in, Maplank	Come here ,Daddy
I am going to find out the plans of the police	
You will watch outside	

The comparative data of Leah's verbiage to Maplank and Daddy is such that to the former, Leah talks relatively longer in a single turn than she does Daddy. Futhermore, to Maplank, though far older in age than Leah, she uses a rather vulgar language (even thought she is

being sarcastic) as in '*and the sky will give us money*! and '*I did not speak to you, woman*, or even *you are foolish, Maplank..*' than is the case for Daddy. For Daddy, She is more soothingly directive in her verbiages.

6.2 Dynamics in the Verbiages

Verbiages are highly dynamic in their nature as spoken functional clauses. That dynamism could be accounted for in many ways. In the current study, however, a more detailed classification was made of four aspects of the verbiages: the first is when the sayer's verbiages are directed to the receiver and the same is also the referent (this was dubbed 'target'). The second is when the sayer's verbiages are about himself or herself and this was referred to as self. The third is when the sayer is talking about other people, apart from themselves and their receiver, and this was referred to as 'other' and the last is when the verbiage is about some other non-human entity or phenomenon and to this we called 'others'. The details of the frequencies of occurrences of the verbiages for each aspect for both Characters as illustrated in Figure 5 below.
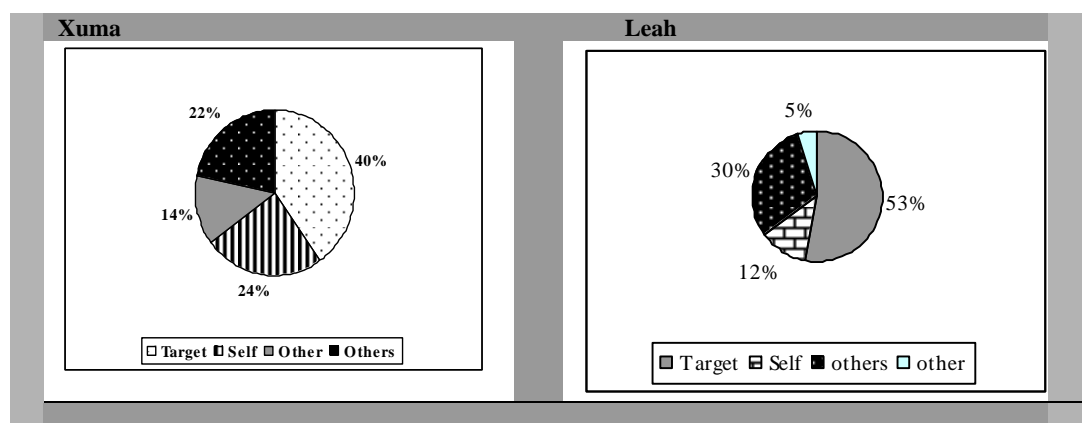

Figure 5. Dynamics of Xuma and Leah's Verbiages

As illustrated in Figure 5 above, we note that both characters talk to their receivers about the same receivers though at varying magnitude; Xuma's verbiage about his receiver is 40% whereas Leah's is well over half her total number of verbiages. We also note that while both characters talk the least to their receivers about other people, Xuma has a higher percentage of 14% when contrasted with Leah's 5%. As for others Xuma's account for 22% of all his verbiages while Leah has a bigger percentage of 30%, indicating that Leah is more of issues person unlike Xuma who is comparably a people person. Another observation worth noting is that Xuma becomes more introspective and thus more reflective by having 24% of all his verbiages being about himself as contrasted to Leah's only 12%.

6.3 Sentence-type Analysis

Another aspect that we were concerned with was analyzing the characters' verbiages in terms of sentence types; namely: declarative, imperative, imperative, interrogative and elliptical. To achieve this, frequencies were clustered into the five sentence types and comparative data were presented in the manner as it appears in figure 6 below.
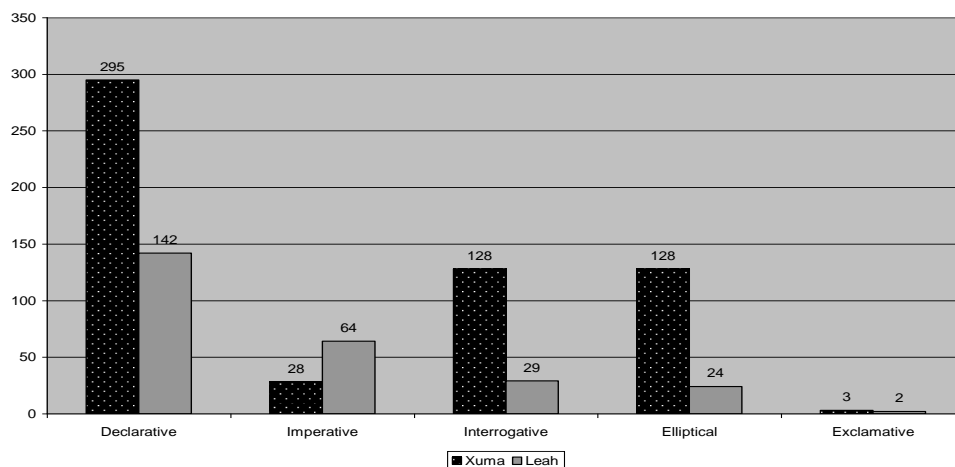
Figure 6. Comparative sentence type analysis of Xuma and Leah

As the data in Figure 4 reveals there is a predominance of declarative sentences, of which 295 are Xuma's contrasted with Leah's 142 verbiages. Thus, Peter Abraham's main characters are depicted more presenting facts or states of their minds than other aspects. Contrastively, Leah is more of an imperative person in which 64 her verbiages are imperatives as opposed to Xuma's 28. This makes explicit her strong character as a woman who is also the in-charge of her household, popular as "Leah's place". Conversely, Xuma is more of an 'interrogative person' since 128 of his verbiages are interrogatives as contrasted to Leah's 29 and most of those are directed to Leah. We also note a significant amount of elliptical structures (128 for Xuma and 24 for Leah).

6.5 Speech Act Analysis

At a further level each of the sentences was re-classified into the four speech act categories as identified and explained by Searle (1976). The resulting data are as summarized in Figure 7 below.
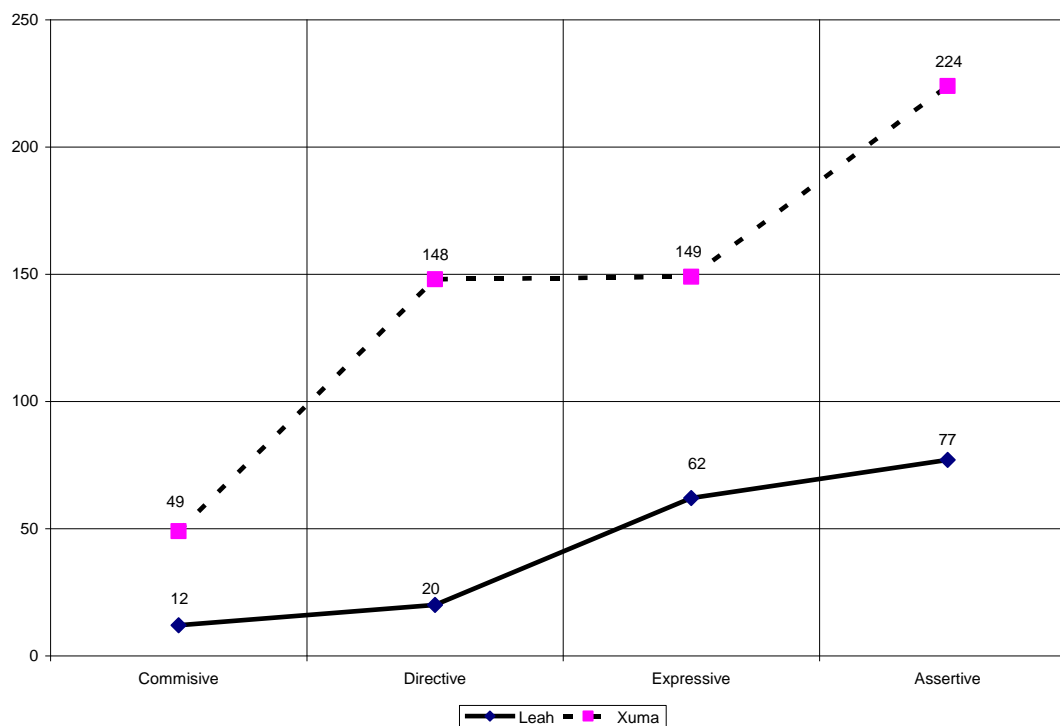
Figure 7. Comparative speech act analysis of Xuma and Leah's verbiages

As the data in Figure 5 illustrates, the two main characters make more use of assertives (Xuma, 224 and Leah, 77) than other speech act categories. In so doing, they, as the definition of assertive speech act points out, share their knowledge of the social, physical and cultural worlds to each other and to others. Ranking second after assertive speech acts are expressives where the characters share their feelings and attitudes towards various phenomena. In this category are Xuma's 149 and Leah's 62 verbiages. In the directive category, Xuma has a wider web of communication at social level such as in Leah's place and occupational worlds (e.g. mines). Commissive is the smallest category with Xuma having 49 of his verbiages mainly in what he promises his soul mate, Eliza, and in his plans both short term and long term.

7. Conclusion

In the light of the above findings, we note a number of things. First, the verbiage is the most significant part of the verbal process for two reasons. One reason is that it is in the verbiages that the impetus of the classification lies since what is said is what makes the process be dubbed 'verbal'. The second reason is that it forms the point of reference for judging (if not labeling) the sayer's personality.

Secondly, the verbal process, as revealed in the two fictitious characters, allows the analyst room for eclecticism in which the verbiages can be subjected to different levels of linguistic analysis beyond clause simplex and complexity. We, tapping from this dynamism, made analysis of sentence type as well as speech act analysis of the verbiages.

The gender dimension is slightly unconventional in the sense that the verbiages of the female characters, notably Leah, manifest more 'hard and defiant language' than the soft, tender over-use of hedges and tag questions (Lackoff, 1975) and uncertainty verb phrases (Mulac and Lundell, 1986). This is the case for her use of more imperatives than her male counter part, Xuma. Xuma, on the other hand, has a good amount of the very features which have been traditionally ascribed to female speech, for example, he uses more expressives than Leah and the excepts of his verbiages as given in different tables exemplify a good number of interrogatives and uncertainty linguistic constructions.

Lastly, while verbal processes was originally seen as occupying a mid-point between mental and relational process, the data show that it permeates those two and go beyond to encompass material process by the simple reason that what one says reveals not only what one thinks (mental) but also with whom he relates and about whom one talks (relational) as well as doing things with one's own words (material).

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