



DISCOURSE STYLISTIC PERSPECTIVE ON TIV NUPTIAL POETRY IN BENUE STATE

Aondoyila Cornelius Ayilamo

Govt. Sec. School, Vandeikya,
Benue State

Shim David Orjime

Department of English,
Benue State University, Makurdi,
Nigeria

Abstract

This paper studies Tiv nuptial poetry from a Discourse Stylistic perspective. On the one hand, Discourse is used in this paper in the sense of an interconnected stretch of text that can be subjected to meaning making. On the other hand, stylistics refers to the use of linguistic methods and insights to understand the artistic effect of choice of language in a text. The data for this paper are the pan-Tiv nuptial antiphonies usually used to celebrate a new bride in a traditional way in Tiv land known as “Kwase Kuhan” (new bride celebration). The songs are transcribed and translated into English using free translation that tries to capture the original meaning as much as possible. The methodology used in this paper is both quantitative and qualitative. Stylostatistics as a quantitative method that involves the use of rough percentages of textual features to draw analytical conclusions is used alongside determinate deviation which is a qualitative method of analysis where textual features that are linguistically salient in the context of a text are analysed descriptively without numerical considerations. In the course of analysis, only relevant extracts from the songs are cited in-text. Tabular presentation of textual features is done for analytical convenience where necessary. The paper concludes that, Tiv nuptial songs studied in this paper are crafted as discourse between the bride, the bridegroom and the general society to welcome the bride to her new home and the general society, to intimate her on the dos and don'ts in marriage, to celebrate marriage as the nucleus of the society, to encourage eligible bachelors to get married, celebrate the primacy of sexuality in marriage and vent out pent sexual emotions, among others. This is achieved in the songs through representative, directive and expressive speech acts.

Key terms: *Discourse analysis, Tiv nuptial poetry, stylostatistics, determinate deviation, representative speech act, directive speech act, expressive speech act*

Introduction

“Discourse” as a concept is etymologically traceable to the Latin term “discursus” in the 14th Century, meaning a conversation (Thouria Grid, 20). In other words, discourse is a stretch of text that is implicitly or explicitly dialogic. According to Brown, Gillian and Yule George, discourse simply means language in use (1). This suggests that, discourse can be written or spoken communication. Carter Ronald also toes the above line of thought as he posits that, discourse refers to types of language use in peculiar situations such as political discourse (3). In like manner, Nunan Peter Vanalso perceives discourse as being synonymous with conversation, interpersonal interaction or interlocution (Qtd in Carter,3).

Though discourse can be a single sentence, it usually suggests intra and inter-sentence connectedness otherwise known as supra-sententiality which culminates into a stretch of speech or chunk of language. Supra-sententiality, however key, does not constitute discourse without inter-textuality or coherence. Discourse is thus a broad term that encompasses semiotic modes such as gestures, facial expressions and other non-verbal cues used for conversing between two or more parties. The foregoing is underscored by Thuria's view of discourse as a complex stretch of language use conveying a complete message (1). The foregoing suggests that, any socio-semiotic element that can be subjected to analysis for meaning making suffices as discourse.

As a field of literary enquiry, Discourse Analysis (DA) studies the ways language is used, usually at the intra and supra-sentential level whether written or spoken, to reveal the various roles language performs in a given context. Social and cultural perspectives of the interlocutors are also laid bare. Jorgenson, M. and Phillips L.J. reiterate this in their position that, DA studies the different patterns that peoples' utterances take when they participate in different aspects of social life (53-55).

From the foregoing, it can be seen that Discourse Analysis, Pragmatics and Stylistics are intricately intertwined as it is evident in their interdisciplinary approaches to linguistic analysis. The idea that, certain elements of

meaning in a piece of discourse fall outside the purview of linguistic forms and formal features entails that, a robust analysis must transcend the linguistic and formal features of a piece of discourse into the socio-cultural context, topic, participants, time and purpose, among other factors.

Brief Notes on Tiv People

Tiv people are the majority in Benue State and the fourth largest ethnic group in Nigeria, with an estimated population of over six million people (Ushe, Mike Ushe, 21). Tiv people are also indigenous to Taraba, Nasarawa, Cross River and Plateau States. The Tiv Language (Zwa Tiv) spoken by the Tiv people is classified among the Bantoid group of languages of the Niger Congo (Ushe, 22). Tiv language is uniquely mutually intelligible across state boundaries.

Additionally, Tiv people who are predominantly farmers are answerable to one paramount traditional ruler- Tor Tiv-the head of the Tiv Traditional Council. Also, the people are Christians majorly, with few traditional worshippers and Muslims.

Empirical Studies on Tiv Nuptial Poetry

Not much has been written on Tiv Nuptial Poetry as a sub-genre of oral poetry. The little available literature basically focuses on the marriage forms among the Tiv, glossing over Tiv nuptial poetry. However, let it suffice that Tiv Nuptial Poetry refers to the songs performed by the Tiv at the instance of a new bride to mark the beginning of marriage in a traditional way.

One of the scholarly works on Tiv nuptial poetry in recent times is a paper titled “A Survey of Nuptial poetry Among the Tiv” by Moses Tsenongu. In that study, Tsenongu views Tiv Nuptial Poetry as “poems performed at the instance of brides (149).” In other words, the nuptial songs are performed as part of the communal celebration of marriage when someone brings home a new bride. This explains why they are performed during “Kwase kuhan” (New wife celebration in a traditional way among the Tiv).

Tsenongu also identifies two types of nuptial songs. First, there are Tiv nuptial antiphonies which are usually performed during the general

celebration of a new wife. These nuptial songs are peculiar because they are pan-Tiv in nature and of unknown authorship. Additionally, they are communal in nature and are usually performed unsolicited. Other Tiv nuptial songs are solicited songs. This means that, the songs are composed by a particular bard for a particular occasion such as “Ivom” or “Dam ceremony” on request. According to Tsenongu, these ceremonies are organised to honour a new bride or to display one's material muscles in the society (150-151). In brief, while some nuptial songs are unsolicited, without known composers and are pan-Tiv, others are solicited and composed by known bards for specific occasions. The study by Tsenongu is relevant to the current study because of the useful pieces of information it contains.

Akiga Sai's *Akiga's Story: The Tiv Tribe as Seen by One of Its Members* is another useful piece of literature for this study. The study focuses basically on the marriage forms among the Tiv such as “kwase tsuen/ngohol” where scoundrels would snatch a woman from her husband and even manhandle the man in the process. Akiga adds that, this practice caused several inter-clan wars in Tiv land due to the animosity so created (137). Also quoting from Rupert East, Akiga identifies “kwase u sha uikya” as another form of marriage among the Tiv where a man would buy a slave from a distant clan and eventually make her his wife (159). Though the study is silent about the nuptial songs which are inseparable from nuptial ceremonies, it is relevant to this study due to the background information it offers on Tiv marriage forms where the nuptial songs studied in this paper are performed whenever marriage is contracted in Tiv land.

Shagbaor Wegh, just like Akiga Sai, also focuses on Tiv marriage forms in his study. Worthy of note is “lye” or marriage by capture which Wegh explains, targets young girls of marriageable ages from distant clans, not married women. A go-between would facilitate the process. Eventually, this form of marriage turned into “yamshe” (exchange marriage) and was prone to a lot of crises, hence, it was eventually outlawed (55). This contribution is also relevant to the current study for the background information it offers.

The above cited literature testifies to the fact

that indeed, not much has been written on Tiv nuptial poetry as a sub-genre of oral poetry, hence, the justification for this study. This paper, therefore, focuses on those pan-Tiv nuptial antiphonies that are usually performed unsolicited during nuptial celebrations in Tiv land as discourse texts to highlight their artistic and functional relevance in the society.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical premise adapted in this paper is eclectic, drawing insights from Formal Linguistic Discourse Analysis (FLDA) and Stylistics for analysis of the selected Tiv Nuptial Poetry. FLDA examines the roles of linguistic forms and structures and their communicative function in a speech context or discourse. According to Gee James Paul, DA focuses on the ways language is used, be it written or spoken, reflecting the social and cultural perspectives such as the different patterns that peoples' utterances take when they participate in different aspects of social life.

The foregoing makes perceptible the nexus between Formal Linguistic Discourse Analysis and Stylistics which is basically the use of linguistic methods and insights for textual explication. A general view of Stylistics is that, it is the use of linguistic insights and methods for textual explication. Pius Dada in his contribution states that, “Stylistics is a systematic and analytical attention to the language of the text” (4). To Geoffrey Leech and Mick Short, Stylistics is simply “the study of literary styles, or the study of the use of styles in Literature” (215). All this presupposes that, linguistic features of a text have interpretive value, hence, Dada further advocates for recourse to language in all its details to understand a text fully (1) just like Prasad T. Krishna who also believes that the study of the artistic effect of the phonological, lexical and structural features is a rewarding exercise (269). Jonathan Culler also points to the fact that, a stylistic analysis is procedural or methodic with the sole aim of objective textual explication (92) thereby bridging linguistics and literature, according to Richard Dutton (3).

By their very nature, Stylistics and Formal Linguistic Discourse Analysis are

multidisciplinary with a clear mission to harmonise the linguist's flare for linguistic description and the critic's quest for literary interpretation. Theoretical insights adopted in this paper are perceived as a viable bridge to access Tiv Nuptial Poetry as discourse involving the bridegroom, the bride, family members and relations and by extension, the wider society.

Methodology

The methodology used in this paper is eclectic as it is both quantitative and qualitative. Stylostatistics as a quantitative method involving the use of rough percentages of textual features to draw analytical conclusions is used alongside determinate deviation which is a qualitative method of analysis where textual features that are linguistically salient in the context of a text are analysed descriptively without numerical considerations. In the course of analysis, only relevant extracts from the songs are cited in text. Tabular presentation of textual features is done for analytical convenience where necessary. Additionally, the tables used are self-explanatory as there are no technicalities that might pose a serious challenge to the reader's understanding.

Speech Acts in Tiv Nuptial Poetry

According to Austin John Langshow, every utterance has the potential of shaping the role of the participants in an interpersonal communication and basically designate the role and the intentionality of the partners in discourse. This stems from the belief that, every utterance has a purpose deriving from the context of discourse. Austin classifies speech acts into representative, declarative, directive, commissive and expressive (48). This paper is, however, concerned with those speech acts which are common in Tiv nuptial discourse. They include representative, directive and expressive speech acts.

Representative Speech Acts in Tiv Nuptial Poetry

Representative speech acts are descriptive- they describe events or incidents in a manner that betray the speaker's perception of the situation such as true, false, uncertain, etc. The nuptial song text below contains representative speech acts as participants describe a supposed bride using endearing terms that reflect their emotions of love and affection:

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>Tiv :</p> <p>Mtee: Vee vee oo Vee vee eee o Mbaior doo vee vee Bee gbajimba akpolo</p> <p>Mlumun: Hie vee vee veee o Vee vee eee o Mbaior doo veevee Bee gbajimba akpolo</p> <p>Mtee: Kwase hia doo yo</p> <p>Ufi Dodo ngohol oo!</p> <p>Mlumun: Ooo iyol shila! Oon iyol shiila (4x)</p> | <p>Solo: Impeccably beautiful oo! 1 Impeccably beautiful oo! Mbaior is impeccably beautiful Like "gbajimba akpolo beads"</p> <p>Chorus: She is nubile and impeccably beautiful 5 Impeccably beautiful oo! Mbaior is impeccably beautiful Like "gbajimba akpolo beads"</p> <p>Solo: The woman is nubile and impeccably beautiful</p> <p>Ufi Dodo marry her ooo! 10</p> <p>Chorus: Ooo! the smooth body! Oon! the smooth body (4x)</p> |
|--|--|

The above cited text is basically descriptive in tone. As it can be seen in both the solo and choral lines, the descriptions constitute representative speech acts through which the oral participants paint a graphic picture of the supposed bride's impeccable beauty. This description is laden with high emotions of love and affection for the bride as it is evident in expressions such as "Mbaior doo

veevee bee gbajimba akpolo" (Mbaior is impeccably beautiful, like "gbajimba akpolo beads" (L.3-4; L.7-8), "iyol shila" (the smooth body) in L.11-12; "Kwase hia doo" (the woman is nubile and beautiful (L.9), among others. The repetitive use of those expressions as solo and choral lines is to emphasise the participants' tender feelings and affection for the bride. To

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"Kwase hia doo" (the woman is nubile and beautiful (L.9), among others. The repetitive use of those expressions as solo and choral lines is to emphasise the participants' tender feelings and affection for the bride. To accentuate this, the bride's beauty is likened to the fanciful "gbajimba akpolo beads," a type of traditional beads charised among the Tiv in the past as a symbol of perfect beauty through the use of simile. In the context of this song, beauty is celebrated as a source of motivation for marriage using representative speech acts.

The same thing is true of the following song text as it is also replete in representative speech acts:

| Tiv | English: | |
|-------------------------------|---|----|
| Mtee: Mza yeh shin Mbavaa | Solo: I went to Mbavaa for courtship | 1 |
| Gee: Ye yam | Chorus: My lover | |
| Mtee: Mkaa hen ya u Abaya | Solo: I called at Abaya's house | |
| Gee: Ye yam | Chorus: My lover | |
| Mtee: Abaya jirdi mo ikyogh | Solo: Abaya prepared a bush rodent for me | 5 |
| Gee: Ye yam | Chorus: My lover | |
| Mtee: Ikyogh iyua mtseme! | Solo: The rodent was sour | |
| Gee: Ye yam | Chorus: My lover | |
| Mtee: Ngokem lohom ishoor | Solo: The mother-in-law invited me to a diviner | |
| Gee: Ye yam | Chorus: My lover | 10 |
| Mtee: Ikpehe ishor kpa doo ga | Solo: The divination was shocking | |
| Gee: Ye yam | Chorus: My lover | |
| Mtee: Kpee a tsuau wana! | Solo: Your child shall be killed some day | |
| Gee: Ye yam | Chorus: My lover | |
| Mtee: Nomkyegh u sha use | Solo: A cock crows at dawn | 15 |
| Gee: Ye yam | Chorus: My lover | |
| Mtee: Kila-kikoo-ioo! | Solo: Kila-kikoo-ioo! | |
| Gee: Ye yam | Chorus: My lover | |
| Mtee: Ankpeve veveer sha use | Solo: A billy-goat cavorts at dawn | |
| Gee: Ye yam | Chorus: My lover | 20 |
| Mtee: Mpeve-mpeve-mpee! | Solo: Mpeve-mpeve-mpee! | |
| Gee: Ye yam | Chorus: My lover | |
| Mtee: Nomikyungu u sha use | Solo: A male pigeon coos at dawn | |
| Gee: Ye yam | Chorus: My lover | |
| Mtee: Mbuku-mbuku-mbuu! | Solo: Mbuku-mbuku-mbuu! | 25 |
| Gee: Ye yam | Chorus: My lover | |
| Mtee: Nom atii u sha use | Solo: The bush pigeon coos at dawn | |
| Gee: Ye yam | Chorus: My lover | |
| Mtee: Kuuu-kuku-kuuu! | Solo: Kuuu-kuku-kuuu! | |
| Gee: Ye yam | Chorus: My lover | 30 |
| Mtee: Nomikyange u sha use | Solo: A male guinea fowl crows at dawn | |
| Gee: Ye yam | Chorus: My lover | |
| Mtee: Tsokali-tsokali-moo! | Solo: Tsokali-tsokali-moo! | |

| | | |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------|----|
| Gee: Ye yam | Chorus: My lover | |
| Mee: Agber-azenga u sha use | Solo: A male striped rat at dawn | 35 |
| Gee: Ye yam | Chorus: My lover | |
| Mee: Wele-wele-wele! | Solo: Wele-wele-wele! | |
| Gee: Ye yam | Chorus: My lover | |
| Mtee: Nom-san u sha use | Solo: The male white-rat at dawn | |
| Gee: Ye yam | Chorus: My lover | 40 |
| Mtee: Uva-uva-uva! | Solo: Uva-uva-uva | |
| Gee: Ye yam | Chorus: My lover | |
| Mtee: Kwase na wan Mbadukuu! | Solo: His wife from Mbaduku | |
| Gee: Kunde ivee | Chorus: Prepared "ogbono soup" | |
| Gbodi nyonho yum | Powdered okra is better | 45 |
| Gee: Ye yam | Chorus: My lover | |

The above cited text reflects copious use of representative speech act as it can be seen in the solo lines. Functionally, the song in question is a narrative nuptial discourse from the first person participant point of view through which the supposed bridegroom narrates his bachelorhood experiences. The choice of pronouns used in the song (the first person singular subjective pronoun "I" (L.1&3) and the first person plural objective pronoun "we" in the fifth solo line) reflect the narrator's personal and subjective perception. Through the first person narrative point of view, the sequences of events are presented in a chronological and causal manner in the above discourse text. First, the narrator is served putrid meat for his meal. Secondly, he is invited to a diviner by his mother-in-law. Thirdly, the diviner reveals to him that his child will be killed someday. All these are contingent upon his going for courtship at "Mbavaa," an impliedly distant place.

Furthermore, the chronological presentation of events in the narrative in question is additionally, climactic in spite of the asyndetic style- the deliberate omission of adverbial linkers such as "first," "secondly," "consequently" and others as it is evident in the first seven solo lines On page ten of this study. Stylistically, this is reminiscent of the tempo of events that climaxes in the plight of the prospective bridegroom. First and foremost, the prospective bridegroom journeys to far away "Mbavaa" on his courtship escapade as the society expects of any eligible

bachelor. Sequel to this, he pays a courtesy call on "Abaya," probably a relation or friend of his in the area. This is potentially an expression of communal solidarity. In the same spirit of solidarity, the symbolic personage "Abaya" hospitably welcomes and entertains his supposedly hungry and weary guest with a dish of bush rodent meat.

However, there is a drastic twist in the turn of events. The highly cherished bushmeat turns out to be putrid. This is a sinister omen to the prospective bridegroom. In like manner, the mother-in-law's invitation of her would-be son-in-law to a diviner concerning the future of the intended marriage is another bad omen that presupposes the eminence of crises. All this climaxes in the revelation that, the would-be family is destined to lose a child in future. Through this sequencing of events is also the message that, marriage and hardships are not strange bedfellows. The young couple must cultivate the virtues of endurance and perseverance in addition to love in order to have a successful marriage.

Also, various forms of imagery creatively couched in ideophonic coinages are employed to celebrate the primacy of sexuality in marriage. The solo lines between line 15 and 35 in the text cited on page ten are capable of arousing mental pictures in the mind of the audience through a juxtaposition of mental and visual imagery as it can be seen in the follow table:

A Table Showing Analysis of Visual, Aural and Kinaesthetic Imagery

| S/N | Imagery | Type of Symbol | Action Performed | Time | Stylistic Effect |
|-----|-----------------------------------|----------------|-------------------------------|---------|------------------|
| 1 | Nomkyegh (Cock) | Visual | Crowing: Kila - kikoo-ioo! | At Dawn | Aural |
| 2 | Kpev (He-goat) | „ | Cavorting: Mpeve-mpeve-mpee! | „ | „ |
| 3 | Nomikyungu (Male pigeon) | „ | Cooing: Mbuku-mbuku-mbuu! | „ | „ |
| 4 | Nom-atii (Wild male pigeon) | „ | Cooing: Kuuu-kuku-kuuu! | „ | „ |
| 5 | Nomkyange (male guinea fowl) | „ | squeaking: Kila-kikoo-ioo! | „ | Aural |
| 6 | Agber-azenga (a striped male rat) | „ | Mating Dance: Wele-wele-wele! | „ | Kinaesthetic |
| 7 | Nom-san (a white male rat) | „ | Mating Dance: Uva-uva-uva! | „ | Kinaesthetic |

In the above table, the effect of the various forms of imagery in the nuptial discourse cited on page 9-10 in this paper is clearly illustrated. This choice of imagery is unique as it comprises common nouns- names of animals of the male gender, the sounds they produce or the mating dance. This can be schematised as follows:

Imagery [+noun + common +concrete +animate +male]

Additionally, this choice of male imagery is portrayed to be most active “at dawn” within the general context of the nuptial discourse: Nomkyegh (Cock), Kpev (he-goat), Nomkyungu

(male pigeon) and nomkyange (male guinea fowl) crowing, cavorting, cooing and squeaking respectively when erotic emotions are understandably at the peak. This choice of words has both visual and aural effect on the audience. The last two symbols have great visuo-kinaesthetic effect. The mating dance by the striped and the white male rats appeals to both human senses of vision and movement. On a general note, the imagery employed in this narrative nuptial discourse is suggestive of the primacy of sex in marriage and a subtle call on the new couple not to ignore it.

In the following song extract, the bride is advised in clear terms using declarative speech acts:

| | |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Mmondum ma nyim ga ooo | mmondum snake don't bite oo |
| Wankwase za kor oo | Young bride grab it oo |
| Unenge ijor mmondu ye | You will experience it! |
| Za kor ooo | Grab it oo! |
| Unenge ijor mmondu ye | You will experience it! |
| Gba tyoor | Lie on your back |
| Unenge ijor mmondu ye | You will experience it! |
| Sar avenge! | Lie astride |
| Unenge ijor mmondu ye | You will experience it! |

Gee: Ingyoloko-ingyo
 Mtee: Alu uhungwa pepe u ese iyough ga

 Me fa yo uyem oo!
 Gee: Ingyoloko-ingyo
 Mtee: Alu we nyor tugh unuur ijua ga
 Me fa yo uyem oo!
 Gee: Ingyoloko-ingyo

Chorus: Ingyoloko-ingyo!
 Solo: If you wake up in the morning and fail
 to sweep the house 10
 If I know of it you will leave
 Chorus: Ingyoloko-ingyo!
 Solo: If you are not active in bed at night
 If I know of it you will leave
 Chorus: Ingyoloko-ingyo! 15

In the above text, the main propositions containing the expected domestic chores and attitudes of a good house wife are nested in the solo lines. The duties of a good housewife mentioned include respecting the father and mother-in-law, keeping the house neat and being submissive to the husband. When these are lacking in the new bride, the consequence is palpable in the context of the song: she will be sent back to her parents, the highest dishonor to the wife and her parents. Given the right illocutionary uptake, the bride is expected to perceive these statements as very serious warnings against misconduct and respond with appropriate perlocutionary acts by being respectful and

hardworking as it is expected of a good wife. This piece of discourse is, additionally, expository with the sole aim of informing and directing the new bride to imbibe the cherished communal virtues and ethos on the one hand and avoid the vices the society condemns on the other hand to ensure a successful nuptial union.

Expressive Speech Acts in Tiv Nuptial Poetry

These speech acts reveal the psychological and emotional state of the speaker such as remorse, happiness, empathy and sadness, among others. The following discourse is laden with the poet's emotional outburst:

Tiv:
 Mtee: Ne kuha kela ve
 Gee: Ee-eee-e -eee- ayaaya (2x)
 Mbaior u va ivar sha Aga Dodo yoo
 Ior ne hembra kwagh kuhan ve
 Me Ufi kuha gbande hembe ooo
 Mtee: Eeee!
 Gee: Hie-eee-eee
 Mtee: Ayeee!
 Gee: Hie-eee-eee
 Me yila mbaior a-ooo
 Mbaior u va ivar sha Aga Dodo yoo
 Ior ne hembra kwagh kuhan ve
 Me Ufi kuha gbande hembe ooo

English:
 Solo: You have drummed very well 1
 Chorus: Ee-eee-e -eee- ayaaya (2x)
 As Mbaior is married in Aga Dodo's family
 The people are master drummers
 Ufi has beaten his drum to pieces 5
 Solo: Eeee!
 Chorus: Hie-eee-eee
 Solo: Ayeee!
 Chorus: Hie-eee-eee
 I call on Mbaior a-ooo! 10
 As Mbaior is married in Aga Dodo's family
 The people are master drummers
 Ufi has beaten his drum to pieces ooo

In the above text, the following are emotive signposts of light-heartedness: "ee-eee-e -eee-ayaaya" (L.2), "eee!" (L.6), "hie-eee-eee" (L.7&9), "ayeee!" (L.8) and "me yila mbaior a-ooo" (I call on Mbaior a-ooo! L.3&10). It can be seen that, the first four examples listed here are open-mouthed coinages often used as fillers in light-hearted performances. In the context of the text in question, the coinages also indicate the

emotive outburst typical of the ecstasy that surrounds nuptial celebrations. In a nutshell, expressive speech acts in the Tiv nuptial text in question have the potential of creating the atmosphere of celebration and light-heartedness typical of the nuptial dance.

Furthermore, the following song is also couched in expressive speech acts:

| Tiv: | English | |
|---|---|---|
| Mtee: Tsa kwav ooo! Akoodo tsa kwav je kela er iyol ga | Solo: A bachelor for too long ooo Akoodo has been a bachelor for long and no longer takes his bath | 1 |
| Gee: Tsa kwav ooo! Akoodo tsa kwav je kela er iyol ga | Chorus: A bachelor for too long ooo Akoodo is a bachelor for too long that he no longer takes his bath | |
| Ior mba ve lu akasev Ve yav mnyam ikpe ve iyol... | Those who are married Let them enjoy their night | 5 |
| Akoodo za shin uagh Ishegh hembe ve | Akoodo went to the stream The gourd is broken | 8 |

In the above cited text, it can be seen that the context of the expressive speech acts is generally parodous. "Akoodo" is an archetype of those inane bachelors who are unable to win a young woman for marriage through any means. This parody is heightened through the repetition in the solo and choral lines between lines 1 and 4. The elliptic expression in L1 where the subject (actor) is stylistically elided is structurally complemented by L2 with the inclusion of the subject as "Akoodo." Therefore, the suspense so created is resolved. Consequently, Akoodo as the archetype of the inept eligible bachelors lives in solitude as a nihilist without even taking his bath any longer. He is equally taunted for his pent up sexual emotions unlike couples and for doing home chores such as fetching water from the stream himself. The bottom line is to persuade eligible bachelors to get married and become responsible members of the society to avoid societal stigma.

Conclusion

This paper studies Tiv nuptial poetry from a Discourse Stylistic perspective. Discourse is used in this paper in the sense of an interconnected stretch of text that can be subjected to meaning making. Also, stylistics refers to the use of linguistic methods and insights to understand the artistic effect of choice of language in a text. The methodology is eclectic. Stylostatistics as a quantitative method that involves the use of rough percentages of textual features to draw analytical conclusions is used alongside determinate deviation which is a qualitative method of analysis where textual features that are linguistically salient in the context of a text are

analysed descriptively without numerical considerations.

This paper thus concludes that, Tiv nuptial songs studied in this paper are crafted as discourse between the bride, the bridegroom and the general society to welcome the bride to her new home and the general society, to intimate her on the do's and don'ts in marriage, to celebrate marriage as the nucleus of the society, to encourage eligible bachelors to get married, celebrate the primacy of sexuality in marriage and vent out pent sexual emotions, among others. This is achieved in the songs through representative, directive and expressive speech acts which are crafted in functional language choices.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are adjudged necessary based on the analytical insights revealed in this paper:

1. Integrating insights from Discourse Analysis and Stylistics should be encouraged as a way of harmonising the linguist's flare for linguistic description and the critic's quest for literary interpretation of texts.
2. The use of qualitative and quantitative methodological insights for textual explication is more revealing and should be encouraged.

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