

Multifaces of Word in Yorùbá Orature

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Abstract

It has been pointed out that word is multifaceted as a communicated scenery. This paper therefore sets out to use Yorùbá oral literature as a medium of expression to explicate the complex faces of word (afò/òrò) as a stylistic phenomenon in Yorùbá communication process.

A wide range of oral literature such as: praise descriptive poetry-oriki, masquerade poetry (èsà), epithalamium (ewì ajemóyàwó), riddles (àlò àpamò/àrò), Ifá poetry, and hunters' genre (ìjálá/ìrèmòjé) are used as paradigms for our analysis. This study shows that the Yorùbá poets use different stylistics devices in their quest for ensuing better understanding of their genres. The poets' uses of language as linguistic choices reflect and influence their relations with their audience in the society. Also, it shows that a particular genre and the focus of the producer of that particular genre determine the face of the word that is projected more than the other.

1.0 Introduction

Yorùbá literature could either be oral or written in form. The oral is regarded as a form of performance. Some foreign scholars had erroneously denounced African unwritten literature using the lenses of Western written literature as yardstick for all forms of literature. But the western yardsticks could not be used to measure the literature of other people. There is cultural differentiation that arises from differentiation in the sensorium of different cultures. It could be gathered from *The New Encyclopedia Britannica* 'Although the derivation of the word literature implies writing, there is so much oral literature in some societies whose principal sources are based on orality'. This portends that literature is not limited to the written genres alone; there are people whose literature was unwritten prior civilization of literacy. Therefore, either oral or written, the function of literature as the channel that mirrors the society is of paramount importance to every society that has it. This paper seeks to use Yorùbá oral literature to show the effects of the poets' usage of stylistic devices in literature on them, the addressee and the work itself. This is a pragmatic approach to literature in order to further expound the uses of Yorùbá

language. As Leo (1993:575) has noted that 'pragmatics is directly interested, not in language, but in what people do with language: its uses and users'. There is in every culture interactive activities whether visual or verbal that constitutes a continuum where thoughts and actions are shared. These in turn carry with them the elements that shape their behavioral patterns and worldview. The innate habits and learned habits through literature (oral/written) are pivotal to behavioral principles of Yorùbá culture. Fowler, (1981:21) has even noted that:

There is a dialectical interrelationship between language and social structure: the varieties of linguistic usage are both the products of socio-economic forces and institutions- reflexes of such factors as power relations, occupation roles, social stratifications, etc., and practices which are instrumental in forming and legitimating these same social forces and institutions. The New Critics and the Formalists vehemently denied that 'literature' had social consequences, but a socio-linguistic theory...will show that all discourse is part of social structure and enters into...effected and effecting relationships...

Implicitly, the use of language depends so much on the social structures and diverse institutions existing in the community of a particular language. These institutions ranges from political, religious, and economic and any other that could be found in a particular society. The existence of these institutions hinges on the usage of language to bear, preserve and save them.

Therefore, the major occupation of this paper is to explicate the poets' stylistics devices in communicative panorama in regards to the use of language and paralinguistic components. Text¹ of any given piece of literature could be divided into three major faces.

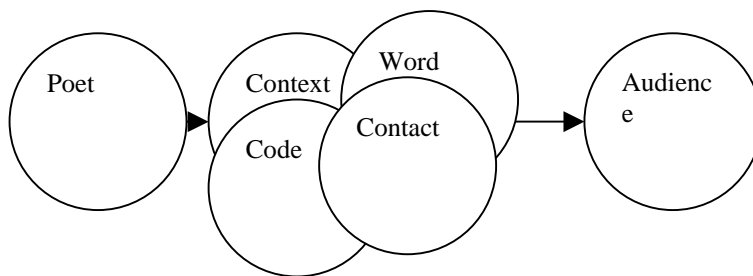
The first face could be said to focus on the Addresser/Encoder/Speaker/Sender/Actor.

The second face focuses on the Message/Word/Address/Code/Acts. The third face centers on the Addressee/Decoder/Audience/Receiver/Recipient. In this work, message (afò/òrò) that is a sub-division will be divided into three faces such as code, contact and context in Yorùbá orature.

¹ In Yorùbá, the word for text is *afò* or *òrò* that means word in diverse form. It could therefore be referred to the complete performance of a particular orature because they cannot separate text from the code, context and the extra-textual materials that make up the performance.

Therefore, we will examine a variety of Yorùbá orature pragmatically to show that word is multifaceted in Yorùbá oral literature. The chart below could be used to depict the faces of word in Yorùbá orature.

Below is a chart showing the multifactes of word in Yorùbá communication process.



2.0 Addresser/Encoder/Speaker/Sender/Actor

Any of the above terms applies to the producer of literature either the writer or the poet. In Yorùbá oral literature, there are words that lay more emphasis on the producer of the literature than other components. This is common with some specific orature. Such words are performing what we shall refer to as emotive function because they focus more on the producer(s). In most cases, these words are either nouns or pronouns such as: "I", "I am", "My", "Mine", "Me", and "Our", "We", "Us" either in the subjective or objective case. The last three examples that are plural are peculiar to Yorùbá oral literature due to its nature of togetherness in the performance; which shall be explained later in this work. The "I", "Me", "Mine" and "My" show that more emphasis is laid on the speaker/poet and they show that "critical activity has tended to focus on the real-world author's or poet's thoughts, feelings, mental states, experiences, as the true object of criticism and source of meaning" (Vimala, 1989:213).

The emphasis laid on the poets is the strategy in the poem that generates effects of selfhood or personhood. The first- person singular or plural pronoun refers to the person (s) speaking in the context of utterance who use the term.

In Yorùbá oral literature, paying of homage is a permanent trait or peculiarity that contains these kinds of words. This is so because of the functions of homage in the performance of oral literature. The poet has to pay homage so that he or she can receive the full support of both the seen and unseen powers that are believed to be present at the performance dome. It is the paying of homage that creates good atmosphere for better and rewarding performance of the poet. The paying of homage is not a trait of Yorùbá written literature since literacy is an adopted child in Yorùbá community. Implicitly, the written literature unlike the oral is seen as a sole produced art. The author of Yorùbá oral literature see themselves as patriots of the genres they perform. Therefore, there is the need to show to the people present and absent, seen and unseen through the paying of homage that he/she has paid homage for a successful performance. It implies that these unseen spirits of the progenitors of the art and those that are still alive are performing the oral literature together with the current performer.

Let us draw example from Masqueraders' poetry to show how emphasis is laid on the Addresser.

Ibà o! - Homage!

N ó ribà kí n tó seré- I will pay homage before my performance

Mo ribà Onígangan – I pay homage to the Gangan drummers

Won ò ní saworo – Their drums have no gongs

Mo júbà àwon alàbèntè – I pay homage to the Àbèntè drummers

The underlined grammatical words show that the part of the poet is the most important in this section. They are referring to the poet as he pays homage to different types of drummers for successful enterprise. Apart from the fact that he is soliciting the support of the patriots of the genre, either dead or present, he is the recipient of their support for a momentous and productive performance. In Yorùbá aesthetics, the dead ones are still regarded as existing in another world of the unseen, and they can see the livings and shower blessings upon them especially when it is solicited for.

A similar example can be seen from the praise/descriptive poetry- oríkì. The example below shall be used to exemplify the point I am making. The example is that of Òkín² lineage among the Yorùbá that goes thus:

Èmi lomo Ìyèrú Òkín Olófàmojò- I am the offspring of Ìyèrú Òkín Olófàmojò
Èmi lomo la a re- I am the offspring of the One who must split it well/equally.
Èmi lomo adijú-lasu-kísu-dógba- I am the offspring of the One who must split yam
equally while closing eyes.
Èmi lomo Akasa-mórí-jadé – I am the offspring of Akasa-mórí-jadé
Èmi lomo Yàndà fohùn jagbè – I am the offspring of Yàndà who has a bass voice.

The underlined grammatical words in the above example of Yorùbá praise/descriptive poetry are laying emphasis on the addresser. The poet shows herself as a unique offspring of Òkín lineage who is not only showing her pride in her ancestry but also proud to be linked to the matriarchs and the patriarchs of this lineage with the hope that their support is fully guaranteed in all her endeavors.

In the performance of Yorùbá epithalamium known as Ewì Ajemóyàwó³, the bride who had lived a chaste life would like to show this virtue in her performance. She would like to show her pride and ego that she was not flirting around; and to also teach lesson of chastity to other young girls who are yet to marry. This can be seen in the example below:

Odò kan, odò kàn – A river, a river,
Tí n be láàrin igbé – That is located amidst the forest,
Ará iwájú kò gbodò débe – The senior citizens must not get there,
Èrò èyìn kò gbodò débè – The junior citizens must not get there,
Èmi Àdùké débè *mo* bù bójú – *I* Àdùké got there and *I* fetched to wash *my* face,
Ojú *mi* wá dojú oge – *My* face has become that of a bride,
Ìbàdí *mi* di ìbàdí ìlèkè – *My* waist has become a waist with beads,
Ìlèkè tí e bá kà tí ò pé – If you count the bead and it is incomplete,
Elégbé *mi*, e tú *mi* láso lo - *My* comrades, strip off *my* dress from *me*,

² This is the title of the lineage poetry of the Òfà people in Kwara State of Nigeria and they could be found all over the places in Yorùbá land. Their lineage poetry is linked with their civil ritual that they are known for, which is the annual wrestling coupled with the art of cutting a yam tuber with knife into two equal sizes. The proper names in other lines are just referring to their patriarchs.

³ I have chosen this term against Ràrà Ìyàwó or Ekún Ìyàwó because it embraces different types of the nuptial poetry that we have in Yorùbá land. From our on-going research on the same subject, epithalamium, sponsored by the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation we have discovered that different Yorùbá dialect group has different name for the nuptial poetry hence, it is expedient to adopt the term that would embrace all of them.

Ire lóní, orí *mi* àfi ire – Goodness today, *my* head is for goodness.

Sociologically, it is a thing of great honor and grandeur to the bride, her parents and the entire family members when a bride keeps herself pure and remains a virgin by the time of marriage. It is a thing of honor to the bride for being a regimented lady, and to her parents and family members for being regarded as reputable parents who have taken good care of their daughter. Therefore, the only and surest public way of making this virtue known to the public is through the performance of the nuptial poetry. Hence, the bride makes much reference to herself by the use of various pronouns – "*I*", "*My*", and "*Me*" in the text above to prove that she, as a bride is virtuous.

Also, in the hunter's poetry, Ìjálá, among the Yorùbá if a hunter wants to show his bravery and prowess in hunting expedition he makes much reference to himself during the performance. This can be easily noted by the use of the persona, "I" and "I am", which is basically a linguistic creation characterizing the speaking subject of this discourse in a more expressive mode and mood. Let us examine this example of the hunters' genre to buttress our point:

E gbóhùn enu mi egbémode – Listen to my voice, fellow hunters,
Mò n regbó òdájú o! – *I am* going to a fearful forest,
Eni tó náyàá kó padà léyìn *mi* – The person who still has mother should not follow
me,
Eni tó ní baba ni kó kálo – The person who has father is to follow me,
Èmi nìkan nígbó onígbo – *I* was alone in a bizarre forest,
Èmi nìkan níjù olòtè – *I* was alone in a dodgy thick forest,
Èmi nìkan níbi efòn gbé n jà takotabo – *I* was alone where male and female buffalo
were fighting.

The italicized words in the above example of the Yorùbá hunters' genre (I, I am and Me) provide the cues for subject production in the discourse. They serve as windows through which we view the poet's qualities as a brave and dexterous hunter in the hunting voyage. The linguistic choices of which the discourse of the genre is composed should, therefore, be regarded as stylistic devices enabling the process of subject production, projection and elevation in the text. This is in consonance with (Benveniste, 1971:226) that:

Language is accordingly the possibility of subjectivity because it always contains the linguistic forms appropriate to the expression of subjectivity, and discourse provokes the emergence of subjectivity because it consists of discrete instances. In some way language puts forth 'empty' forms which each speaker, in the exercise of discourse, appropriate to himself and which he relates to his 'person' at the same time defining himself as 'I'...

Therefore, the speaker refers to himself in most cases as "I" or "I am" or "Me" in the text is an indication that he wants the audience to pay attention to him more than any other thing in the performance at that time. Also, he uses the avenue to reveal his past glories as the basis of his present and future success and breakthrough. Similar example can be seen in the Dadakúadà that is a particular traditional song among the Yorùbá people of Kwara State. Let us look at the example of a notable Dadakúadà singer among the Yorùbá, Odòlayé Àrè mú's performance below:

Mo kogbón orí mi- I use my sense
Bémi náà ò kàwé o! - If I am not literate
Mo kogbón orí mi- I use my sense
Bémi náà ò kàwé o! - If I am not literate

The italicized words in the above example of Dadakúadà song are showing the bravery and the prowess of the singer. In this case he shows to the audience that even though he is not lettered, he is a competent and adroit singer and a philosopher. The use of emphatic pronouns is an indication that the emphasis rests more on the speaker. Not only this, in lines one and three, we will observe that both in the objective case and the subjective case, the reference is to the same speaker. The essence of this kind of emphasis or repetition is to show the dexterity of the singer. At times, if the performers of a particular genre are more than one there are words that show mutual and collective responsibility and praise. This is common with Sewele, a variant of dadakúadà that is performed by female that is very common with Yorùbá of Kwara State of Nigeria. Here below is an example from Ìyáládùké who is a trendy performer of the genre:

Mo ní e bá wa kálo-I say that you should follow us
E sá máa wà léyìn in wa- Just stay behind us
Ti Mòmó yàtò gédégédé- That of Mummy is totally different
A sá yáa bólóde fè é lójú- She amplifies any ceremony she is invited to perform.

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The use of "I", "Mummy" and "She" in the above text shows the skill of the leader of the group itself. She is referred to as Mummy in the performance. The use of "Us" which is a collective pronoun in the objective case is an indication that they are the recipients of the action. And it shows that it was jointly performed by the group it is not a sole performance. They use this stylistic device to call the attention of the people to themselves as dexterous performers. This is performing emotive function to the artists. Though the artists are appealing to the masses to invite them for another performance due to their skills, they are also advertising themselves. Therefore, the effect of the word they are speaking rests on them more than it is on the audience.

3.0 Message/Word/Address/Code/Acts

The essence in communication is for a particular message to be passed across to the targeted audience. It comes up in various ways and various means. The manipulation of language by employing figure of speech such as metaphor, simile, metonymy, innuendo, personification, wordplay, repetition, allusion, symbolism, onomatopoeia, euphemism and an unending list of them to bring out the aesthetic feature of that particular genre play a prominent role in understanding the message. Therefore, in a situation whereby the part played by the figure of speech is colossal and that it makes the bulk of the genre sound poetic; it means that it performs poetic function. Each figure of speech performs specific function in different orature depending on the utilitarianism, peculiarities, and context of performance or production of that genre. Figure of speech has been described as the 'graces of language, dressing of thought and embellishments, for indeed they do decorate our literature and give couturier's sense' (Edward et al, 1999:41). Figures of speech were calculated to work directly on the emotions, to establish the ethical image of the speaker in order to foster persuasive appeal. These shall be examined one after the other.

It is important to make distinction among the three components that are associated with message; these are code, contact and context, which I would call 'the associates of message'.

Code is the linguistic and paralinguistic expressions, which are passed across to the audience with regard to a particular context. It could be referred to as questions that need answers. Code is very common in Yorùbá orature but it is more pronounced in riddles –*Àlò àpamò* and *Àrò*. Code appeals to the psychoanalytic mind of the audience, and gives room for them to have a deeper thought over the genre. Decoding a code in Yorùbá orature calls for a bit of understanding prior the time of performance of the genre hence its understanding demands a hermeneutical inquiry in some instances. In any case, 'if the message is to be understood it has to be expressed in some linguistic or paralinguistic code which is, to some degree at least known by both the addresser and addressee' (Allen and Corder, 1975:186). In Yorùbá orature, the audience of riddles- *Àlò àpamò* and *Àrò* could be familiar with some dictions of the orature but to fully decode the code of either would make them think deeper. It is a kind of metaphorical use of language. 'In riddles, deliberate attempts are usually made to make the solution of the propounded enigmas difficult, hence the recondite nature of the metaphors' (Olatunji, 1984:183). Examination of few examples of riddles below will expound our understanding of code in Yorùbá orature.

Speaker: *Àlò o!* -A riddle!

Audience: *Àlò!* - A riddle!

Àdàbà kenke- The small dove

Kò sí ojà tí kíí ná o! - There is no market that it cannot visit.

The speaker who has propounded this enigma knows that the audience are familiar with the three key words- *àdàbà*(dove), *kenke*(small) and *ojà*(market). But, for them to decode it requires their imaginative potentialities coupled with their experiences of their cosmography. The answer to the above riddle is money-*owó*. Money is used as the medium of exchange in economic transactions in every human society therefore; there is no market that it cannot visit. Here is another example of riddle:

Speaker: *Àlò o!* -A riddle!

Audience: *Àlò!* - A riddle!

Ìkòkò rúgúdú- A smallish round pot

Fèyìn tìgbé- Rests in the bush with its back.

The answer to this riddle is snail-*Ìgbín*. Among the Yorùbá, the natural habitat for the snail is bush. It is not unlikely that the audience of this riddle is familiar with *pot, back* and *bush*; but the act of linking them together has to do with imagery for proper decoding of the riddle. Similar principle applies to Àrò. In fact, it is a difficult task separating these two genres; but the beginnings of the two genres clearly make the distinction between them possible. Àlò starts with Àlò o! - A riddle, while Àrò starts with *Mo járó! Mo járó!* - I proffer solution to an enigma. But both have similar focus and they are identical in content. Below is an example of Àrò:

Speaker: *Mo járó! Mo járó!* - I proffer solution to an enigma
Audience: Àrò, *mo já o pátí!* - I proffer the solution strikingly
Speaker: *Arúgbó sùn* –An old person slept
Ó feegun *rè tìlèkùn* – He used his bone as the door.

The answer to this form of riddle is *spider-Alántakùn* that uses the web it produced to enclose itself. In order to answer this kind of question calls for alertness of the audience and their imaginative virility. Another observation here is that the visual domain plays an important role in decoding the codes in Yorùbá riddles. It tasks the visual domain to imagine and visualize the habitats of creatures like snail and spider that were mentioned in the riddles before they can decode the riddles.

The second associate of word (*afò*) is the *contact*. The poet for special effect can manipulate the normal conventions of 'normal talk'; and this is visible in contact. This device results in better attention of the audience and comprehension of the message. The term phatic communion was used to describe this kind of relationship between the poet and the audience. Malinowski coined this term in the 1920s as a type of speech in which ties of union are created by a mere exchange of words. He stresses further that the actual words used in phatic communion "fulfill a social function and that is the principal aim, but they are neither the result of intellect reflection, nor do they necessarily arouse interest in the listener" Malinowski (1972:151). But, our experience with Yorùbá orature shows that his explanation cannot fit totally into the situation of Yorùbá orature. Apart from the fact that the Yorùbá poet uses contact as a form of phatic communion to fulfill a social function, the ability of the poet to use it correctly and appropriately reflects his intellectual

capacity to manipulate words and it also stir emotional responses of the audience. Thus, it helps the poet to communicate with his audience clearly and effectively. In fact, contact elicits admiration for the expressiveness of the poet. Contact is regarded as 'routine vacuities' that people perform in verbal interaction (Fowler, 1981:84).

In the performance of Yorùbá orature, phatic communion has an important social function, fellowship and participatory essence. It serves as a communicative function of breaking uncomfortable silence as well as laying the foundation for proper and further interaction between the poet and the audience. No wonder Lyons sees it as felicitous expression that emphasizes the notion of fellowship and participation in common social rituals that should be regarded as communion and not just communication (Lyons, 1981:143). This observation of Lyons suits the Yorùbá orature because many of them are ritualistic and rituals among them demand experiential participation through the phatic communion (contact). During the performance of Yorùbá oral literature contact gives room for the listeners to participate in the performance as passive performers or poets. The poet bears in mind that he is relaying the message not only for himself but also mainly for the audience who are the prime recipients of the message. 'The speaker recognizes that in some sense the static listener is in a closer psychological relationship with the immediate territory than he is, and that in a way the listener can be regarded as the owner of the territory' (Laver, 1975:226). This point about contact is better illustrated with following examples.

In *ìjálá*, the hunter poetry, the poet sometimes commences by asking questions from the audience as seen the example below.

Sé n máa báré lo? – Do I continue with the performance?
Sé kò ní séwu lónà enu ìlo? – I hope there won't be any problem with the performance?

The audience can therefore respond to the poet's question with:

Máa báré lo- Continue with the performance
Kò ní séwu- There won't be any problem
Òla nilè ó mó- You can take the whole day.

In most cases, response to the poet at this juncture might be just a word, a sentence or at most two sentences. Then, if the poet is a capable person he/she begins to pour the lineage praise poetry of the recipient.

In a nutshell, contact serves various functions in the performance of Yorùbá orature. It keeps the audience mentally awake during the performance. It gives room for experiential participation and thus fosters the spirit of togetherness in the performance. It enhances better comprehension of the message, which forms a better track or path for its applicability. It aids the performance in that the audience might remind the poet some salient points that he does not remember. Hence, this face of word in Yorùbá orature should be seen as vital in their communication scenery. The next associate of message is context.

Context is the third associate of the message. This is non-verbal aspect of the message but it is as important as the code and contact. In most cases, context determines the type, nature, content and timing of the message in Yorùbá orature. Virtually in all cases they perform referential function in the genre. Context can expedite or impedes the message. In short "context comprises all relevant things outside language" (Fowler, 1971:34). The Yorùbá orature could be regarded as contextual genre. Virtually in all cases it is the context that determines the production of a particular genre. Yorùbá regard everything going on both in the physical and celestial realms as context of a genre. The dressing of the poets, attitude of the audience, the locale of the performance, time of the performance, nature of the performance, attitude of the poets (genuflexion), materials used for the performance such as drums, guns, ritual materials etc; and the climatic condition during the time of performance are all regarded as context in Yorùbá imagination of their orature. Below explanation will further buttress our understanding of context in Yorùbá orature.

When the masquerades are performing their genre among the Yorùbá, at times they can climb the house after they had turned into monkey. The audience can show their mood to the performance by shouting, clapping or jumping up to show that they are enjoying the performance. Traditionally, this kind of performance comes up at the palace ground of the king or at the market square that would take many people who will watch their performance. It might rain

during the performance. Somebody might fall down during the performance that would distract the attention of the audience. All the aforementioned about the masquerades' performance are regarded as the context of the masquerades' genre among the Yorùbá.

Likewise, the hunters' funeral dirge, *Ìrèmòjé*, comes up in the noon and late in the night among the hunters' guild. Whenever they are carrying the hunter's paraphernalia to the outskirts of the town they must not meet anybody on the road beside the hunters' guild members. They beat their special drum called *Àgèrè*. There will be shootings of guns into the air. They chant the dirge as they take paraphernalia one after the other referring to them in the chanting. The timing, chanters' attitude, materials used, the destination of the paraphernalia are all context of the genre. If we remove any of them from the performance then the genre is rendered incomplete and defective.

Another example is that of the funeral dirge, *ràrà òkú*, among the *Ìbòlò* Yorùbá dialect. Before they begin to chant the dirge they must perform some rituals like the pouring of libation of palm oil for soothing and appeasing. The chanters are women who tie sash to their belly. These are part of the genre, which cannot be separated from it.

During one of the performances of masquerades' genre in *Ìníṣà*, a town in *Odò-Òtìn* local government of *Òsun* State, Nigeria, it started drizzling and it is a taboo for rain to fall during their performance. Then the chanter chewed alligator pepper and began to chant incantation to stop the rain thus:

Eji dá òjò dá-Dew stop, rain stop
Ejígbojò lòó jé- Your secret name is Ejígbojò
Eji dá kó o jé n parí eré- Rain, stop and let me finish the performance. (Personal witnessing on April 10th, 2004, at the market square in *Ìníṣà*)⁶.

The rainfall of that day formed part of the orature produced as cited above and it is the context of that particular cited genre.

⁶ I was there in this town physically in order to watch the performance of the masquerade.

If we continue to give various examples of different types of Yorùbá orature this kind of work will not be suitable for it, because there are many.

Conclusively, the message of a particular Yorùbá orature can never be produced without its associates-code, contact and context. This leads us to the last division that is the recipient of the action-addressee.

4.0 Addressee/Decoder/Audience/Receiver/Spectator

The addressee of the Yorùbá orature refers to the recipient of the message that the addresser relays. Whenever more emphasis is laid on the addressee in the genre it performs connative function. In Yorùbá orature, the addressee could either be seen or unseen audience. It could be either audience because the sensory world of Yorùbá has both spiritual and physical dimensions and there is no clear-cut line of demarcation between their celestial and terrestrial cosmos. The most important thing is that the speaker bears it on mind that there is the audience for what he speaks. Among the Yorùbá, the lineage praise poetry performs soothing function just as he does for the person who praises himself as the speaker or addresser. Besides, the role of *oríkì* among the Yorùbá is great and it has a lot of effect on the recipient whenever it is chanted. Babalola, (1966:24) has even noted that:

It is traditionally believed that the correct performance of *oríkì* in honor of progenitor gladdens the progenitor in the world of spirits and induces him to shower blessings on his offspring on earth. The reciting or chanting of the *oríkì* in honor of the ancestors of a particular family causes members of that family who hear the performance to feel very proud of their pedigree, and if they are then away from home, they also feel exceedingly homesick

Oríkì makes the addressee feels proud of his/lineage and gives a sense of security in that he/she hopes that the ancestors who are connected with him/her in the *oríkì* are sordidly behind him/her. Such a person feels happy to be connected to the route and can then respond to the message by giving money, cloth or other type of gifts to the chanter.

Not only in oríkì do we have connative ability of Yorùbá orature. An example of dadakúàdà below shows that it is the impact of the addressee that is more pronounced in the genre. It goes thus:

Lágbájá⁷ má se koko- Somebody don't divorce your husband
Lágbájá má se koko- Somebody don't divorce your husband
O ò wògbà téé tí n bá a bò wá- Think of the time you are married together
Kò mà síbì tégbìn kò sí- There is no home that does not have their own differences
Ko fidí mólè kóo jeun omo- Remain with your husband and enjoy your children
Lágbájá má se koko- Somebody don't divorce your husband.

In the above folk song the singer warns the addressee against divorce and preaches endurance in the marital institution so that the couple can train and enjoy their children together. A good number of the Yorùbá orature performs the functions of enlightenment, caveat against social ills, didactic and the likes to the addressee. For example, in the masquerades' poem below is another caveat for the addressee:

A kí dèdùn orò tí Olóun ò dání dá- No one struggle for what God has not given him
A kí jogún orò tí kò kanni- No one should struggle for another man's property.

This is a word of warning against covetousness and greediness and the message centers on the addressee as the recipient of the message.

In most cases, a high proportion of advertising genre is direct address to the intended consumers. The Yorùbá advertisers also take into account people who have no interest in their goods and services that they advertise.

The person advertising draws attention of the audience to specific goods in order to increase its consumption for economic gains. This is part of the discursive relations that operate in the formation and maintenance of a market economy. Consumers' perception of the goods differ, therefore, the advertiser must present the advertisement in an appealing way to the consumers. The language of their adverts must attract and holds the attention of their intended consumers. At times, they make use of various stylistics devices ranging from humor, metaphor, personification

and the likes to appeal to their audience. This is because they have to produce a genre that entices diverse intended consumers who have differing opinions about the goods. This is in consonance with the observation of Bex, (1993:722) that:

...Advertisers typically stand in one of three relations to their intended audience. They are either offering goods or services to readers who have already decided to buy; offering them to people who have not made up their minds; or making uncommitted readers aware of the goods and services available. These different activities require different strategies.

The usage of hyperbole that requires elucidation suggests that the advert is appealing to specific 'discourse communities' who are familiar with the particular interpretative strategies appropriate to such elliptical expression. Yorùbá advertisers are fond of employing imagery in their advertisement to create a kind of pictorial representation of the goods for sale. In most cases, it is difficult for non-native speakers to decode such language of adverts because it requires considerable pragmatic inferencing before they can be understood. Such adverts use visual appeal by encoding a message that will remain in the psychoanalytic mind of the audience in a way that even if they are yet to make up their minds whether to buy or not, the message has been passed to them that the goods will suit their needs. Examples of genre of advertisement from a pounded yam seller and that of an okra seller respectively among the Yorùbá will give further details about our argument.

E wojú obè –Look at the face of the soup
E múyán o! - Then hold pounded yam

And

Ee feja dálá o! -Use fish to create (cook) the okra

In the two examples above, the advertisers are appealing to the visual domain of their intended audience to create a kind of scenario that will linger in their memory and instigate them to make their choice. In their adverts they mentioned the goods they are selling and at the same time gave description of other goods that can serve as complements to their goods. Advertising

⁷ This is one of many names that Yorùbá use for anonymity.

"foregrounds the goods and services on offer; and they are described and compared favorably with other, similar goods and services" (Bex, 1993:730). In the above, the whole discourse bothers so much on the audience/addressee than the addresser. The usage of language must appeal to the interest of the audience in the goods and services.

Conclusion

The paper, which is an exploration into the pragmatics of Yorùbá orature, shows various stylistic devices of Yorùbá poets in their quests for better comprehension, appreciation, application and appraisal of their messages. In every culture, there are culture interactive activities that form a continuum where thoughts and actions are shared. The study shows that the innate habits and learned habits through the use of orature in Yorùbá community are germane to their behavioral pattern. Besides, it shows the poets' devices to project the image of themselves, the message and that of their addressee; and these are regarded as different faces of their word. Also, the work reveals that a particular genre or discourse can function as expressive (emotive), directive (connative), phatic, and referential. In conclusion, a particular genre, the utility of the genre and the focus of the producer determine the face of the word that would be more projected than the other in Yorùbá orature.

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