

Male-Female Characters' Tenor of Discourse in Akachi Ezeigbo's *The Last of the Strong Ones*

Innocent Sourou Koutchadé (Corresponding author)

Department of English, Université d'Abomey-Calavi, République du Bénin

E-mail: koutchade2@yahoo.fr

Séverin Mehounou

Ecole Doctorale Pluridisciplinaire (EDP) / FLASH, Université d'Abomey-Calavi,
République du Bénin

E-mail: mehounous@gmail.com

Received: May 25, 2016 Accepted: June 15, 2016 Published: June 26, 2016

doi:10.5296/ijl.v8i3.9662 URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5296/ijl.v8i3.9662>

Abstract

This article attempts to explore male-female characters' tenor of discourse in the novel entitled: *The Last of the Strong Ones* by Akachi Ezeigbo. According to Halliday's (1978), the tenor of the discourse is the social role relationships played by interactants. It is associated with the grammar of interpersonal meanings which is, in turn, realized through the mood patterns of the grammar. The paper, through the analysis of mood system, modality and vocatives, reveals how male and female characters establish relationships between each other. The tenor of their discourse unveils how women are oppressed by patriarchy on the one hand, as well as how they fight against the system, on the other. From these linguistic choices, the work concludes that there exists an atmosphere of tension, distance, aggression and dominance between some characters of the novel.

Keywords: Tenor of discourse, Mood, Modality, Vocatives, Patriarchy

1. Introduction

In Systemic Functional Linguistics, it is generally agreed that interactants' language choice determines their social status (equal or unequal), their contact (frequent or infrequent) and their affective involvement (high or low), which are identified in terms of the use of formal or informal language, abbreviations, non-standard language, everyday lexis, full name, expressions of politeness, etc. Therefore, tenor denotes the interaction among language users, their relationships with one another and their purposes. This is why Eggins (1994:149) contends that:

Establishing social identities such as 'friends', 'strangers', 'male', 'female', 'bossy', 'effusive' is not done by holding up a sign with a role label on it. Instead, it is done through talk. Being male and being friends, for example, means being able to dominate the talk, being able to argue in the direct and confrontational way [....]. Being female and being friends means being willing and able to keep the conversation going, by making suggestions but giving up the floor without fight [...], by clarifying [...] and by finding out about people, especially males.

From the above quotation, we can say that the use of language helps not only to determine who/what participants engaged in a talk are but it also helps determine their gender. In fact, it is generally noticed that males, most of the time, dominate the talk and argue in a direct and confrontational way whereas females make suggestions and give up the floor without fight. This appears controversial but has prompted Lakoff (1973/1975) to identify and elaborate a theoretical methodology which accounts for the aspects of language difference between males and females. According to Lakoff (1975), the way women use language makes their speech unassertive, trivial and devoid of force/power, which adds to their subordination, domination and submission.

This social reality stated above is exploited by men to demean women and settle dominance over women who have no other choice but to submit themselves to it. This is even noticed in fiction where male writers seem to underrate female characters. In this vein, Kumah (2005) cited in Dooga (2009:137-138) contends that "female characters in male-authored works are rarely granted primary status—their roles often trivialized to varying degrees—and they are depicted as silent and submissive in nature, remaining absent from the public sphere."

The rise of feminism in the world in general and in Africa in particular has created an awareness of the representation of gender relations in fiction (Yengkangyi, 2009, Adjei, 2009, Koussouhon, Akogbeto & Allagbe, 2015). It is then clear that a thorough enquiry into Akachi Ezeigbo writings can make it easy to know how she is committed to the sensitization of her fellow women and the enlightenment of men. This paper, then, studies Akachi Ezeigbo's male and female characters' tenor of discourse with chief focus on mood, modality, vocatives choices made by the participants. For this purpose, the theoretical background to the study has been briefly overviewed before moving to the practical analysis of data followed by the discussion and interpretation of meanings language is structured to make in the novel.

2. Theoretical Background

2.1 Tenor, Interpersonal Meaning and Mood elements

Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) is the linguistic theory used in our analysis here because of its emphasis on the social aspect of language. It states that context of situation is arranged into three categories. These are field, tenor and mode. Corresponding to these, Halliday (1978/1985a), Bloor and Bloor (2004) view language as a system of three kinds of meanings, viz. experiential, interpersonal and textual.

As a matter of fact, the study of tenor and interpersonal meaning is our main concern here. Martin (1992: 523) refers to tenor as “the negotiation of social relationships among participants...”. As for Amoussou (2014:148), he contends that “the phrase tenor of discourse is used to designate the role relation of power and solidarity between the interactants: speaker/listener, addresser/addressee, writer or narrator/reader or the writer/speaker’s attitude to the subject matter, etc.”. Drawing on Halliday (1978/1985a) and Poyton (1985), Eggins (1994) argues that tenor can be broken down into three simultaneous continua of ‘power’, ‘affective involvement’ and ‘contact’. They determine the social roles of participants depending on the situation in which they find themselves. In the analysis of literary texts, tenor is on two levels: one between the narrator and his/her readership, which is embodied in the narrative, and one among the participants in the narrative, which is embodied in the dialogue (Halliday, 2002:58).

As for interpersonal meaning, it is concerned with the enactment of social processes (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004), i.e., with how people use language to build, establish and maintain personal and social relationships with others (Cunanan, 2011). According to Butt, et al. (1995:13) “The interpersonal metafunction uses language to encode interaction and to show how defensible or binding we find our proposition or proposal.” In interpersonal analysis, meaning is considered from the point of view of its function in the process of social interaction. Amoussou (2014:148), in this vein, observes that the interpersonal meaning is “the one running throughout a clause which expresses the role relation of power and solidarity between the addresser and the addressee, or which expresses the writer’s relationship with the reader and his/her attitudes to the subject matter.”

From the two definitions given above, it is to be assumed that the tenor of a text is associated with the realisation of interpersonal meaning which is in turn realised through the Mood patterns of the grammar. Eggins (1994:154) claims that Mood is “the grammar of the clause as exchange”. Mood describes the “variables such as the types of clause structure or mood types, modality, the use of tags, vocatives, attitudinal words which are either positively or negatively loaded, expressions of intensification, and politeness markers of various kinds” (Eggins, 1994:192-4) included in any instance of language use-text. Drawing on this, Amoussou (2014:150) contends that mood is “the linguistic expression of attitudes, judgments, points of view, social relationship ... etc.” The mood of a clause can be identified from its grammatical structure: statement is realized by declarative mood, question is realized by interrogative mood, command is realized by imperative mood, etc. and the degree of certainty or obligation (expressed through modality, vocatives, attitudinal words, politeness markers of various kinds, etc.).

2.2 Modality and Vocatives

Modality refers to how speakers and writers take up a position, express an opinion, a point of view or make a judgment. It also expresses the degree of certainty and truth of statements about the world. Simpson (2004: 123) quoted by Koutchadé (2015) argues that modality is that part of language which allows us to attach expressions of belief, attitude and obligation to what we say and write. It is the grammar of explicit comment, and it includes signals of the varying degrees of certainty we have about the propositions we express, and of the sorts of commitment or obligation that we attach to our utterances. Halliday and Matthiessen (1999:526 cited in Fontaine, 2013:120) claim that “modality is a rich resource for speakers to intrude their own views into the discourse: their assessments of what is likely or typical, their judgments of the rights or wrongs of the situation and of where other people stand in this regard.” Modality has two basic components: modalisation and modulation. While the former is an expression of the speaker’s/writer’s judgment about certainty, likelihood, frequency, and operates through finite modal operators like “*can, could, may, might*” or mood adjunct like “*I’m sure, I think, it’s likely, it’s possible, it’s probable...etc*”, the latter expresses obligation, inclination or disinclination through finite modal operators like “*must, should, need, ought to, have to, shall, shan’t, will, won’t, cannot, etc.*” or any other means (Eggsins, 1994, Amoussou, 2014, Koutchadé 2015).

Vocatives according to Eggsins (2004: 101) “are a very powerful area for the realization of interpersonal meaning, an area very sensitive to these contextual constraints of tenor”. are components of Modal Adjuncts which add interpersonal meaning to the clause. Vocatives Adjuncts function to control the discourse by designating a likely “next speaker”. They are identifiable as names, where the names are not functioning as subjects or complements, but are used to directly address the person named. They typically occur initially or finally and affect the clause as a whole. They encode the degree of intimacy, affection or power between the different participants in an interaction.

3. Practical Analysis

As said earlier, this article analyses male-female’s tenor of discourse with chief focus on the mood and modality choices, vocatives and lexical choices made by the interactants. To do this, two extracts have been selected from the novel. These extracts are instances of conversation between male and female characters. To reach our goal, we have, first of all, identified the mood, modality and adjunct- types (see the appendix) in the two extracts. Then, we have summarised the main findings in tables 1, 2, 3 below.

Table 1. Mood types in the Extracts.

Mood Types	Extract 1		Extract 2	
	Number	Percentage (%)	Number	Percentage (%)
Declarative Mood	138	80.23	138	83.13
Interrogative Mood	20	11.62	20	12.04
Imperative Mood	09	05.23	05	03.62
Exclamative Mood	04	02.32	00	00
Minor	01	00.58	03	01.80

Total Clauses	Ranking	172	100	166	100
---------------	---------	-----	-----	-----	-----

As shown in the table above, declarative mood is mostly used in the selected texts. The predominance of declaratives indicates that the two extracts are centrally concerned with giving information about people, actions, circumstances, etc. This also denotes the written mode where feedback between the writer and the reader is impossible (Eggins, 1994:313). The use of interrogative, exclamative and minor clauses in the extracts implies that participants are interacting with one another. This is suggestive of a dialogic mode. As for imperative clauses, their use suggests an interactional situation where one participant is repeatedly giving orders to the other one. It also denotes a rhetorical interactive context characterized by a tense language tenor. The social power between Onyekozuru, Ejimnaka and Obiatu is equal, the affective involvement is low and the contact is frequent.

Table 2. Modality-types in the extracts

Modality Types	Extract 1		Extract 2	
	Number	Percentage (%)	Number	Percentage (%)
Modulation	13	81.25	14	50
Modalisation	03	18.75	14	50
Total ranking Clauses	16	100	28	100

Table 2 above shows that modulation is predominant in the first extract, whereas in extract 2, there is an equal distribution of modulation and modalisation. This means the two excerpts express not only meanings about obligation, necessity, inclination and disinclination, but also meanings about probability and usability.

Table 3. Types of Adjunct in the Extracts

Adjunct Types		Extract 1		Extract 2	
		Number	Percentage (%)	Number	Percentage (%)
Circumstantial		54	56.25	57	46.34
Modal	Mood	04	04.16	07	05.69
	Vocative	12	12.5	08	06.50
Textual	Conjunctive	26	27.08	51	41.46
Total Clauses	Ranking	96	100	123	100

From table 3 above, it is obvious that circumstantial adjuncts prevail over other adjunct-types in the two extracts. This denotes a detailed description of the actions and events in the extracts, thereby situating them in time and space as well as noting what the participants are doing, when, to whom they are talking, why and for how long. The presence of textual adjuncts in the extracts is an indication of a written mode where the writer uses these adjuncts (conjunctive and continuity) to connect the different parts of the clauses so as to ensure a rhetorical organization of her narration. The use of modal adjuncts in the extracts not only denotes the spoken mode showing that the speakers effectively interact with one another but it also shows how interactants express probability (Eggins, 2004) regarding actions and events described.

4. Discussion and Interpretation of Findings

As said earlier, Mood describes the “variables such as the types of clause structure or mood types, modality, the use of tags, vocatives, attitudinal words which are either positively or negatively loaded, expressions of intensification, and politeness markers of various kinds” (Eggins, 1994:192-4) included in any text. As a matter of fact, by looking at how male and female interactants use language in a literary artifact, meanings about the interpersonal relationships such as power, intimacy, friendship, solidarity, familiarity, etc. can be perceived and analyzed. It is worth noting here that we draw the discussion and interpretation of the meanings from the study of extracts on mood types, modality and vocatives.

Based on this premise, the analysis of mood in extract 1 exudes a total number of 172 clauses. Out of these figures, 138 (80.23%) are declaratives. The narrator uses 22 clauses all of which are declaratives. The remaining 116 declaratives in extract 1 are used by the different characters interacting therein. These are Onyekozuru, Ejimnaka, Obiatu, Nnaji, Abazu and Nwokike. The 20 (11.62%) interrogatives are distributed among Onyekozuru, Ejimnaka, Abazu and Nwokike. Similarly, the 09 (05.23%) imperative clauses appear in utterances produced by Abazu in clauses (78,102), Obiatu in (106, 108), Onyekozuru in (133, 160,162) and Ejimnaka in (156, 157). All the 04 (02.32%) exclamative moods are used by Onyekozuru. The only minor clause identified in (57) appears in Nnaji’s speech.

The analysis of modality in extract 1 reveals 16 selections out of which there are 13 (81.25%) selections of modulation realized through modal operators like “*will*”, “*should*”, and “*must*” and 03 (18.75%) selections of modalisation encoded in modal auxiliary verbs like “*can*” and “*could*”. The 14 selections of modulation are produced by Onyekozuru in (114, 116, 154, 165,168), Abazu in (42, 66, 67, 68, 70, 89, 99, 123). The 03 selections of modalisation are used by Ejimnaka in (31) and Onyekozuru in (34, 35). As far as the Adjunct-types are concerned, the focus is on vocatives. As such, 12 (12.5%) selections of vocatives have been used by interactants in the extract. They are used by Onyekozuru in (82, 109,132, 138, 160, 167), Abazu in (102, 109), Obiatu in (106, 107) and Ejimnaka in (136, 156).

The analysis of mood-types in extract 2 reveals a total number of 166 clauses, 138 (82.63%) of which are declaratives. The narrator uses an important number among which 03 modalized declaratives in (9, 81, 143). It is worth signaling here that the writer is, at the same time, the one who is narrating the story. This is a first-person narration where the first person pronoun “I” is profusely used. This accounts for the great use of declarative clauses in the extract. The remaining declaratives are used by Chieme, and Iwuchukwu. The 20 (12.04%) interrogative clauses are distributed between Chieme and Iwuchukwu. The 05 (03.62%) imperative clauses appear in utterances produced by Chieme and Iwuchukwu.

The analysis of modality in extract 2 reveals 28 selections with 14 (50 %) use of modulation encoded in modal verbs like “*will*”, and “*should*” and 14 (50 %) selections of modalization encoded in modal operators like “*can*”, “*may*”. The 14 selections of modulation are produced by Iwuchukwu in (57, 76, 106, 107, 108, 115, 119, 151, 154) and Chieme in (27, 45, 54, 111, 112). The 14 selections of modalization are made by Chieme in (9, 37, 48, 60, 81, 84, 143) and Iwuchukwu in (50, 52, 62, 63, 94, 101,152). As far as vocatives are concerned, 08

(06.50%) selections of vocatives have been used by interactants in the extract. They are used by Chieme in (24, 36, 43, 83, 92, 159), and Iwuchukwu in (1, 48).

An interpretation of the different linguistic features uncovered in the extracts is to be carried after the discussion. In fact, the mood analysis not only reveals the way participants truly exchange information with one another but also the role relationships and power relations among them. Moreover, it also shows that the narrator aims to inform the readers about how women are marginalized in all societal strata and particularly in the fictitious Umuga society. The large number of the declarative mood types used in the extracts confirms such a pronouncement.

In extract 1, Abazu and Onyekozuru are the main characters around whom most of the actions are centered. While the former's utterances are represented as showing the patriarchal attitudes known to men, the latter is portrayed as having the nerve of displaying the qualities of "iron-lady" in front of patriarchy. Her idiolect is not only shocking but also convincing, persuasive, affirmative and above all assertive. Examples are shown in (93, 96) where she confronts Abazu with his falsely accusations. The use of the strong modalized verbs in (34, 35) by Onyekozuru is not only meant to express her surprise/bewilderment at the betrayal act orchestrated by her in-law, but also to save her face before the inner council committee (obufo). Abazu distances himself from Onyekozuru's explanation and expresses his indignation at it through the highly modulated declarative clauses encoded in (66, 67, 68, 70). He also expresses his judgment about the wicked letter writer through the lexical item 'dishonest' in (91). Unable to control herself in front of Abazu's mocking and scornful utterances, Onyekozuru lets out Abazu's real physical personality she promises and vows to keep secret. The use of the lexical items/expressions "empty shell", "a big drum...hollow inside", "not a man" in clauses (145,152) seems to be insulting but this provides the reader with information about Abazu's inability to impregnate a woman. In most African culture, a man of such characteristics has no permission to speak in society and this is well captured in Onyekozuru's utterances in (150, 151, 152).

The tenor of discourse in this extract proves that there is a great argument between the different protagonists. This is what accounts for the great use of modality which mostly appears in Abazu's and Onyekozuru's utterances. The use of the modulated declaratives and interrogative clauses in Abazu's utterances (e.g.: clauses 42, 66, 67, 68, etc.) and in Onyekozuru's utterances (e.g.: clauses: 36, 113, 115, 153, 164, etc.) encodes their disagreement with and disapproval of each other. None of them modalizes while exchanging with each other. In addition to the use of modulation, the use of imperative mood in both characters' discourses during the interaction displays an attitude of dominance, power, authoritative tenor of discourse, atmosphere of fright and high affective involvement. This patriarchal behaviour from Abazu is not surprising since patriarchy encourages men to define their masculinity by acts of physical aggression and coercion towards others, *women* and children (Hooks, 1994). But the assertive attitudes shown by Onyekozuru informs the reader on men's treatment of women who fight to put an end on scenes of oppression and exploitation they are victims of in Umuga society.

Obiatu (leader of *obufofo*) and Ejimnaka (leader of *oluada*) use imperative mood clauses followed by some vocatives such as “Abazu”, “Onyekozuru” either to temper mood-like in (106) or to express affection or give orders like in (108, 156,157), etc. On the other hand, Onyekozuru uses these linguistic features viz. imperatives and vocatives in (133,160, 162) to give orders and express her anger in spite of Obiatu’s and Ejimnaka’s pleas. As for Abazu, he uses them to draw Onyekozuru’s attention to the evil her in-law does. In a nutshell, the verbal exchange between Obiatu and Onyekozuru and the linguistic choices made therein, allows us to argue that Onyekozuru belongs to the group of women Ezeigbo creates in her novel in order to fight against patriarchal prejudices that affect women. Therefore, unlike some male authors who, some years earlier, institutionalize male heroism, Ezeigbo on the other hand institutionalizes female heroism.

The analysis of Mood in extract 2 reveals a total number of 167 clauses. Declarative mood clauses are the most dominant, which shows that the extract is centrally concerned with giving information about the characters interacting therein. The extract is, in fact, an interaction between Iwuchukwu and Chieme. The use of the vocatives “my husband” in (36, 83, 92) by Chieme proves that it is a conversation between a husband and his wife. But when attention is focused on their tenor of discourse and their linguistic choices, the power continuum between these two characters is unequal and the contact infrequent. The main information the narrator is conveying through the predominance of declarative mood is that of a couple which, after four years of marriage, remains fruitless because of Chieme’s inability to menstruate. This generates a high affective involvement between the two participants and this is noted in Iwuchukwu’s utterances in clauses such as (41, 42, 69, 131, 147, 153, 154) to name but a few. Iwuchukwu finds Chieme’s status queer and strange. Chieme’s efforts to explain her condition with the strong modalized verb “may” followed by the modal adjunct “still” in (37) does not prevent him from noting and concluding: “[...] I do not want to continue to live with a *person* [our emphasis] whom I cannot say is male or female. [...] I want you to leave this *ngwuru* before the Isigwu celebration which is twenty days from today.” (pp.107-108).

The use of the demeaning and neutral lexical item like “*person*” by Iwuchukwu, in this utterance while addressing his wife, is an insult and also displays hatred and humiliation towards Chieme. This also expresses Iwuchukwu’s exasperation and disappointment towards his wife. We then contend that any fault about women is not always admitted by men. Moreover, many a man do not seek cooperation with women on this matter and some men, most of the time, use it to submit women to treatments likely to victimize them.

Moreover, Chieme’s linguistic choices reveal an attempt to save her marriage. She desperately negotiates with Iwuchukwu, asking him not to send her away. This is why there is a great use of modalisation, which is an expression of uncertainty and probability, in the extract. She tries to negotiate her stay with Iwuchukwu. This is expressed in (9, 37, 60, 81, 84, 143). The use of these modalized verbs expresses Chieme’s despair in front her husband’s hard-built heart. This makes her discourse trivial, lacking force and authority, especially when she pleads with Iwuchukwu to take her in or take a second wife. Meanwhile, her husband uses modulation to reinforce his arguments. The modulated verbs used by

Iwuchukwu in declarative clauses like (76, 94, 108, 119), to name only a few and in interrogative clauses like (48, 108) are meant to express meanings about his disagreement with Chieme and his disinclination with her proposal made in (98). Seeing that Iwuchukwu remains deaf to all her pleas and finally pronounces the divorce, Chieme changes her discourse. She becomes challenging with the use of modulated verbs in (54) and lexical items in (159, 160, 165) to save her face and put an end to her husband's influence over her. The use of both modalisation and modulation by this female character shows a dual nature/personality every human being embodies.

Finally, we find out that Chieme's self-narration gives a wider perspective about her marital experiences. Through the interpretation of the findings, we can argue that there exists an uneasy atmosphere between her husband and herself. The paucity of vocatives in her husband's discourse illustrates this. Both protagonists call each other's names. But, when it comes to pleading, Chieme uses "my husband" in (36, 83, 92) to ask for affection and understanding. This, at least, means that she knows she has a husband. But in Iwuchukwu's utterances, there is no use of vocatives such as "my wife". We, then, contend that Iwuchukwu does not want Chieme as his wife anymore and the argument between them confirms such an interpretation.

5. Conclusion

This article has dealt with male-female tenor of discourse with chief focus on mood, modality and vocatives to work out the kind of interpersonal relationships of power, familiarity, affection, distance, etc. that exist among Ezeigbo's different protagonists in her fiction. It has been noted, through the linguistic choices made by the male and female interactants in extract 1 as well as in extract 2, that there exists an atmosphere of tension, distance, aggression and dominance between them. This shows the narrator's arguments about patriarchal treatments of women within Umuga society and in their marital places. The portrayal of assertive characters such as Onyekozuru and Chieme in the extracts studied above is a way to empower her fellow-women so as to say no to such treatments.

References

- Adjei, B. S. (2013). Discourse Analysis: Examining Language Use in Context". *The Qualitative Report*, 18(Art. 50), 1-10.
- Amoussou, Y. C. (2013). Cultural, Ideological and Interpersonal Functions of Pronominalisation in Achebe's First Three Novels". *Langage & Devenir*, 23(2), 207-222.
- Amoussou, Y. C. (2014). Discourse Tenor, Context and Character in The Lawyer's Monster Parable (*Petals of Blood*). *Particip'Action*, 6(1), 147-170.
- Ayoola, M. O. (2013). An Interpersonal Metafunction Analysis of Some Selected Political Advertisements in Some Nigerian Newspapers". *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 3(8), 165-178.
- Bafana, K. (2014). Manhood and Womanhood Inter-Connected: The Role of Sex in D. H. Lawrence's *Lady Chatterly's Lover*. In *Multifontaines, Revue Internationale de Litt ératres*

et Sciences Humaines, 1, 119-140.

Bilal, H. A. (2012). Analysis of Thank you M'Am: Halliday's Metafunctions. *Academic Research International*, 2(1), 726-732.

Butt, D., Fahey, R., Spinks, S., & Yallop, C. (1995). *Using functional grammar: An Explorer's Guide*. Sydney: Macquarie University, NCELTR.

Cameron, D. et al. (1989). Lakoff in Context: The Social and Linguistic Function of Tag". Retrieved from <http://www.stanford.edu/~eckert/PDF/CameronTags.pdf> on 31/08/2015.

Cunanan, B. T. (2011). Using Transitivity as a Framework in Stylistic Analysis of Virginia Woolf's Old Mrs. Guy". *Asian EFL Journal*, 54, 69-79.

Dooga, J. T. (2009). Linguistic Choices and Gender Roles in New Nigerian Literature: An Examination of Alpha Emeka's *The Carnival* and Razinat Mohammed's *A Love Like a Woman's and Other Stories*. *International Multi-Disciplinary Journal, Ethiopia*, 3(3), 133-146.

Eggs, S., & Slade, D. (1997). *Analysing Casual Conversation*. London: Casselle.

Eggs, S. (1994). *An Introduction to Systemic and Functional Linguistics*. London: Pinter Publishers.

Eggs, S. (2004). *An Introduction to Systemic and Functional Linguistics*. (2nd ed). London: Continuum.

Ezeigbo, A. (2006). *The Last of the Strong Ones*. Lantern Books. Literamed Publications (Nig) Limited.

Fontaine, L. (2013). *Analysing English Grammar: A Systemic Functional Introduction*. First Edition. New-York: Cambridge University Press.

Halliday, M. A. K. (1978). *Language as Social Semiotic: The Social Interpretation of Language and Meaning*. London: Edward Arnold.

Halliday, M. A. K. (2002b). Linguistic Studies of Text and Discourse. In J. J. Webster (Ed.), *Collected Works of Michael Halliday* (Vol. 2). London and New York: Continuum.

Haratyan, F. (2011). Halliday's SFL and Social Meaning. Second International Conference on Humanities, Historical and Social Sciences IPEDR, 17, 260-264.

Koussouhon, A. L., & Dossoumou, A. M. (2014). Lexico-Grammatical Analysis of *Yellow-Yellow* by Kaine Agary with a Focus on Experiential and Textual Meanings. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 5(23), 2430-2436. <http://dx.doi.org/10.5901/mjss.2014.v5n23p2430>

Koussouhon, A. L., Akogbeto, P. A. & Allagbe, A. A. (2015). Portrayal of Male Characters by a Contemporary Female Writer: A Feminist Linguistic Perspective. *International Journal of Advanced Research*, 3(12), 314-322.

Koutchadé I. S. (2015). Discourse Analysis of General Muhammadu Buhari's Official Acceptance Speech: A Systemic Functional Perspective. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, 5(5), 24-36. <http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/ijel.v5n5p24>.

Lakoff, R. (1975). *Language and Woman's Place*. New York: Harper & Row.

Martin, J. R. (1992). *English Text: System and Structure*. Philadelphia and Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Poynton, C. (1985). *Language and Gender: Making the Difference*. Geelong, Vic: Deakin University Press.

Toolan, M. (1997). *Language in Literature: An Introduction to Stylistics*. London: Edward Arnold.

Yengkangvi, M. (2009). *Feminism in Une si Longue Lettre by Mariama Ba*. Unpublished Master of Art Thesis.

Appendix

Clause, mood, modality and adjuncts identification

Key:

S=Subject, F=Finite, Fn=negative, Fms=modalised, Fml=modulated. P=Predicator, Pml=modulated Predicator, Pms=modalised Predicator, F/P=fused Finite and Predicator. C=Complement, Ca=attributive Complement. A=Adjunct, Ac=circumstantial, Am=mood, Ao=comment, Ap=polarity, Av=vocative, Aj=conjunctive, At=continuity. Wh=wh element; Wh/S, Wh/C, Wh/Ac=fused Wh element. Mn=minor clause. **MOOD element** of ranking (non-embedded) clauses is shown in **bold**.

Extract 1: (*The Last of the Strong Ones*, 2006:77-81)

1. **Onyekozuru** (S) **was** (F) sitting (P) quietly (Ac) 2. and (Aj) following (P) the argument (C), a look of utter disbelief on her face (C). 3. At last (Ac) **she** (S) **spoke** (F/P). “**I** (S) **want** (F) to ask (P), 4. this letter (C) **you** (S) **are** (F) talking about (P) ... 5. **is** (F) **it** (S) the one (C) 6. **Orizu, my in-law** (S) **wrote** (F/P) in my presence (Ac)? 7. Or (Aj) **is** (F) **there** (S) another (C)?” 8. “**There** (S) **is** (F) only one letter (C). 9. **We** (S) **did not** (Fn) arrange (P) for two (C), 10. **did** (F) **we** (S)?” 11. **asked** (F/P) **Ejimmaka** (S) 12. **who** (Wh/S) **sat** (F/P) near Onyekozuru (Ac). 13. “**Are** (F) **you** (S) then (Aj) saying (P) 14. that (Aj) **Orizu** (S) **put down** (F/P) all the wicked words (C) 15. **we** (S) **are** (F) told (P) 16. **the letter** (S) **contains** (F/P)?” 17. “**That** (S) **is** (F) [[what (C) it (S) means (F/P)]] (C), 18. if (Aj) **we** (S) **judge** (F/P) [[from what (Ac) our informant (S) says (F/P)]] (C),” 19. **put in** (F/P) **Obiatu** (S) 20. **who** (Aj) **turned** (F) to look at (P) the informant (C). 21. “**It** (S) **is** (F) so (C),” 22. **he** (S) **confirmed** (F/P). 23. “**There** (S) **is** (F) no error at all (C). 24. **It** (S) **is** (F) the letter (C) 25. **you and the other men** (S) **gave** (F/P) to District Officer (C) 26. the day (Ac) **you** (S) **came** (F/P) to Awka (Ac).” 27. “**That** (S) **explains** (F/P) the attitude of *kosiri* (C). 28. **I** (S) now

(Ac) **understand** (F/P),” 29. **said** (F/P) **Nnaji** (S). 30. “**A toad** (S) **does not** (Fn) run (P) in the middle of the day (Ac) without cause (Ac).” 31. “**But** (Aj) how (C) **can** (Fms) **we** (S) explain (P) this wicked act (C) by the letter-writer (Ac)?” 32. **asked** (F/P) **Ejinnaka** (S), puzzled (Ca). 33. **I** (S) still (Am) **do not** (Fn) believe (P) 34. **Oriziu** (S) **could** (Fms) do (P) something (C) so callous (Ca). 35. **He** (S) **cannot** (Fnms) do (P) that (C) to me (C). 36. **Idemmiri** (S) **forbid** (F/P)!” 37. **Onyekozuru’s voice** (S) **shook** (F/P) 38. as (Aj) **she** (S) **spoke** (F/P). 39. “How (Wh/C) **did** (F) **we** (S) hire (P) this man (C)?” 40. **Abazu** (S) **asked** (F/P). 41. “How (Wh/C) **did** (F) **we** (S) fall (P) into the trap (Ac) of such an evil character (C)? 42. **Ogwugwu** (S) **will** (Fml) destroy (P) him and those behind him (C).” 43. “**He** (S) **is** (F) my in-law (C),” 44. **said** (F) **Onyekozuru** (S), anxiously (Ac). 45. **I** (S) **know** (F/P) him (C) well (Ca) 46. and (Aj) **I** (S) **brought** (F) him (C) to do (P) the work (C). 47. [[**What** (C) **I** (S) **do not** (Fn) **understand** (P)]] (S) **is** (F) [[why (Ac) he (S) should (Fms) do (P) //what (C) he (S) did (F/P)]] (C).” 48. “**You** (S) **said** (F/P) 49. **he** (S) **is** (F) from Agbaja (Ac)?” 50. **Asked** (F) **Nwokike** (S). 51. “**Have** (F) **you** (S) forgotten (P) 52. that (Aj) **Agbaja people** (S) **bear** (F/P) us (C) a grudge (C)? 53. **Was** (F) **it** (S) not Ezeukwu (C) 54. **who** (C) **invited** (F/P) Abam warriors (C) //to attack (P) Agbaja people (C) years ago (Ac)? 55. **Something** (S) **happened** (F) to make (P) the cocoyam (C) 56. what (C) **it** (S) **is** (F).” 57. Hmm (mn)... **that** (S) **was** (F) long ago (Ac),” 58. **said** (F/P) **Nnaji** (S). 59. “**That incident** (S) **was** (F) forgotten (P) long ago (Ac) by Agbaja people (Ac). 60. **We** (S) **have** (F) been relating (P) well (Ca) with them since (Ac); 61. **they** (S) **marry** (F/P) our daughters (C) 62. and (Aj) **we** (S) **marry** (F/P) theirs (C). 63. **There** (S) **is** (F) no bad blood (C) between us (Ac).” 64. “**That** (S) **is** (F) [[what (C) you (S) think (F/P)]] (C),” 65. **Abazu** (S) **said** (F/P), impatiently (Ac). 66. “**We** (S) **should not** (Fnml) have hired (P) a letter-writer (C) from Agbaja (Ac). 67. **We** (S) **should** (Fml) have looked (P) for someone (C) from another town (Ac). 68. **We** (S) **should** (Fml) be (P) careful (Ca) about those (Ac) 69. **we** (S) **trust** (F/P). 70. **We** (S) **should not** (Fnml) bare (P) our minds (C) to just anybody (C).” 71. “**Orizu** (S) **is not** (Fn) just (Am) anybody (C),” 72. **Onyekozuru** (S) **retorted** (F/P) angrily (Ac). 73. **I** (S) **know** (F/P) him and his people (C) well (Ca). 74. **They** (S) **are** (F) my in- laws (C).” 75. “**You** (S) **claim** (F/P) 76. **you** (S) **know** (F/P) him (C) well (Ca),” 77. **Abazu** (S) **mocked** (F/P). 78. Look at (P) 79. what (C) **he** (S) **did** (F). 80. And (Aj) **you** (S) **say** (F/P) [[you (S) are (F) surprised (Ca)]] (C)? 81. And (Aj) **you** (S) **want** (F) us (C) to believe (P) you (C)?” 82. Abazu (Av) ... **I** (S) **don’t** (Fn) like (P) your words (C),” 83. **replied** (F/P) **Onyekozuru** (S). 84. **I** (S) **don’t** (Fn) like (P) the form (C) 85. **your words** (S) **are** (F) taking (P) in this matter (Ac),” 86. “what (C) **have** (F) **I** (S) **said** (P) 87. **that** (S) **is not** (Fn) true (Ca)?” 88. **Abazu** (S) **said** (F/P) in a scornful tone (Ac). 89. “**The ground** (S) **will not** (Fnml) break (P) 90. if (Aj) **the truth** (S) **is** (F) pronounced (P). 91. **You** (S) **brought** (F/P) us (C) a dishonest man (C) 92. **who** (Wh/S) **has** (F) caused (P) us (C) trouble (C).” 93. “**Your words** (S) **lack** (F/P) sense (C) 94. if (Aj) **you** (S) **are** (F) saying (P) 95. that (Aj) **I** (S) **have** (F) a hand (C) in Orizu’s treachery (Ac). 96. **I** (S) **dare** (F) you (C) to prove (P) it (C)!” 97. **Onyekozuru** (S) **was** (F) very angry (Ca). 98. **She** (S) **was** (F) finding (P) it (C) difficult (Ca) to control (P) her emotion (C). 99. “**I** (S) **will not** (Fnml) sit (P) here (Ac) 100. and (Aj) be insulted (P) by a woman (Ac) 101. even if (Aj) **that woman** (S) **is** (F) *oluada* (C). 102. Watch (P) your words (C), woman (Av).” 103. **Abazu** (S) **was** (F) pointing (P) a finger (C) at Onyekozuru (Ac). 104. **There** (S) **is** (F) no

need (C) for these angry words (Ac),” 105. **pleaded** (F/P) **Obiatu** (S). 106. Abazu (Av), please (Ao), be (P) calm (Ca). 107. Onyekozuru (Av), **it** (S) **is** (F) enough... 108. do not say (Pn) more (C). 109. “But (Aj), Obiatu (Av), **did** (F) **you** (S) not hear (Pn) [[what (C) he (S) said (F/P)]] (C)?” 110. **Protested** (F) **Onyekozuru** (S). 111. “**Did** (F) **you** (S) not hear (Pn) 112. **Abazu** (S) **accuse** (F/P) me (C) of betraying (P) Umuga (C). 113. I ... Onyekozuru, a traitor? 114. **My ancestors** (S) **will** (Fml) destroy (P) anybody (C) 115. **who** (Wh/S) **accuses** (F/P) me (C) falsely (Ac)! 116. **our goddess, Isigwu** (S), **will** (Fml) punish (P) every false accuser (C)!” 117. **Abazu** (S) **was** (F) furious (Ca). 118. **His eyes** (S) **went** (F/P) red (Ca) like the fruit of the *ugoro* three (Ac). 119. “Woman (Av), **you** (S) **have** (F) spoken (P) many reckless words (C). 120. **Nobody** (S) **is** (F) accusing (P) you (C); 121. **you** (S) **are** (F) accusing (P) yourself (C). 122. If (Aj) **you** (S) **have** (F) betrayed (P) our cause (C), 123. **you** (S) **should** (Fml) tell (P) us (C).” 124. **All obuofu** (S) **were** (F) roused (P) 125. and (Aj) **many voices** (S) **protested** (F/P) 126. and (Aj) **demanded** (F/P) calmness (C) from Abazu and Onyekozuru (Ac). 127. **Abazu** (S) **sat down** (F/P), //shaking (P) his legs (C). 128. **Onyekozuru** (S) **was not** (Fn) so easily (Ac) calmed (Ca). 129. **She** (S) **turned** (F/P) fully (Ac) 130. and (Aj) **faced** (F/P) Abazu (C). 131. **Her voice** (S) **rang** (F/P) clear (Ca), like a bell (Ac). 132. Abazu (Av), **were** (F) **you** (S) sent (P) after me (Ac) today (Ac)? 133. Tell (P) those (C) 134. **who** (S) **sent** (F/P) you (C) 135. that (Aj) **you** (S) **did not** (Fn) find (P) me (C) at home (Ac)...” 136.”**It** (S) **is** (F) enough (Ca), Onyekozuru (Av),” 137. **Ejimmaka** (S) **pleaded** (F/P).” 138. **It** (S) **is** (F) me and you (C), today (Ac), Abazu (Av),” 139. **she** (S) **cried** (F/P); 140. **her ears** (S) **were** (F) deaf (Ca) to all pleas (C). 141. “**Who** (Wh/s) **are** (F) you (C) to talk (P) to me (Ac) like that (Ac)? 142. Whose home (Wh/Ac) **does** (F) **the path** (S) from your house (Ac) lead to (P)? 143. For more than thirty years (Ac) **I** (S) **kept** (F) your secret (C). 144. **I** (S) **did not** (Fn) betray (P) you (C). 145. Now (Ac) **you** (S) **call** (F) me (C) a traitor (C). 146. **I** (S) **did not** (Fn) tell (P) the world (C) 147. **you** (S) **are** (F) an empty shell (C). 148. **You** (S) **are** (F) only (Am) a big drum (C) 149. **that** (S) **is** (F) hollow (Ca) inside (Ac). 150. Yet (Aj), **you** (S) **have** (F) the temerity (C) to talk (P) 151. when (Aj) **men** (S) **talk** (F/P). 152. **You** (S) **are not** (Fn) a man (C). 153. Now (Ac) **your secret** (S) **is** (F) out (Ac). 154. What (Wh/C) **will** (Fml) **you** (S) do (P)?” 155. **She** (S) **was** (F) implacable (Ca) in her anger (Ac), like a goddess passing judgement on an offender (Ac). 156. “Onyekozuru (Av), hold (P) your tongue (C). 157. Do not offend (Pn) the ancestors (C).” 158. **That** (S) **was** (F) Ejimmaka (C), //pleading and using (P) kind words (C) to disarm (P) her friend’s warring tongue (C), 159. **which** (S) **cut** (F/P) away like a sharp knife (Ac). 160. “Ejimmaka (Av), let me (S) speak (P),” 161. **Onyekozuru** (S) **said** (F/P). 162. “Let me (S) clip (P) Abazu’s wings (C). 163. **It** (S) **is** (F) said (P) 164. that (Aj) when (Aj) **a commoner** (S) **wishes** (F) to criticize (P) the king (C), 165. **he** (S) **must** (Fml) wear (P) the disguise of a masquerade (C). 166. But (Aj) **that** (S) **is not** (Fn) my style (C). 167. Abazu (Av), **I** (S) **am not** (Fn) afraid (Ca) of you (Ac). 168. **I** (S) **will** (Fml) say (P) it (C) to your face (Ac), 169. **You** (S) **are not** (Fn) a man (C). 170. **Your strength** (S) **displays** (F/P) itself (C) only (Am) in appearance (Ac); 171. in reality (Ac) **it** (S) **is** (F) like air (Ac). 172. **It** (S) **is** (F) as hollow as the inside of a bamboo (Ac).”

Extract 2: (*The Last of the Strong Ones*, 2006:104-108)

1. "Sit down (P), Chieme (Av)," 2. **he** (S) **said** (F/P), pointing to a chair (Ac). 3. "**I** (S) **want** (F) to talk (P) to you (Ac)." 4. **I** (S) **tied** (F/P) my cloth (C) high up (Ca) 5. so that (Aj) **it** (S) **covered** (F/P) my body (C), from the chest to the knees (Ac). 16. **I** (S) sat down (F/P) carefully (Ac) 7. and (Aj) **gazed** (F/P) at him (Ac) worriedly (Ca). 8. Somehow (Aj), **I** (S) **felt** (F/P) 9. **[[what he was going to tell me]]** (S) **would** (Fms) not only be unpleasant but calamitous (Ca). 10. "**We** (S) **have** (F) been (P) husband and wife (C) for almost four years (Ac)," 11. **he** (S) **began** (F/P), 12. "but (Aj) **nothing** (F) **has** (F) come out (P) of it (Ac). 13. **Is** (F) **it** (S) not so (C)?" 14. **He** (S) **was** (F) choosing (P) his words (C) with restraint (Ac). 15. **He** (S) **waited** (F/P), 16. and (Aj) when (Aj) **I** (S) **did not** (Fn) respond (P), 17. **he** (S) **continued** (F/P): 18. "**The main problem** (S) is not (Fn) **[[that there has been no child or even pregnancy all these years]]** (C). 19. **[[What gives me sleepless nights]]** (S) **is** (F) **[[that you have not seen your time like normal woman should]]** (C). 20. **This thing** (S) **has** (F) bothered (P) me (C) for a long time (Ac). 21. **You** (S) **are not** (Fn) a child (C). 22. **What** (Wh/S) **is** (F) the matter (C) with you (Ac)?" 23. **I** (S) **was** (F) hurt (P) by his attitude (Ac). 24. "Iwuchukwu (Av), **you** (S) **talk** (F) 25. as if (Aj) **I** (S) **am** (F) the cause (C) of this problem (Ac). 26. **Do** (F) **you** (S) think (P) 27. **I** (S) **will not** (Fnml) do (P) anything (C) about it (Ac) 28. if (Aj) **I** (S) **knew** (F/P) the cause (C)? 29. **Have** (F) **you** (S) forgotten (P) 30. that (Aj) **you and I** (S) **consulted** the woman *dibia* (C) from Arochukwu (Ac) on this problem (Ac)?" 31. "**I** (S) **have not** (Fn) forgotten (P)," 32. **he** (S) **answered** (F/P), 33. "but (Aj) **it** (S) **does not** (Fn) seem (P) 34. **there** (S) **is** (F) a *dibia* (C) 35. **who** (Wh/S) **is** (F) able to help (P) you (C)." 36. "But (Aj), my husband (Av), do not (Fn) give up (P) yet (Aj); 37. **I** (S) **may** (Fms) still (Am) see (P) it (C)..." 38. "**I** (S) **do not** (Fn) share (P) your hope (C)," 39. **he** (S) **interrupted** (F/P) impatiently (Ac). 40. **I** (S) **want** (F) you (C) to know (P) 41. that (Aj) **I** (S) **have** (F) decided to end (P) this marriage (C) 42. which (Aj) **I** (S) **consider** (F/P) no marriage at all (C)." 43. "Iwuchukwu (Av), what (Wh/C) **are** (F) **you** (S) saying (P)? 44. **Are** (F) **you** (S) saying (P) this (C) to know (P) 45. how (Ac) **I** (S) **will** (Fml) react (P)?" 46. **I** (S) **was** (F) shocked and afraid (Ca). 47. **My heart** (S) **palpitated** (F/P). 48. "Chieme (Av), how (Ac) **can** (Fms) **I** (S) play (P) with a matter like this (Ac)?" 49. **I** (S) **want** (F) to marry (P) another wife (C) 50. **who** (Wh/S) **can** (Fms) give (P) me (C) children (C). 51. **I** (S) **am** (F) afraid (Ca) of you (Ac) 52. and (Aj) **can** (Fms) no longer (Ca) continue (P) with this marriage (P)." 53. How (Ac) **do** (F) **you** (S) know (F/P) 54. **your next wife** (S) **will not** (Fnml) have (P) a similar problem (C)?" 55. **I** (S) **asked** (F/P) in confusion (Ac). 56. "**I** (S) **assure** (F/P) you (C) 57. **I** (S) **will** (Fml) ascertain (P) **[[that she has started seeing her time]]** (C) 58. before (Aj) **I** (S) **pay** (F/P) her bride price (C)." 59. "**Is** (F) seeing (P) **her period** (C) a proof (C) 60. that (Aj) **she** (S) **can** (Fms) give (P) you (C) children (C)?" 61. **I** (S) **asked** (F/P). 62. "**It** (S) **may not** (Fnms) be (P), 63. but (Aj) **it** (S) **will** (Fml) be (P) a proof (C) 64. that (Aj) **she** (S) **is** (F) a woman (C), at least (Ac)," 65. **he** (S) **countered** (F/P) in a harsh voice (Ac). 66. "A woman (Mn)?" 67. **I** (S) **trembled** (F/P). 68. "**Am** (F) **I** (S) not a woman (C)?" 69. "**You** (S) **are not** (Fn) a woman (C)." 70. **His eyes** (S) **were** (F) challenging (P). 71. And mocking (Mn). 72. "What (Wh/C) **am** (F) **I** (S), then (Aj)?" 73. **My voice** (S) **was** (F) full (Ca) of hurt and despair (Ac). 74. **I** (S) **wilted** (F/P) like cocoyam leaves in the heat of sun (Ac). 75. "**I** (S) **do not** (Fn) know (P). 76. **You** (S) **should** (Fml) tell (P) me (C); or (Aj) ask (P) your *chi* (C)." "

77. **I (S) was (F) frightened (Ca).** 78. **Iwuchukwu (S) was (F) about to reject me and divorce me (Ac).** 79. **I (S) did not (Fn) want (P) that to happen (C).** 80. **He (S) was (F) pleasing (P) to me (Ac);** 81. Moreover (Aj), **shame (S) would (Fms) kill (P) me (C) if (Aj) he (S) exposed (F/P) my condition (C) to the world (Ac).** 82. **I (S) pleaded (F/P),** 83. “My husband (Av), do not (Fn) do (P) this (C) to me (Ac). 84. **I (S) may (Fms) yet (Am) see (P) my time (C).** 85. **I (S) am (F) only twenty years (Ac).”** 86. **I (S) knelt down (F/P) before him (Ac).** 87. **Iwuchukwu (S) became (F/P) annoyed (Ca).** 88. “Only twenty years (Ac), **you (S) say (F/P)?** 89. **Do (F) you (S) know (P) 90. that (Aj) girls of twelve or thirteen (S) are (F) already (Am) seeing (P) their time (C)?** 91. And (Aj) **you (S) say (F/P) [[you are only twenty]] (C).”** 92. “But (Aj), my husband (Av), for some women (Ac) **it (S) comes (F/P) late (Ca), perhaps (Am).”** 93. “Not this late (mn),” **he (S) retorted (F/P).** 94. “Moreover (Aj), **I (S) cannot (Fnml) wait (P) any longer (Ac).** 95. **I (S) am (F) the only son of my father (C).** 96. **It (S) is (F) my duty (C) to fill (P) this ngwuru with children (Ac).”** 97. **He (S) was not (Fn) prepared to listen (P) to my plea (C).** 98. “**I (S) am not (Fn) against your taking a second wife (Ac),”** 99. **I (S) reasoned (F/P).** 100. “But (Aj) let me (S) stay (P) with you (Ac).” 101. “How (Ac) **can (Fml) I (S) take (P) a second wife (C) at my age (Ac)?** 102. **I (S) am (F) twenty-four years (Ac).** 103. **Some members of my age group (S) are not (Fn) even (Am) married (Ca) yet (Am).** 104. **I (S) do not (Fn) want to grow (P) old premature grey hair (C).** 105. If (Aj) **I (S) bring (F/P) home (Ac) another young wife (C),** 106. **both of you (S) will (Fml) kill (P) me (C) with your rivalry (Ac).** 107. **I (S) will (Fml) have (P) no peace at all (C).** 108. In addition (Aj), **it (S) will not (Fnml) be (C) easy (Ca) providing (P) for two wives at this stage in my life (Ac).”** 109. **He (S) was (F) doing (P) everything (C) to justify (P) his decision (C).** 110. **I (S) began (F) to weep (P).** 111. “What (Wh/C) **will (Fml) I (I) say (P) destroyed (Ca) our marriage (C)?** 112. What (Wh/C) **will (Fml) I (S) tell (P) my people (C)?”** 113. “Tell (P) them (C) 114. **what (Wh/S) pleases (F/P) you (C).** 115. **I (S) will not (Fnml) mention (P) your condition (C)** 116. or (Aj) admit (P) **I (S) am (F) the one divorcing you (C).** 117. **I (S) leave (F) you (C) to tell (P) your people (C)** 118. whatever (Ac) **you (S) consider (F/P) appropriate (Ca).** 119. **I (S) will not (Fnml) ask (P) for the bride price to be refunded (Ac)** 120. unless (Aj) **your people (S) return (F/P) it (C) on their own initiative (Ac).”** 121. As (Aj) **he (S) said (F/P) all this (C),** 122. **Iwuchukwu (S) did not (Fn) touch (P) me (C) or (Aj) try to comfort (P) me (C).** 123. “**Are (F) you (S) the one saying all this (C)** 124. or (Aj) **am (F) I (S) dreaming (P)?”** 125. **I (S) asked (F/P) in tears (Ac).** 126. “**I (S) have (F) been (P) very patient (Ca),** 127. **he (S) said (F/P), without any feelings (Ac).** 128. “**My ancestors (S) know (F/P)** 129. **I (S) have (F) tried (P).** 130. **I (S) do not (Fn) want to continue to live (P) with a person (Ac)** 131. **[[whom (Ac) I (S) cannot (Fnml) say (P)]] (S) is (F) male or female (Ca).”** 132. **His last words (S) stung (F/P) me (C) like a scorpion (Ac).** 133. **I (S) wiped (F/P) my eyes (C) with the tail of my cloth (Ac).** 134. So (Aj), **that (S) was (F) [[how he saw me all this while]] (C)** 135. and (Aj) yet (Aj) **I (S) believed (F/P)** 136. **I (S) had (F/P) a husband (C)** 137. **who (Wh/S) loved (F/P) me (C)?** 138. **My self-esteem (S) was (F) severely bruised (Ca)** 139. and (Aj) **I (S) rose (F) to leave (P) the obi (C).** 140. **I (S) decided (F) not to ask (Pn) him (C) the question (C)** 141. **that (S) was (F) on my lips (Ac)** 142. before (Aj) **he (S) insulted (F/P) me (C):** 143. whether (Aj) **he (S) would (Fms) take (P) me (C) back (Ac)** 144. if (Aj) **my chi (S) made (F) me (C) complete woman (C) by letting me experienced**

menstruation (Ac). 145. As (Aj) **I (S) walked out (F/P)**, 146. **he (S) said (F/P)** with vehemence (Ac): 147. “**I (S) want (F)** you (C) to leave (P) this *ngwuru* (C) before Isigwu celebration (Ac) 148. **which (S) is (F)** twenty days from today (Ac). 149. If (Aj) **you (S) do (F/P)** 150. as (Aj) **I (S) have (F)** instructed (P), 151. **there (S) will (Fml)** be (P) no more trouble (C) 152. and (Aj) **you (S) can (Fms)** go (P) [[with the property you brought with you and even the things I bought and provided for you]] (C). 153. But (Aj) if (Aj) **you (S) prove (F/P)** headstrong (Ca), 154. **you (S) will (Fml)** have (P) yourself (C) to blame (P).” 155. **I (S) paused (F)** at the entrance (Ac) to hear him out (Ac). 156. **I (S) was (F)** very angry (Ca) 157. and (Aj) **hated (F/P)** him (C) for causing me so much pain (Ac). 158. **I (S) hurled (F/P)** at him (Ac): 159. “Iwuchukwu (Av), **you (S) have (F)** said (P) enough (C). 160. **You (S) are (F)** cruel and thoughtless (Ca).” 161. **I (S) turned (F/P)** 162. and (Aj) **faced (F/P)** him (C). 163. [[**The anger which I saw in his face**]] (S) **brought (F/P)** me (C) much satisfaction (C). 164. **I (S) continued (F/P)**, 165. “**I (S) am not (Fn)** a slave (C), 166. **you (S) know (F/P)?** 167. **I (S) have (F)** a home to go to (Ac).”

Copyright Disclaimer

Copyright for this article is retained by the author(s), with first publication rights granted to the journal.

This is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/>).