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It is our policy that contributions are not only original but also advanced in the respective disciplines. Contributions that receive positive assessment from our team of assessors are published in the Journal.

Prof. Benjamin Omolayo
Editor

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POWER, RESPONSIBILITY AND LANGUAGE: SOYINKA'S *A PLAY OF GIANTS* AND THE CONATIVE FUNCTION

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Abstract

*The basic assumption of this research is that communication is preoccupied with the relationships between language and other variables outside language. The study, therefore, investigates how such variables as power and responsibility acquire their forms in and through language in Soyinka's play. By focusing on the conative function of language as proposed by Jakobson (1960), the study explains how the relationships between language and power, language and responsibility are dramatized in Soyinka's **A Play of Giants**. The study concludes that despite the fact that power and responsibility are subsumed in positions of authority; the powerful abducts power from those positions and leave the responsibility unattended to. This work adopts insights from a functionalist orientation in order to study an aspect of the language of Soyinka's **A Play of Giants**.*

Keywords: Power, Responsibility, Soyinka, Conative, Function

1.0 Introduction

A critical assessment of the world in relation to language reveals that the world is 'worded'. This means that objects in the world have been reduced to some forms of letters through which they can be described or expressed. In an attempt to represent the world through language, human beings transfer into language the structure(s) that is found in their world. Such structures as power relations, class, gender, identity representation and other forms of ideology become obvious during interaction. Power is an integral component of every society and the fact that it is expressed through language has been established by many scholars especially those interested in the critical study of language. There have been so many attempts at describing power by scholars but it is difficult to reduce the term to a specific definition. According to Wodak (2002, p10), 'power is seen as a central condition in social life'. This suggests that power is evident in every form of human interaction. Since the relationship of dominance permeates every sphere of human life, power can be defined as the ability to direct or influence the course of event and the behaviour of others in a particular domain. It can be official, coercive, religious, or associated with the ability to exercise control. Power is a social instrument for establishing and maintaining order on the one hand and on the other hand for domination and control. Types of power can be identified based on the social domain of control. Van Dijk (1998, p.5) states that:

Different *types of power* may be distinguished according to the various resources employed to exercise such power: The coercive power of the military and of violent men will rather be based on force, the rich will have power because of their money,

whereas the more or less persuasive power of parents, professors or journalists may be based on knowledge, information or authority.

Thus, one can identify different types of power such as political power, social power, military power etc. Social power, according to Van Dijk (1998, p.5), comes to the fore when a group is able to (more or less) control the acts and minds of (members of) other groups..... This ability presupposes a power base of (privileged) access to scarce social resources, such as force, money, status, fame, knowledge, information, 'culture' or indeed various forms of public discourse and communication.

From the foregoing, social power manifests itself by establishing the ideological dichotomy between 'us' and 'them' and this can be found in inter-groups interaction. For Van Dijk, social power is associated with privilege. Usually, the privilege can be used as the instrument of social change as much as it can be used for oppression and subjugation by the powerful. In addition to privilege, all forms of power have a measure of responsibility attached to it, especially if the power is legal or official. Such forms of power accompany positions like political offices, official positions, and religious positions among others.

Responsibility can be defined as being in a position of authority over someone or a group of persons and having a duty to ensure that particular things are done appropriately and in time. It is evident that there is a connection between power and responsibility from the definition above. Since language is an important mode of communicating intentions and thoughts, power and responsibility are social variables diffused into language during interaction.

Power is diffused into language in various ways and at various levels as justified by Fairlough (1992, p88) which states that ideology (which includes power) 'invests language in various ways and at various levels'. Usually, power is investigated at the micro (linguistic forms) and macro level where an external variable such as context is explored in relation to language use. The focus of this study is on how Soyinka in *A Play of Giants* has manipulated linguistic components in order to express power and responsibility. Generally, Soyinka's works have received robust scholarly attention. Such previous studies include Jain (1986), Omole (1990), Osakwe (1995), Ogunsiji (2001), and Hunjo (2010). In spite of the interest shown by scholars, the peculiar intersection between power, responsibility and language in the dramatization of *A Play of Giants* has not been explored by scholars.

As stated earlier, power comes with responsibilities and vice versa. Where responsibility is given, a form of power necessary to carry out the responsibility effectively is also given. Such power can be political, military, religious, and so on depending on the position of authority. Despite the dialectical relationship, power and responsibility cannot be said to be the same. On the contrary, as evident in this study, it is possible to abduct the power associated with a position of authority and leave the responsibility unattended to. Therefore, where power is abused, the responsibility that comes with the power is suppressed or ignored such that the display of power becomes paramount for the powerful and supercedes any sense of responsibility. Usually such occurrence is expressed in and through language.

Austin's student, Searle, in 1976 attempts an elaboration of the work of Austin (1962). He also identified five categories of illocutionary acts. These, he calls directives, commissives, representatives, declaratives and performatives. By re-categorising speech act thus, he establishes that language can perform such functions as named by the categories identified. Mey (2001) describes the illocutionary acts as follows:

Directives: this refers to speech acts that embody an effort on the part of the speaker to get the hearer to do something, to direct him or her towards some goal (of the speakers mostly).

Commissives: these are used to create or express obligations on the part of the speaker. Such obligations are found in promises.

Representatives: 'these are used to assert a state of affair in the world. They are also called assertives because they carry the truth value of a condition or state in the world. By the use of representatives, it is easy to establish the truth value of a state of affair in the world.

Expressives: this expresses the inner state of the speaker (Mey, 2001, p.121). Since the expression refers inward (to the feeling of the speaker) it rarely has something to do with the external world.

Declarations: when these are uttered, the condition of a thing or the state of affair changes or is altered.

As evident in the definitions of the speech acts, the language use in directives also relates to the conative function as explained by Jakobson (1960). The language use is directed towards the addressee to get him/her to do something i.e. elicit a particular action from the hearer.

Another major work in classifying language functions is the work of Halliday (1978) which identifies three functions of language. He describes them as the meta-functions of language. They are the ideational, the interpersonal and the textual meta-functions. The ideational meta-function relates to the ideational component of language which has to do with the encoding of experience. According to Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) the ideational function is the grammar resources for constructing our experiences of the world around us and inside us (P. 13). It comprises the experiential and the logical function. According to Halliday and Hassan (1989), the experiential meaning of words or group of words is got from the experiential function of language and it refers to the meaning of certain features that represent the real world as it is apprehended in our experience. Language, here, is used to reflect, i.e. experiential function of language portrays language as action (Halliday and Hassan, 1989, p.20).

The interpersonal function is the doing function. It refers to the function of language that generates the interpersonal meaning which explains words in terms of the social functions they perform. It is used to establish or reflect relationships. The third is the textual meta-function which relates to the ordering of information with language. The textual meaning is what makes a piece a text, as distinct from an artificial or fossilized specimen

of wording (p.23). These three meta-functions establish language as a system of signs used for social signification. Many social based theories of language use take clue from these meta-functions or are based on them.

For Brown and Yule (1984), there are two broad functions of language. These are transactional and interactional. Transactional function describes the content. This function of language is message oriented. It describes the efficiency with which language conveys factual or propositional information. The interactional function is used to express social relations and personal attitudes. They emphasize that a great deal of everyday human interaction is characterized by the primary interactional rather than the primary transactional use of language. The broad classification by Brown and Yule attempts to bring all the functions of language under the two umbrellas. Meanwhile, Osisanwo (2003, p.3-4) identifies ten functions of language. These are modeled after Stubbs (1995, p.46) classifications which are:

1. Expressive/emotive function: this function explains language as a means of expressing human feeling.
2. Directive/conative/persuasive function: this explains how language is used to direct the hearer to carry out an action.
3. Poetic function: it describes the creative function of language.
4. Contact function: this refers to the use as for brief social or psychological interaction.
5. Meta-linguistic function: these points to the fact that language can be used for clarification.
6. Referential function: here, language gives meaning to the objects it refers to.
7. Contextual/situational function: language is used in relation to the immediate environment.
8. Ideational function: this function of language is expressed when a speaker talks about his experience of the real world.
9. Interpersonal function: language is used to establish social relations.
10. Textual function: this function of language is used to provide links with itself and with features of the situation in which it is used.

These functions of language are descriptive of the many social relations and personal attitudes that can be conveyed through language. The criteria used by Osisanwo in classifying the functions are not clear. What is evident in this classification is that it amalgamates the different function identified by earlier scholars based on different criteria. Also the difference between contact and interpersonal function is not clearly defined. The two functions are used to describe social interactions.

Since we have established that the functions of language have been well researched and established by scholars across different periods, it is important to note that most of the scholars recognize the fact that language can be directed towards the addressee to get him or her to perform a particular action. This is well captured by the conative function of Jakobson's model. The conative function enables the speaker to relate language to whoever is been addressed in terms of directives, imperatives, or vocatives. Since power is a social phenomenon, it usually relates to the participants in communication and just like Austin

(1962) says, exercitives (a form of language use) are ‘exercising of powers, rights, influence’ (Austin, 1962, p.50). When power comes to the fore in language use, it either relates to the emotive function of language which describes what the speaker feels or the conative function which relates to the listener. For the purpose of this study, power and responsibility are investigated in relation to the conative function of language.

3.0 A Short Review of Relevant Literature

Some scholars have subjected Soyinka’s work to different types of investigation. Some of these are Jain (1986) which explores *Death and the Kings Horseman* as a text and investigates the use of irony as a strategy in the play, Omole (1990), a work on Soyinka’s *Isara* with focus on the thematic preoccupation of the text, Osakwe (1995) which studies Soyinka’s poems, Ufot (1991) a stylistic investigation of Soyinka’s prose works, etc. Some of the more recent ones are reviewed below:

Ogunsiji (2001) explores the language of Soyinka’s fiction from a linguistic stylistic perspective. The focus of the study is the meaning making strategies in Soyinka’s (auto) biographies. Three of Soyinka’s fiction- *Ake*, *Isara* and *Ibadan* are used as the primary data. The framework for the analysis is Systematic Functional Linguistics. The analysis is carried out on the phono-graphological, grammatical and lexico-semantic levels. The study discovers that Soyinka employs nominal group structure, mood and modality, tense and aspects, transitivity and so on to enhance the narrativity of texts. It then concludes that texts are multi-semiotic in nature and is embedded in the context that produces it.

Also, Adekoya (2006) works on Soyinka’s *A Play of Giants*. The study explores the obsession of African leaders with power and their abuse of it. Adekoya’s focus in the study is to explore the elements of drama such as plot, character, action, setting etc. in *A Play of Giants*. This is with the view of revealing the African leaders as psychopaths. The study also reveals the various manifestation of power which includes economic power, language or rhetorical power, military power and so on. It concludes that ‘*A Play of Giants* is an affirmation of the resilience of the human spirit, the undying will to freedom, and an expression of the unflagging commitment to beauty, criticism and truth’ (p4).

Fashina (2008) attempts a re-reading of Soyinka’s *The Road* with the aim of revealing that Soyinka choice of language in the absurdist play is a deliberate attempt at exposing the depth of philosophical statement about the problem of language and communication. This is particular to African Literature trying to communicate the African essence in a foreign language. The problem arises from the ‘disjunctive’ nature of the European languages and the indigenous nature of African literature. Therefore the complexity of Soyinka’s language is seen as a meta-functional device projected as a character, centre, and circumference of post-colonial African Literature and human society in general rather than a weakness. The crux of Soyinka’s message in *The Road* indicates the creation of awareness about the destructive influence of language man, especially the African man in the post-colonial society. The study concludes that the play is a ‘tragedy of human thought and reason in the ‘prison’ of language and grammar’ (Fashina, 2008, p.18).

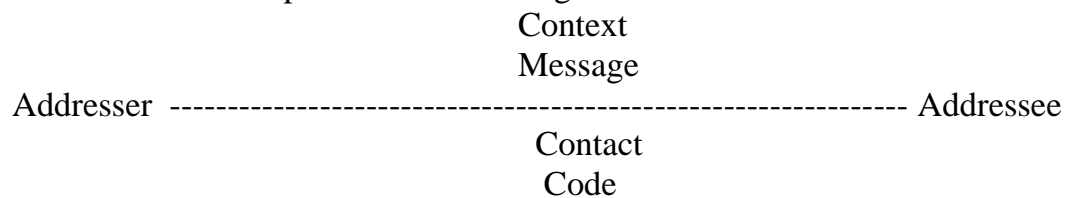
Another research on Soyinka’s work is Hunjo, (2010). It is a critical description of the language of Wole Soyinka’s Non-fictional texts. It sets out to fill the gap that has been

created in the analysis of Wole Soyinka’s work by focusing on resistance ideologies which for the author is central to Wole Soyinka’s work. The aim of the study is to investigate Soyinka’s use of metaphor, intertextuality, and his methods of foregrounding the ideology of resistance in his discourse. How Soyinka, as a text producer, uses language to enact ideologies of resistance with the aim of generating arguments for social change is also one of the concerns of this study. The study adopts Critical Discourse Analysis and Systemic Functional Linguistics. The linguistic aspects of Soyinka’s text that are explored include passivisation, coinages, transitivity system, and intertextuality among others. The study concludes that linguistic items used in Soyinka’s texts encode ideologies for enacting social change.

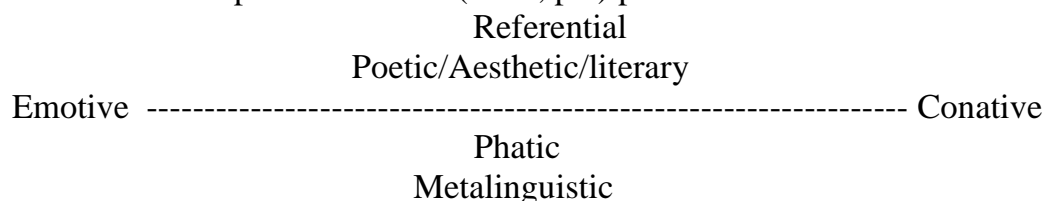
4.0 Theoretical Background

Language is integral to every form of communication. Communication or human interaction can hardly take place without the use of a form of language (verbal or non-verbal). This is why language has formed the basis of researches across disciplines from sociology to anthropology, psychology, philosophy, linguistics, and so on. Many functions of language have been identified as seen in the section above. The model considered for the analysis in this study is Jakobson (1960)’s functions of language. According to him, communication has six fundamental elements which in turn produce six functions of language.

The elements are represented in the diagram below:



These elements of language feature indispensably in all communication process. There is usually a message encoded by the addresser for the addressee. For Jakobson, the message requires a contact between the addresser and the addressee ‘which may be oral, visual, electronic or whatever’ (Hawkes, 2003, p.65) and of course, the interaction requires context which Halliday (1978) divides into the context of culture and context of situation. The final element is the code which is the tool with which the language is conveyed. Each of these elements has its own functional role. These roles become the whole essence of the communicative process. Clarke (1981, p.1) presents the functions as follows:



The referential function refers to context beyond itself. The emphasis is on what the message is about i.e. ‘the denotative or cognitive purpose of the message’. The emotive function is the emotional response of the addresser to a particular situation. The poetic

function stresses ‘the form of the message itself as a result of which the aesthetic purpose is predominant’ (Clarke, 1981, p.1). Also the metalinguistic and phatic function checks whether the code is being understood and used by both parties and whether the contact is working respectively. The phatic function is indicated by such expressions as ‘Good morning’, ‘How are you?’, and so on. The conative function which is the focus of this paper exposes the impact of the message on the hearer. It is indicated by the use of words such as listen, come, look, or I say etc.

The crux of Jakobson’s account of communication is that ‘the message does not and cannot supply all of the meaning of the transaction’ (Hawkes, 2003, p.65). It is also dependent on the other elements. Hawkes stresses that the communication process can orient towards each of the elements in different degrees. Even though all the elements are present in the communicative process, any of the elements may be focused on in the communication process. This indicates that the function of language that dominates a communicative event is a product of the element the communication is oriented towards. According to Hawkes (2003, p.66):

This means that if the communication is oriented towards context, then the referential function dominates and this determines the general character of a message... if the communication is oriented towards the addresser of the message, then the emotive function dominates... if the communication is angled towards the receiver of the message, the addressee, then the conative (or vocative, or imperative) function dominates... if the communication inclines towards the contact, then the phatic function dominates... if towards the code, then the metalingual function dominates... if the message is oriented towards the message for its own sake, then the poetic or aesthetic function can be said to be dominant.

The above quotation establishes that different instances of language use emphasize different functions of language. ‘For Jakobson, a work of art is a message in which the poetic or aesthetic function dominates’ (Clarke, 1981, p.2). While it is true that the poetic function dominates most work of arts especially poetry, it is important to know that other functions such as the conative function can dominate depending on the element the communication is oriented towards in the literary piece.

The conative function can be stressed in works of art especially where the work is representational of the events in the real world. When ideologies are communicated, the functions that are stressed can be emotive or conative. This is because the social actors are the target of such ideological display. Ideology has been discovered to be integral to language use in all domains, therefore, emotive and conative use of language are essential functions of literary piece.

In the present study, the use of language which focuses the message on the hearers (conative function of language) is investigated in Wole Soyinka’s *A Play of Giants* with a view to unveiling how power and responsibility are revealed in language use.

5.0 A Summary of *A Play of Giants*

The play centres on the activities of four African Heads of State while attending the General Assembly of the United Nations (UN) in New York. The four tyrants represented

in the play are Field Marshal Kamini (Field Marshal El-Haji Dr Idi Amin, late president of Uganda), Emperor Kasco (Emperor of life Jean-Baptiste Bokassa, of the Central African Republic), Benefacio Gunema (late President for life Macias Nguema of Equatorial Guinea), and General Barra Tuboum (late life President Mobutu Sese Seko of Congo). These heads can be said to have abducted the powers associated with their respective positions and left the responsibility unattended to. They all acquire power and sustain it through much brutality and dehumanization of their subjects.

The play is divided into two parts. The first part opens with three of them (Kamini, Kasco, and Gunema) posing for a life portrait and discussing politics (power and governance). In their opinion, commoners who are their subjects are not entitled to power and any human right. So, anyone who arises to challenge their authority should be severely punished. In their discussion, it is discovered that each of the Heads of State tries to show how powerful they are by describing how they treat their subjects. There is a subtle power struggle between them. Kamini who happens to be the most brutal of them all discusses the loan his country wanted with the chairman of Bugara Central Bank. The loan has been denied them by the World Bank on the basis that the country does not meet the conditions for the loan. The chairman incurs Kamini's wrath when he refers to Bugara's currency as worthless. In his words, 'the currency is not worth more than toilet papers'. Kamini punished the chairman for 'devaluing' the currency by asking a taskforce officer to put his head in a toilet bowl. The punishment continues until the end of the play.

The actions of the drama become complicated with the escape of some Bugara delegates from the General Assembly and the arrival of the fourth Head of State, General Tuboum. Kamini becomes tensed because of his speech and this leads to the revelation of more problems in the Bugara economic system and governance. The sculptor who is to produce the portrait insists on not being able to complete the sculpture within the time given and he incurs the wrath of Kamini, not particularly because he would not complete the work but because he gives an opinion that the portrait will be kept in Madam Tussaud's Chambers of Horrors. He is beaten and bandaged all over his body except for the hand he would need to complete the work. The presentation of the sculptor seems to be a metaphor for the relationship between the head of state and their subjects. There is no freedom except the freedom to serve the heads of state on their terms.

Also, the actions of the play become more complicated when the Secretary General raises objection about the portrait and the place it is expected to be displayed. The four Heads of State became furious at the Secretary General's insistence that there is no way to approve the display of the portrait. The heads asked him to find a solution to the problem. In a bid to establish their solidarity, with Kamini especially, the Russians sent delegates to the Bugaran Embassy. The delegates do not hesitate to express their opinion of the Heads of State since they have the advantage of speaking a language they assumed no other person understands. This results in more trouble when it is discovered that the Professor present understands Russia and has taken notes of all the insults from the Russian delegates. Kamini became angry at this and held the delegates hostage. It is announced that a coup has taken place in Bugara, and that there is a protest in the embassy. This leads to holding everyone hostage- the Russian delegates, the US delegates, and the other Head of State.

The play ends on the instruction that an attack be launched against the open space. This includes the UN building very close to the Bugaran Embassy and everyone who has attempted to protest.

6.0 Analysis

The analysis of the linguistic and the rhetorical features of the use of language in *A Play of Giants* is presented here. Since language is a basic tool of expression, the play exposes various instances of how language use reflects power and responsibility or lack of it. The chief tyrant Kamini, and the other three leaders in an attempt to establish their authority over everyone that comes around them use language to express their untamed thirst for power and lack of responsibility. The linguistic features in relation to the conative function of language found in the play are presented and analysed below:

Model for analysis

Speaker/Addresser ----- Hearer/Addressee
 Kamini and other leaders-----Others (Chairman of Bugara Central Bank, Ambassador, etc.)

Speaker's intention	Linguistic expression	Effect on Hearer
Legitimize unequal power relation	tagging	subjugated, depressed,
	confused,	terrorized, dehumanized, and so on.
Threaten, terrorise	use of declaratives, imperatives, interruptions, incorrect expressions, rhetorical question, metaphor, and so on express dominance confuse etc	

6.1 Linguistic features

This section describes the linguistic components of the play that express the display of power and responsibility or lack of it.

6.1.1 Linguistic tagging

This can be defined as linguistic representations of characters by other characters. The label or tag given to a character is informed by what the speaker thinks of the character being tagged. In a way, linguistic tags reveal the power relations between the participant doing the tagging and the person being tagged. Examples of this are presented below:

Sequence one

Kamini: Take this **coat and tie kondo** inside the toilet room there and put his head inside bowl...

pg 8

Sequence two

Kamini: Taking around with me **sneaking traitors** left and right talking bad about Bagara. Today I make you smell your mother's cunt... pg 7

Sequence three

Kamini: ...Me, you **common makongo carver**, you call head of state a stupid man. Pg 30

The linguistic tags used in the examples above are aimed at suppressing and humiliating the hearers. Kamini who is the Chief tyrant in the play, uses words to subjugate and suppress his hearers. His intention is to establish his authority over them and stress the unequal power relation between himself and others. Language here is used in the form of linguistic tags to stress the unequal power relation existing among the interactants with the goal of dominating, subjugating and harassing the listeners. By referring to the chairman of the Bugara Central Bank as a *coat and tie kondo* and his officers as *sneaking traitors*, he asserts that the chairman is like any other citizen that can be suppressed and that he lacks confidence in his officers. 'Kondo' is the derogatory term used by Kamini to refer to 'freedom fighters' in his country. In every instance of Kamini's name calling, his words have the effect of releasing terror on his hearers. It is worthy of note that the negative tagging of their subject by the heads of state is a reflection of their relationship with them. For Kamini, there is no position held in his country that is more important than his ego and his desire to rule and conquer. This is why he results to the use of negative tags for his citizens no matter their position and responsibility. His lack of responsibility, hence commitment to the well-being of his subjects is revealed in the tags he used for his hearers. It is obvious that he is more concerned about exercising and where necessary abusing power than being committed to the responsibility attached to his position.

6.1.2 Use of Imperative sentences.

Imperative sentences are expressions of command used to elicit desired action from the listener. There are instances in the play where Kamini uses imperative sentences to impose his decisions on his listeners. This has the effect of demoralizing and confusing the listeners especially when the action required is 'unreasonable'. Examples are presented below:

Sequence one

Kamini: ...**go back** and **tell** them either they loan ready cash direct, or I take over all remaining foreign business in Bugara....

Sequence two

TF SPECIAL: Your Excellency?

Kamini: **take** this coat-and-tie-Kondo inside that toilet room there and **put** his head inside the bowl. (TF SPECIAL proceeds upstairs.) Each time the tank full, you **flush** it again over his head....

Push his head deep inside, I say deep inside. **Put** your bloody foot on his neck and **press** it down.... That's better. Now **pull chain**.... you leave door open so I can hear water flushing his stinking mouth.

Sequence three

Kamini: **Promote** him first secretary and **tell him** to get on with my speech. Still, I don't like the idea of third secretary writing speech for a life president. **Promote him** today. Ambassador: but, if er.... If I may make bold to remind Your Excellency, the reason why the post of First and second secretaries, plus that of Commercial Attache have been vacant is that, well, according to the Foreign Affairs Minister, there are no funds to pay anyone in those grades.

Sequence four

Kamini: As for you, **get back** to Bugara right away and **start printing** more Bugara bank notes. I show the bastards at least they can't control Bugara sovereign currency. Pg 6

The use of imperative statements is typical where there is unequal power relation and the powerful wants to express and legitimize the inequality. From the examples above, it is obvious that Kamini gives orders without considering the implications of such on his subjects and country as a whole. In the first example, he orders the chairman to go back to the World Bank meeting and relay his threat to them. Apart from the fact that he sees his officers as robots who only receives instructions, it is obvious that he is not knowledgeable about procedures in international relations. Since it is his desire to get the loan, he sees no reason why the World Bank under any disguise should deny him.

Also, in the second sequence, the choice of verbs such as take, push and pull, that expresses actions which require a measure of force reveals the extent to which Kamini wishes to use force to entrench his supremacy over his subjects. Since the chairman has dared to challenge him, he chooses to use force to establish his authority by treating him in an inhuman way. In addition to this the third sequence has imperatives which have to do with the status change of an individual. It appears that Kamini sees no connection between power, status and responsibility. Even though he is willing to promote the third secretary to perform the duty of the first secretary, he is not willing to endow him with the power associated with the position. He reserves the power associated to all statuses in his country but gives out the responsibilities as he is not ready to take them. This points to the lack of responsibility on the part of the dictator and he expresses this through commands.

Furthermore, Kamini's lack of responsibility comes to the fore when he commands the chairman of Bugara central bank to get back and start printing Bugara's currency. It is amazing that he doesn't care about the implication of that instruction on the economy of his country. It is obvious that his financial power is being threatened because it appears that Bugara is broke and they need the support of the World Bank. Since the World Bank is not ready to help, he prefers to have the financial power than to protect his country. This also signals the abduction of power from responsibility thereby leaving Kamini powerful but irresponsible.

6.1.3 Use of declaratives

Declarative is from the word 'declare' and it is usually used to make statements. When a declaration is made, it is not subject to debate. It is used to state facts, hence, the

authenticity of a declarative is its truth value. This means that the fact stated is either true or false. In the present study, Kamini uses declarative sentences as seen in the examples below to express his power and irresponsibility.

Sequence one

Kamini: Taking around with me sneaking traitors left and right talking bad about Bugara.
Today, I make you smell your mother's cunt... pg 8

Sequence two

Kamini: You! If you are not careful, **I dismiss you...** pg 33

Sequence three

Kamini: **I have no emergency when it is my lunch time,** Pg 33

There is the trace of 'power intoxication' and lack of responsibility in the declarative sentences highlighted. Kamini also exercises his power by stating what he will do and what he wants. In this regard he has absolute power and as such he is in control. But in spite this sense of security, he betrays his level of irresponsibility by stating that he does not have an emergency condition while eating. This shows the extent to which Kamini abuses power.

6.1.4 Use of interrogative sentence

Interrogative sentences are used to ask questions. Just like any other expression, it is capable of expressing more than what has been said. In *A Play of Giants* Kamini uses a lot of interrogative statements. Some of these are presented below:

Sequence one

Chairman: there is more to it, Your Excellency. They don't even want to hand over the money directly. In fact, the Board dismissed that request outright. There was no discussion.

Kamini: what they mean by that? You not tell them Bank of Bugara is here with president in person? Pg 5

Sequence two

Kamini: why a friendly embassy? **Why not our own telex?** Pg 16

Sequence three

Ambassador: it's me, your excellency. I have been looking everywhere for you, Your Excellency. Your guests are waiting to...

Kamini: **...why you are not looking after my brother Excellencies?** Pg 33

Sequence four

Kamini: I have no emergency when it is my lunch time, how many times I tell you that? Pg33

The questions asked by Kamini actually signal his level of commitment to the issues of the state. The questions presented show that he knows little about governance and is way too conscious of status and power. These expose his level of irresponsibility and thirst for power. For example, he asks the chairman to interpret the verdict of the World Bank on their request for a loan. This does not mean that he doesn't understand the meaning of what the chairman said literally, but he suggests from his questions that the verdict is meaningless to him. Also sequence two shows that the president is not even aware of the economic and financial status of his country. He suggests from his question that he has not been interested in what happens in the different sectors under his government. This expresses how irresponsible Kamini has been.

6.1.5 Interruption

Sequence one

Chairman: just that all currency needs backing your Excellency. It must be...

Kamini: no, you said Bugara currency only worth something

Sequence two

Sculptor: Mr President sir...

Kamini: Dr President

Turn management in interaction is a strategy for legitimizing power relation. This is seen in the participant who allocates turns, does most self-selection and a number of interruptions. In the examples above, Kamini tries to exercise control over the other participants by his interruptions. When he interrupts, it is discovered that the other participants willingly yield the floor to him. In the first example, Kamini does not want to know the logical reason why the chairman of Bugara Central Bank will refer to the currency as worthless. He interrupts his explanation by asking him to restate what he has said. The purpose is not to understand the message of the chairman but to punish him. Also, the second example presents an instance of proper appellation. He wants to be referred to as Dr President and not Mr President. This expresses his consciousness about titles. Obviously, he exercises his power to take-over turns in discussions on issues not so important. This signals power intoxication and irresponsibility.

6.1.6 Incorrect expressions

Example 1

Kamini: All subversives bad people...

Example 2

Kamini: you very good lady Gudrum...

Example 3

Gunema: is why I like voodoo. That also secret power

Example 4

Kasco: whay you think of papa?

Many of the ungrammatical expressions found in the play are used by the Heads of State as seen in the examples above. The Heads of State express their power through their careless use of the English language. Despite the fact that they are expected to address their audiences in the standard form of English language, they seem not to care about their expressions. Since every one addressed is viewed as a subordinate, the Heads of State do not feel any obligation to explain what is said clearer than they did. This is a display of carelessness and irresponsibility but more importantly it stresses the unequal power relation among the participants. Also, it is ironical that those who seem to have a good command of the official language are at a mercy of those who barely speak the language. Hence, it can be said that there is wrong placement of power which is a factor responsible for the lack of responsibility.

6.2 Rhetorical devices

6.2.1 Rhetorical question

Sequence one

Chairman: not exactly, Your Excellency. They simply insisted on certain conditions....

Kamini: what I care about conditions? Agree to any conditions just get the loan. Pg 5

Sequence two

Chairman: it is not quite as easy as all that Your Excellency. They want to mortgage Bugara body and soul.... Pg 5

Kamini: I say what I care about body and soul? If they can loan Bugara the two hundred million dollars, I give them body and soul. Go back and agree to any condition they want.

Sequence three

Chairman: they replied that Hazena has been paying interest regularly Your Excellency

Kamini: (angrily). What I care about rotten interest? Bugara promised to pay everything all at once, in five years. So what I care about stupid interest enh? Taking interest and taking interest and finishing up Bugara foreign exchange. Pg 6

From the examples above, the rhetorical questions from Kamini reveal that he is an irresponsible leader. He cares less about due process or proper procedures which is expected to be central to good governance. As far as he is concerned, it does not matter what the law says, what matters is what he wants and how he gets it. He wants the loan from the World Bank without wanting to know about the law governing giving out loans and paying the loans back. This shows that Kamini is a selfish and irresponsible leader.

6.2.2 Metaphor

Sequence one

Kamini: ...put **your bloody** foot on his neck and press it down

pg 6

Sequence two

Kamini: my friend Mr Mayor, these are my brothers. They are not guests... Pg 22

Clair, (2000) defines metaphor as statements based on some kind of analogy where two things are compared to each other. Beyond such comparisons, there are two levels of meaning where metaphor is used, the primary meaning and the inferred meaning which is also the second/secondary level. According to Ricoeur (2004, p110), Metaphor is a kind of attribution, requiring a 'subject' and a 'modifier' – an obviously analogous pair to those others, 'tenor-vehicle' and 'focus-frame'. For him, metaphor is just one tactic within a general strategy, which is to suggest something other than what is stated (Ricoeur, 2004, p110). Such metaphors as used in the examples represent another level of meaning other than what is said.

In the first sequence, Kamini calls the task force's foot, a 'bloody' one. The significance of this description cannot be overlooked. The task force officers are used by Kamini as instruments of oppression, such that they have shed innocent blood and have become symbols of terror to the populace. So apart from using 'bloody' as mere modifier, Kamini expresses the function of the task force to his government and in terms of power, he places them above the other citizens as their oppressors. A leader who oppresses his subordinates especially by shedding innocent blood cannot be said to be responsible even though he is powerful. The second sequence reveals the kind of relationship that exists between the four head of states. Kamini calls the others his brothers, thereby expressing to the listener that they are related. In this case, the relationship is not by blood but it is in terms of the style of governance. He has been able to express through the use of metaphor that the other heads of state present are equally powerful, ruthless and irresponsible.

7.0 Conclusion

The analysis above has revealed the centrality of language to governance and ideological reproductions in it. It has been established that power and responsibility are important features of governance and expressing them through language makes important statements about the style of governance and the commitment of the leaders. This study has revealed that language is a major tool used by the powerful to express their activities in the position of authority. Either overtly or covertly, one is able to decipher from the conative function of language the commitment of a leader to the general well-being of his/her subjects. Also, it is discovered that power and responsibility are not just found in social contexts, they are woven into the linguistic and rhetorical choices made by speakers. Language therefore, is established as an instrument of control and governance.

On a final note, the study has revealed that excessive power breeds irresponsibility. The concern of the African leaders represented in *A Play of Giants* is to taste power in all its forms. Despite the fact that the focus of the play is the military leaders, one can find traces of the same problem in the African society today. Power intoxication, seat-tight governance, corruption and irresponsibility among other characterize African governance, and the leaders do not hesitate to express them in their linguistic choices. The more power they get, the more ruthless and irresponsible they become. This is seen in the conative

function of language as used by Kamini principally in *A Play of Giants*. He sourced for power in virtually every aspects of human life just like African leaders do today, and the more he (they) get(s) the more irresponsible he (they) become(s). The reason corruption is integral to governance or political positions in Africa, even in the democratic dispensation is that the power associated with governance is excessive and it is usually abducted from the positions. This fact leaves most African countries with less than responsible leaders.

Since this study has established that power and responsibility can be investigated in linguistic choices, it is recommended that the speeches of the present day leaders in Africa be analysed with the aim of establishing their level of (ir) responsibility and display of power. This will have the immediate effect of curbing misuse of language and since language reflects thought, such researches will have the long term effect of changing the thought pattern of African leaders.

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