

AN EXPOSITION OF LITERARY AMPLIFICATION IN SELECTED POEMS OF ADÉBÁYÒ FÁLÉTÍ

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Abstract

This study tends to do the extensive exposition of literary amplification in selected poems of Adébáyò Fálétí, a renowned literary icon in Yorùbá land. There seems to be recurrent agglutinative foregrounding of poetic languages sporadically used in almost all Fálétí's poetic works. This we termed literary amplification. It is so called because it expressively projects the emotional state of mind of the poet wherever it is found. This literary amplification goes beyond Yorùbá established proverbs found in the literary works. It surfaces randomly whenever the poet wishes to do vivid emotional discharge of amazement, surprise, fear and the extent to which the effect of something is felt. Just like Fálétí is indebted to Yorùbá oral institutions for the evergreen proverbs, epithets, allusions, anecdotes and rhythmical dexterity, the study under consideration will also espouse the hidden oratory devices that enliven the rhetoric in Yorùbá language at the same time, figure out the instance of amplification as a literary appraisal criterion in Yorùbá studies. The work is approached from the viewpoint of structuralism, most especially Mukarousky; Roman Jakobson and Levis Straus, G. Messing (1979), who observed foregrounding of certain poetic language at two different axes organizational structure/paradigmatic axis or axis of selection, and structural patterning systematic axis or axes of combination. The examination of Fálétí's

poetic works reveals agglutinative structural patterning of poetic languages at the axis of selection, which is also known as paradigmatic axis and organizational structure. Linguistically, the literary amplification is said to be the end product of semantic repetition which Fálétí inherits from the fore litterateurs such as Fágúnwà and others. His own is circumstantial, hence, the explanation of literary amplification from the angle of style as a situation because the term on is occasioned by emotional states of poetic personnel.

Keywords: Amplification, Foregrounding, Patterning, Organizational Structure, Circumstantial

1.0 Introduction

Literary amplification in this context connotes description of an idea, intents and viewpoint, to paint a vivid picture of intended phenomena. The agglutinative patterning of semantically repeated languages translates to the same thing. Fálétí's obsession to this is not unconnected with what Qlátúnjí (1982:7) posits as the inspiration of Fágúnwà when he says:

...But it was Ògbójú ọ̀ḍẹ̀ nínú igbó Irunmalẹ̀ that most impressed Fálétí by its amazingly creative use of language, repetition, especially its piling together of semantically correspondent sentences, and the literary possibilities of Yorùbá narratives. (Bámgbóṣe 1974, pp 1008-130)

The point here is that while most of the poems in question distinctly depict incidence of narration, the literary amplification, obtainable from agglutinative pulling of poetic languages, is likened to semantic repetition which Fálétí is said to have derived from Fágúnwà's traditions in literary aesthetics. Fálétí is quite different, in that it is circumstantial and it is poetically coined in such a way that the orators can easily grab them and use them as rhetoric ingredients while in the midst of people. So, Fálétí benefits from the Yorùbá oral poets' language grandeur and examination of his literary amplification highlights some patterned languages, different from proverbs, idioms, among others. This therefore exposes the said patterning as Fálétí's language.

In a closely related issue of literary amplification is Ọlátúnjí's (1982:63-65) observation about arresting opening lines. While the literary amplification and arresting opening lines are designed to arouse audience and sometime readers as the case may be, literary amplification is not limited to the beginning of the poetic works. They are structural signature tune that the poet in question uses to express his viewpoint at given circumstances, initially, medially or at the final position. No wonder, Fálétí unlike many other poets, commands audience attention, while putting them at the other side of transmission later in his communicative arena. The idea is consisted in the fact that many of such Fálétí's linguistic coinage possibilities, have been adopted as rhetoric devices. Several literary compositions, critical analysis and stylistic commentators have, in one way or the other been used by Fálétí.

An excerpt from one of Fálétí's poems titled "Adébímpé Ọjédòkun" can be considered as an example thus: "Ọdẹ́ ń gbọ̀n rì bí arúgbó da mi nù lójú ọ̀dẹ́. (The hunter shivers like an old woman that pours out water outside)" (Ọlátúnjí 1982, pg 11, lines 164). The poem referenced here is one of the imaginary historical escorts of Adébímpé to the forest to search for animal that kills his friend when he is told to shoot the said animal. So, many of such exist in Fálétí's linguistic masterpiece. This one is

stylistically motivated, in that, all the lexical items are not treated in the same way in Fálétí's poems: while some are in overt narrative language, some are illustrative while some are observations motivated by structuralists' axis of selection paradigm which is the patterning that are lexically, phonologically, sometimes syntactically distinct but always semantically congruous. It is not unconnected with what Trubetzkoy in Ọpéfẹ̀yítímí (2014:26) observes that "the age in which we live is characterized by the tendency of all scientific description to replace atomism with structuralism and individualism with universalism" hence, the conceptualization of the linguistic patterning as literary amplification.

Conceptual Analysis

Literary amplification is one of the devices employed by the artist to drive home the point raised. The device embellishes and projects the extent to which something is done. It usually stems from the subject of the discourse as observed in Fálétí.

Amplification refers to a literary practice where in the matter embellishes the sentence by adding more information to it in order to increase its worth and understanding. When a plain sentence is too abrupt and fails to convey the full implication desired, amplification comes to play when the writer adds more to the structure to give it more meaning. (<http://literary-devices.com>.)

Obviously, this is one of the Fálétí's distinctive styles in some context, he, intentionally digresses from overt narration and amplifies the subject matter with his concentrated sayings. "In literature, amplification refers to a rhetoric device that involves extending a sentence in order to elaborate, exaggerate and emphasize certain point in a description." (<http://ppedia.com>). This is exactly what Fálétí does, and it is neither an inference from any traditional oral materials nor independent of them. Similarly, on the issue of style and style as a situation, we find that what Fálétí does is tantamount to the style in that, the concatenated string of aphorism and witty sayings in his works

are projected by organizational structure as observed above in his style. This is so because the exhibition of rich language as such, is hardly found within poetry. In other words, Fálétí's use of language in Yorùbá oral poetry is richer than some of his peers. In order to conceptualize literary amplification as one of Fálétí's style, it is expedient to look into concept of style and stylistics in relation to style as a situation. First of all, style is a distinct manner, approach and outlook of an artist in doing what he does. Style sets aside an artist from another and the unique attribute of any literary artist is found in his own style. This is congruous with Baxher (2016) position that:

Every individual has his/her own unique way of doing things and that no two persons are of exactly the same character. There are always distinctive features that distinguish one person from the other, thus in literary style, ...A person's style may also be shaped by his social and political background, religious inclination, culture education, geographical location etc.

The point is very clear here, style of a person is a product of his linguistic competence, and experience though some earlier popular artists do have direct influence or otherwise on their role models. Olátéjú (2016:11) also buttresses thus:

This school thought believes that style is a relational term referring to the set of feature peculiar to, or characteristic of an author, his or her language habit or idiolect... This perspective hinges on the belief that a writer idiosyncratic way of writing is a projection of his personality.

Aside from the fact that style projects the distinctive features passed by an artist, style can also exhibit people's personality in emotion, philosophy and worldviews. Invariably, style examines the reaction of the artist towards what happens in the society and this can also shape his language. The literary amplification underlies artistic emotional discharge. In Fálétí's works, literary amplification shows his emotional sentiment to issues at hand, distinct from narratives. Waterhill, et al (1974:133) is of the opinion that: "Style is quality of language which

communicate precisely emotions and thought of emotions or thought peculiar to author."

The implication here is that style highlights the inner most of the thought of the literary artist and by extension what they utter at any given circumstance. This leads us to the concept of style as a situation, where the context, circumstance and setting sometimes determine the utterances which literary artists use. Shaw (1991:28) says:

Style as a situation or relationship between message and medium: language use does not occur in a vacuum, the message and medium are always of importance. The medium can be formal or informal, spoken or written and so on. By and large, it is obvious that the concept of medium and message is indispensable in style and stylistics.

Shaw as seen above underscores further the importance of medium and context in. A given situation has a great influence on the choice made at any level of performance or oral rendering. Situations often determine the kind of literary amplification used by Fálétí as he also considers the atmosphere and context before the selection from the linguistic repertoire where all literary artists make their choice. His literary amplifications are directed at emotions like grief, excitement, fear and others.

Fálétí's Literary Amplification

Literary amplification helps in vivid conveyance of thought and emotion as regards the subject matter introduced or the one under discussion. In Fálétí's "Ènì ọmọ sin" (who buried by his child), a seemingly elegiac poetry where he laments the death of a deceased and condoles with whoever has such terrible experience. He expresses his emotion with concatenated Yorùbá aphorism as thus:

*Àpón n̄ sunkún Àìrìbì
Àgàn n̄ sunkún àìrípòn
Arúgbó n̄ sunkún ọmọ
Şùgbón ọmọ ò láyòlẹ̀
Ènì ọmọ sin ló bímọ
(Bachelor laments unavailability of
childThe barren laments
unfruitfulnessThe old one decry*

childlessness But no one rejoices
over child Whoever that is buried by
a child truly gives birth.)

This is a rhetorical exhibition of linguistic competence of Fálétí and this can easily be learnt by orators who found themselves in such context of addressing people and consoling aggrieved person. It expresses the poet's emotional state as to why no one should be boasting of a child. It goes beyond this, it conveys Yorùbá's worldview on the importance of children because Yorùbá's believe that what your child does for you when you are alive is as important as how they position you immediately you answer the call of your Creator. Similarly, in 'Adélabú kú' an elegiac poem lamenting the death of Adélabú Adégòkè, the poet employs amplification in the midst of emotional discharge as thus:

Àjànàkú sùn bí òkè Emó kú ojù òpó
dì Èsún là ó là dànù *Òpálámá òtí*
èèbó fọ onígbansọ kò ri í sọ...

(Rat dies and its lane is blocked

Elephant sleeps like a mountain

Èsún plant disperse wastefully

The white man's bottle drink breaks,
no one dares mend it.)

Some orators, literary artists and poets have employed this style and many will still employ it. This is the goal of this exposition or part of it to pass message in such context. Though syntactic and lexical make up might be different, the context remains, when the orator might not know the meaning of some lexical items in the construction, they use it to convey such proclamation of ironic death. The whole four lines are the extension of the first line to emphasize the death of such personality. In the same vein, in one of his poems titled 'Adébímpé Òjédòkun' when the reports of Ináqlájí reaches Adébímpé, he mourns and consoled others to stop crying for wailing for long does nothing to who is already dead. He says:

Ó ní bẹni ẹní bá kú tí a mógún ọdún

sunkún,

Ó ní kí lẹkún le dà lórò ẹní?

Ó ní bọfò sị sèniyàn tí a mógbọn ọsù gbààwẹ,

Kí làwẹ ó ẹ fẹni tó ọfọ

*(He said, if one's relative died and
do cry for twenty years,*

*He asked that, could crying could
solve such a situation?*

*He said, if losses tend to ruin our
life and we kept fasting for thirty
years,*

*What could fast do to safe loss from
the loser?)*

This is a semantic elaboration of the preceding line of these four lines "È jẹ ká nujú nù, ká dárò ọdẹ." (Let us wipe off tears and truly mourn a deceased hunter). This suits the primary effect and motive behind amplification, for the explanation is extended further on the need to take action rather than weeping ceaselessly for nothing. He also laments his inability to foresee the future of his own life and how destiny plays important roles in the life adventures of the bearer after one of the hunters had mistakenly shot him as follows:

O ní àimàsikò ló ń ba wa jà ọjàre

Ó ní bí a bá mójó aákú

Bí a bá mójó àáròrun

Kí lode ń wá nínú igbó

Tódé gbégi lórí

Ttódé gbé igi lórí tí ń pè igi rẹ níbọn

Ó ní kú ọdẹ ń bẹ nínú apò

Ikú àgbẹ ń bẹ lórùn ebé

Òwò àdà mọ ní í kàdà lẹhín

Bómùwẹ tile mọ iwẹ tó

Bí ọ bá tètè kú, odò ni yóò gbé e lọ

*(He says our inability to know
destiny is our great challenge*

*He says if we know the day we shall
die*

*If we know the day we shall go to
world beyond*

*What will motivate the hunter to go
to the forest*

*That he will go along with his gun on
his head*

*That carries the stick on his head
and calls it gun*

*He says, the hunters death is in
arrow pouch
Farmer's death lies on the heap
The trade that cutlass know best
defaces it
No matter how perfect a swimmer is
If he dies not young; he will die of
water.*

Many poets have adopted this, including one of the present hunter in poetic composition, consciously and sometimes unconsciously. This is undeniable the fact that, Fálétí is the second artistic teacher of most Yorùbá poets and some orators aside from Yorùbá oral poets. Fálétí's work would be better appreciated if some of his linguistic and artistic elegance, such as the one highlighted in this study are projected, used and remembered.

Aside from lamentation, another contextual deployment of Fálétí's dexterity in language use has been variously adopted and analyzed by several critiques. History can never forget Fálétí's 'Dídàké Akéwì' most especially among the orators, poets and ceremonial poet, who seek audience attention with Fálétí's opening semantic and literary amplification which Olátúnjí (1982) sees as arresting opening lines or the modification of the construction that goes:

*Níjò tí ẹ bá r' Akéwì tó dáké
E má bínú, Akéwì n wí nńkan nínú ni
Níjò tẹ bá pàdẹ Akéwì tí kò sòrò
E ma bínú Akéwì n wí nńkan nínú ni
Şùgbón tani mohun t' Akéwì n rò
nínú?
(Whenever you see a poet in quiet
moods, Do not worry, a poet is
soliloquizing, Whenever you meet a
poet being quiet,
Do not worry, a poet is soliloquizing,
But who knows what such poet is
thinking about?)*

The language selection, the modification of this has served as motivation for several poets, among who are Olátubòsún Oládàpò and Olátúnjí Òpádòtun, two renowned poets in Yorùbá land. Not limited to these, many poets have adopted it and possibly its

variants as their signature tune at the beginning of their poems, this further portrays the literary amplification in Fálétí's poems as circumstantial hence, style is seen as situational. Literary amplification is not just being employed, it is used after careful observation of the context and environment. While doing the functional portrayal of farming and essence of farming, Fálétí employs the literary amplification to maintain the contact between him and the imaginary audience thus:

*Òré mi bó o bá mòkun
Ìwo yára bà mi kálò
Òré mi bo ò bá m'òsà
Tètè kálò kí o lọ mòsà
Tètè kálò kí a r'Èkó Àdèlè
Kò wá walagbalúgbú omi
(My friend if you don't know ocean You should
quickly follow me
My friend, if you don't know
lagoon
Quickly follow me to know
lagoon
Quickly follow me to Lagos,
Adélés abode
So that you can see a big
body of water.)*

The construction is aimed at excite the audience and prepare their mind ahead of what farmers do. And this can still be used for such scenario at least to gain audience attention. This is what rhetoric's do, and Fálétí's literary amplification as projected here and many yet untapped can bail them out the wood. In another context, marriage is another important cultural institution in Yorùbá land (Ajíbádé 2009). The bridegroom and of course the relatives and well-wishers express their excitement during the ceremony. Such is the emotional reaction of Fálétí took to the institution in question. In "Ìgbéyàwó kan ní iletò wà" (A marriage in our community), Fálétí employs concatenated aphorism that have to do with wedding and how the aforementioned stakeholders view it as:

*Ìyàwó dun l'òşìngín oko tún mi gbé
Okò tún mi gbé, mo tún fẹ şoge
Ìgbà tó lọ kí i bọ mọ*

*E jẹ ká rójú ayé wa re.
 (The new marriage is always
 pleasurable,
 My husband, celebrate me newly,
 I want to display my beauty
 Time waits for no one again
 Let try as much as possible live by
 example.)*

Above excerpt portrays how happy and elated the brides are during their marriage. Although, such utterance doesn't come straight from the bride, but being a student of the society, the concerned orator, mostly the modern Yorùbá anchormen known as Alága Ìdúró or Alága Ìjókòó (visiting and home anchorwomen) expresses this to show the emotion of the women. It is not limited to this; men too can use it in similar concept to describe the depth of happiness of the couple to be. To corroborate the fact that this literary amplification emphasizes marriage concept and that amplification can also come before the targeted subject matter, the following expression after the amplification is “ìgbéyàwo kan ṣẹlẹ̀ lójú mi.” (I had an experience of one glamorous wedding). We discern the fact that it is Fálétí's style to re-emphasizes any subject matter, even in mere narration, but this survey is different, in that, the selected ones are strung together just like we have it in some oral poetry. Oral poets can also derive inspiration in some of Fálétí's poem for language competency acquisition is not in both but learnt from the observation and daily experience in the society. Consequently, how Fálétí uses literary amplification to describe “Ògún Olúwè” in “Ìjàmbá Odò Ọ̀bà” (An incident at Ọ̀bà River) is amazing and attractive in such a way that context and situation can warrant an oral poet to imbibe it in his Ìjálá or other poetic rendition. He says:

*Níjọ̀ tẹ̀rù Ọ̀gún tí ń bà mí, kò ẹ̀ ni
 Níjọ̀ t'ò p'abalabéré, to f'abéré jóná
 T'ó pẹ̀lẹ̀tẹ̀, tó fẹ̀lẹ̀ ya gberegedẹ̀ bí
 aṣo
 Tó yàkísà tẹ̀rẹ̀, tó fì di ìdí àdán
 Tí Lákáayé kò tí kọ lá ẹ̀sẹ̀ pépẹ̀yẹ
 Níjọ̀ ọ̀gún ń ṣẹ̀bo l'òdò ọ̀bà*

*The day I am dreadfully scared of Ọ̀gún, was
 eventful
 The day he killed owner of needle and burnt the
 needle
 That he killed the owner of vagina and tore the
 vagina
 That he cut thin rag to block bat's anus
 That Lákáayé refused to separate duck's limbs
 The day Ọ̀gún had a feast at Ọ̀bà River)*

The word “Abéré” and “Alábéré” symbolizes men and their manhood while “ẹ̀lẹ̀” and “ẹ̀lẹ̀lẹ̀” symbolize women and womanhood. The whole selection can be viewed as imaginary, symbolism but in all, the functional role result in literary amplification. It further describes Ọ̀gún's (supposed god of iron) roles in a fateful accident at Ọ̀bà River where many travelers lost their lives in a railway accident as a result of heavy rain. To further project the effect of the accident and people's helplessness as regards the accident, Fálétí employs another literary amplification as follows:

*Níjọ̀ ìjàmbá reluwe, igí dá ni
 Nńkan ẹ̀ níjọ̀, a ò tètè gbọ̀ letilẹ̀
 Nńkan ẹ̀ níbít'ò gbé tètè ráńíṣẹ̀ OlúwòóTá ò tètè
 ríkò Tímì
 Tá o sì le r'oníṣẹ̀ Ládoṣù t'Ọ̀ṣogbo
 (The day of railway, was a fateful one
 Terrible thing happened in the forest, we didn't hear
 at homeIt happened where we heard no message
 from Olúwòó
 Where no messenger is from Tímì
 Where no messenger is also from Ládoṣù of
 Ọ̀ṣogbo.)*

The above excerpt portends that people are always helpless whenever such thing would happen, and when it happened no one was there to signal to people around that such horrible occurrence had happened. We contend at this juncture that amplification is the literary effect of semantic repetition that extends the literal sentence “Gbogbo wọn ló kú; gbogbo wọn ló bómi lọ”. (All of them died and washed away by water).

Style as a situation: Fálétí's literary amplification as examples

As earlier noted, style as a situation hinges on the notion that occasion, circumstance and context in which certain choice of language is made determines the choice from linguistic lexicon. This implies that whatever we utter must be a match to the situation and circumstance. A careful look at Fálétí's literary amplification in block, indicates that each is designed from different context and linguistic environment, hence, their consideration as situational approach.

Pleasurable Atmosphere: The language use in this lax atmosphere is pleasing, smoothening and humane. This is in accordance with the subject matter, which might be marriage, naming ceremony, chieftaincy, graduation, housewarming, among others. Any of these occurrences warrants pleasurable language use in literary amplification. The succeeding poet, orator and of course author, must adhere to the principle for deviation from the stipulations which renders such literary figure redundant and linguistically passive. Similar thing is discernible in literary amplification such as:

Ìyàwó dun l'òṣìngín ọkọ tún mi gbé
Ọkọ tún mi gbé, mo tún fẹ ọgo
Ìgbà tó lọ kì í bọ mọ
E jé ká rọjú ayé wa re.
(New marriage is pleasurable, my husband
re-marry me
My husband celebrate me afresh, I want to
display beauty
The time waits for no one Let us try
as much as possible live by
examples.)

The situation here is lax and pleasurable; it cannot be heard in burial or mourning atmosphere. It is also worthy of note that language use here is derived by the situation the poet wishes to discuss.

Tensed Atmosphere: Tensed atmosphere connotes the condition that warrants grief, sadness and protest, either to human or supernatural and mysterious being. Such atmosphere includes but not limited to death, loss, regret, illness among others. Death constitutes the principal and height of tensed atmosphere in Yorùbá cosmology, for it seems the only irreversible among all the sardonic

occurrences. Hence, the atmosphere that is occasioned by death is accompanied by tensed literary amplification. This is the commonest in Fálétí's literary amplification. Example is:

Àjànnàkú sùn bbí òkè
Èmó kú ojú òpò ddi
Èègùn là, ó là dànù
Ọpálámbá otí èèbó fọ onígbanṣọ ko
rí i ọ...
(Rat dies, the lane is blocked
Elephant sleeps like a mountain
Èèsún
plant breaks and dispense
wastefully
The Whiteman's bottle drink breaks, no one
mends it.)

This is evidently a situation that narrates lamentation and the poet addresses it as such. The point here is to encourage the intending orator, literary artist to study the amplification and situation as much as possible before rendering it to avoid linguistic malady.

Conclusion and Recommendation

After a careful understanding of Fálétí's literary amplification, we discover that they are the end products of semantic emphasis and repetition made up of mainly declarative sentences for vivid exposition and explanation. Literary amplification embellishes the whole thought and intent of the poet which ordinary language selection cannot capture. So, literary amplification which is neither proverbs, idioms nor aphorisms but conglomerations of all can paint the vivid picture of any subject matter. It is recommended that, Fálétí's works can better be appreciated if the modern literary artists, orators, rhetoric and boards can actually study the situation and employ Fálétí's literary amplifications which will depict them as competent speakers of language just like proverbs, idioms and alphorns do. The oral traditional resources are truly rich but Fálétí's linguistic ability which consist in his extended metaphor, imagery and mostly literary amplification which is agglutinative strong of all. Fálétí's language use is seen as second in command

to Yorùbá oral resources which indisputably he also benefited from.

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