

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

TRANSITIVITY ANALYSIS OF SELECTED POEMS OF ATUKWEI OKAI

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**A THESIS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH EDUCATION, FACULTY OF
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PHILOSOPHY DEGREE IN ENGLISH.**

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DECLARATION

Student's Declaration

I, Abraham Gyasi, declare that this dissertation, with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works which have all been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my own original work, and it has not been submitted, either in part or whole, for another degree elsewhere.

Student's Signature:

Date:



Supervisor's Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation of this research was supervised by me in accordance with the guidelines for the supervision of research laid down by the School of Research and Graduate Studies, University of Education, Winneba.

Supervisor's Name: Dr. Akosua Bosompemaa Quarcoo

Supervisor's Signature:

Date:

DEDICATION

To my wife, Hannah and my children, Gold, Takyiwaa, Eyram, Arreilla, and Chief.



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I wish to express a sincere gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. Akosua Bosompemaa Quarcoo for her selfless guidance. She indeed made the thesis appear very simple even though it seemed impossible from the beginning.

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To God be the glory.



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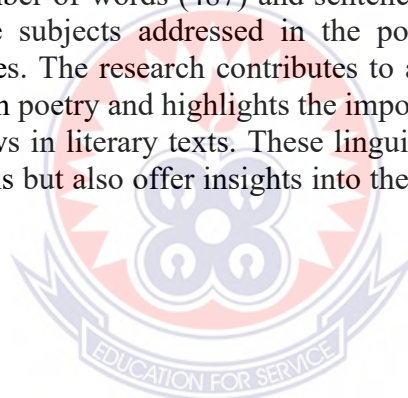
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ABSTRACT

Poetry, with its compressed and figurative language, challenges readers to actively engage in interpretation, particularly with regard to how language reflects the worldviews of the poet. This study is rooted in the understanding that language encodes experiential meaning and conveys ideologies, which can be uncovered through a detailed analysis of linguistic elements such as processes, participants, and circumstances. The study analyses the Transitivity system in selected poems by Atukwei Okai through the lens of Halliday and Matthiessen's Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG). It examines the process types, their participants, and their distribution in the poems. By analyzing the poet's linguistic choices, the study reveals the intersection of grammar and ideology, demonstrating how these elements shape thematic concerns and characterizations. The findings reveal that material processes are the most frequent processes followed by mental, relational, behavioural and existential processes in that order. In terms of the types of processes present in each poem, "The Pioneer" and "Walewale Chorus" do not have behavioural processes. On the contrary, "The Oath of the Fontomfrom" has all the six process types. There is a correlation between the length of the poems and the number of clauses in them. The 'Oath of the Fontomfrom' with the highest number of words (669) and sentences, has the highest number of processes (82). The 'The Pioneer' on the other hand, which has the least number of words (487) and sentences, records the least number of the processes (56). Also, the subjects addressed in the poems contributes to the to the differences in the process types. The research contributes to a deeper understanding of how transitivity functions in African poetry and highlights the importance of language structures in uncovering implicit worldviews in literary texts. These linguistic choices not only shape the thematic concerns of the poems but also offer insights into the poet's representation of reality and his personal worldview.



KEYWORDS

transitivity, systemic functional grammar, processes, participants, ideologies , worldview



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The Language of poetry is generally condensed in both structure and content. Often, few words are craftily and wittingly chosen to reflect prevailing sentiments of society and the writer. A word or phrase might carry a sense usually communicated in several chapters in prosaic discourse; so, the reader is often confronted with the burden of interpretation of such language for effective and sufficient textual analysis.

Poetry encourages its audience to engage in shaping meaning through the use of language. While poetic expression is largely figurative, its emphasis lies in uncovering significance through how particular word groupings are formed and how these clusters function within the text. Readers are invited to consider the features of each term and how they connect with others within the poem's structure. Cunanan (2011) illustrates that by drawing on various linguistic elements (such as vocabulary, grammar, sound patterns, word formation, and meaning) poetry can reveal the perspective or worldview of the speaker or author. The reader draws from these language resources to raise their awareness on the convergence of language structures.

This research applied Halliday and Matthiessen's (2014) framework of systemic functional grammar (SFG) to help readers recognize how language choices and structures interact in the interpretation of literary texts, especially poetry, as a way of making the study of poetry more accessible. It is obvious that these language resources are self-sufficient meaning; making devices upon which a reader of poetry can rely to extract the kind of world

view the writer communicates by their choices of linguistic elements including the lexical and structural choices.

This chapter provides an overview of the study. It discusses the background, outlines the research problem, highlights the aim and objectives, and presents the guiding research questions. In addition, it explains the study's importance and scope. The chapter concludes with a brief summary.

Background to the Study

Language carries significant weight and is never completely neutral or free of influence. Every word we use embodies certain powers and viewpoints that reveal the interests of those who speak or write them (Matthiessen, 2014). When creating a text, speakers and writers have many linguistic options, but the selection of one word over another often exposes both conscious and unconscious beliefs. These choices can also guide the interpretation of a text toward particular ideological directions. As van Dijk (2006) points out, examining language is essential for uncovering and understanding underlying ideologies. He defines ideology as a system of attitudes, values, convictions, and doctrines (whether religious, political, social, or economic) that shape how individuals and groups perceive the world and construct their sense of reality.

Fairclough (1989) explains that language serves as the most widespread form of social activity, since we rely on it in both personal and public exchanges to shape our connections with others and with the broader community we live in. According to Fowler (1979), the experiences of individuals and the environments surrounding them are captured within the language they employ as collections of concepts. In other words, people treat language as a tool through which they communicate their understanding of the world. It further highlights that language reflects a speaker's thoughts, emotions, and overall perspective on life.

Language plays an indispensable role in human life. Our ability to operate productively in nearly every area of society rests heavily on how well we use it. Communication skills are the foundation of interaction, making it possible for us to connect, exchange ideas, and function in the world. Words are never entirely neutral; they always carry weight and reflect certain perspectives or intentions of the speaker or writer (Matthiessen, 2014). Each choice of vocabulary reflects not only conscious preferences but also hidden assumptions and attitudes. Such decisions shape how texts are received and often steer interpretation toward particular ideological positions. As van Dijk (2006) explains, analyzing language allows us to uncover the values and beliefs that underlie it. He describes ideology as a structured set of principles, convictions, and viewpoints (whether political, social, religious, or economic) that influences how people interpret reality and form their worldview. Similarly, Nguyen (2012) notes that learners and users of language are primarily concerned with how it enables them to create and convey meaning through different linguistic resources. Bloor and Bloor (2004) also emphasize that language in use does more than transmit information; it actively constructs meaning.

Language, though abstract, can be represented tangibly in forms such as writing, speech, gestures, signs and symbols, and any of these forms is considered a discourse since its aim is to communicate. When writers produce a text, it becomes the task of readers to figure out the intended meaning behind the words. Because of this, readers often develop strategies for uncovering the ideas and messages hidden in an author's work. Typically, they draw on their knowledge of language to interpret expressions and make sense of the writer's world. Yet, the lingering question is whether depending solely on language skills is truly sufficient to grasp the deeper meaning of literary works. The interpretations that the reader generates from the text usually transcend their linguistic competence into other factors such as context (e.g.

situation, culture, status), constructions (e.g. active vs. passive, simple vs. complex) and structure. Writers tend to project varying aspects of life (cognitive, emotional, interpersonal, experiential, material, behavioural, and physical) and the reader is expected to grasp these through adequate interpretation of the texts they read.

Language plays a vital role in shaping how people think, feel, and connect with others. It serves as the primary tool for building and sustaining relationships, as well as the channel through which experiences are expressed and shared. Studies of language consistently reveal that its purpose is to transform human thoughts into verbal forms, allowing individuals to share meaning with one another and engage in communication, whether spoken or written.

Language is used for a number of communications ends usually referred to as genres in varying human endeavours such as literature, media, politics, business, education, and science just to mention few. Literature, for instance, presents authentic language material while it concurrently motivates students (Abdalrahman, 2021) and helps them to understand the practical use of language to construe human socio-cultural experiences on the one hand and to improve students' language abilities (Lazar, 1993) on the other. Literary genres thus not only delight but also instructs learners linguistically. Literary genres capture human experiences and realities from multiple viewpoints. According to McKay (1982), an important advantage of linking literature with language learning is that it introduces language through discourse, which in turn enhances learners' overall proficiency. Mastery of a language involves knowing how to use it appropriately within cultural and contextual settings. Incorporating literature into language instruction helps students broaden their cultural awareness, especially in relation to the culture tied to the target language (Abdumuminova & Salimova, 2021).

Language use in literature (i.e. style) leads to the usual broad categorization of literary works into three genres ; prose, drama, and poetry. Still, the primary types of literature applied

in language education include poems, short fiction, narrative works, and plays (Coşgun, 2022). In addition to their unique features, each of them contributes to students' language development in different ways (Babae & Yahya, 2014). For example, although Lockward (1994) notes that many English instructors often feel uneasy teaching poetry, it can serve as a medium through which students engage with suprasegmental aspects of language; like rhythm, tone, and intonation. These features not only aid in understanding a poem from an individual standpoint but also allow learners to connect emotionally with it (Babae & Yahya, 2014).

Comparatively, Collie and Slater (1987) think that the use of prose such as short stories and novels seems more advantageous in the classroom, as short stories, for instance, appear most welcoming with respect to style (i.e. language use). The prose genres reflect the regular human life, experiences and linguistic patterns. They also improve the critical thinking skills of students (Babae & Yahya, 2014; Al-Ajmi, 2022), make language learners creative in presenting and exploiting text (Collie & Slater, 1987). For example, when engaging with a short story, learners may become aware of their own limitations; such as weak reading techniques, difficulty interpreting meaning, lack of motivation, limited appreciation of style, challenges in grasping cultural context, and problems with comprehension (Lazar, 2009). Recognizing these gaps can provide the foundation for taking steps to strengthen their language abilities. Exploring novels broadens students' perspectives and deepens their awareness of diverse cultures and customs (Babae & Yahya, 2014). Moreover, they expose learners to varied forms of language and introduce a wide range of vocabulary, which is especially beneficial for those at intermediate and advanced stages.

Drama is a genre, which is the closest literary form to life itself. The use of this style introduces students to the dynamic and complex aspects of human life (Boudreault, 2010),

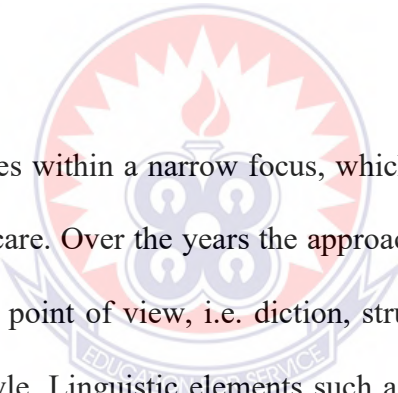
thereby supporting their ability to grasp both spoken and unspoken features of the language being learned (Babae & Yahya, 2014).

These literary genres and other instances of language are referred to as texts (Halliday, 2004) which specifically is language structured to create certain meanings that meet the needs of the users in the speech community, including the need to interact, communicate, or show their ideas to others. Bloor and Bloor, (1995) postulate that language encodes our experiences and thereby plays a crucial role in our involvement with other people, animal life in general, and even inanimate matters. An individual's language choices to describe their experience is very influential in shaping how they view the world. For example, the language a person selects both reflects their mindset and influences their actions, while also serving as a means to communicate beliefs and perspectives. Because language operates as a form of representation in every type of social interaction (Fairclough, 2001), Halliday (1973; 2004) explains that the linguistic and functional decisions made by a writer are shaped by the social contexts that influence the writer's perspective.

Dancygier (2011) argues that if a text means something to someone, there has to be a linguistic phenomenon that makes it possible. To comprehend written works, one must rely on linguistic tools such as grammar formation and conceptual integration, since the author's language choices convey meaning and stimulate our thinking throughout the interpretive process.

Language and literature are interconnected, as language functions as the tool through which authors communicate their ideas and viewpoints. In many cases, writers and people in general, express their reflections and lived experiences through the narratives they create. The long-held view that literature is a mere reflection of reality is as a result of the failure of many literary scholars to realize that most literary works are borne out of the experiences of people

and most of these experiences can occur in the life of basically every human being. Thus, literary discourse functions as a medium for forming social realities, guiding perspectives through prevailing ideological frameworks (Fairclough, 2003). Halliday and Matthiessen (20014) further argue that a text is a product of multi-dimensional processes of discourse and does not embody only the same kind of polyphonic structure as found in grammar (in the structure of the clause as message, exchange and representation) but also as the realization of semiotic orders above language since it is functioning at a higher level of the code. When creating or analyzing a piece of writing, attention must be given to grammatical correctness. This happens since the elements of grammar are essential in helping authors convey or clarify linguistic features along with their personal experiences in literary works, such as poetry.

The logo of the University of Education, Winneba, is a circular emblem. It features a central sunburst or star-like design with multiple points. Below the sunburst, there is a banner with the text "EDUCATION FOR SERVICE". The entire emblem is set against a light background.

Poetry generally operates within a narrow focus, which is why poets craft their work with heightened accuracy and care. Over the years the approach of the analysis of poems has dominantly been from, literary point of view, i.e. diction, structure, point of view, imagery, literary devices, theme, and style. Linguistic elements such as the grammar of the language used in poetry are however missing from the list. Aspects of linguistics that have somewhat gained some considerable attention in literary texts analysis and particularly poetry analysis have been the figurative language, metaphors, discourse and critical discourse analyses. It needs however to be stressed that grammatical choices made in context reveal meanings. The essential idea is that poems are linguistic creations that may be viewed as forms of discourse, since they exhibit all the defining features of discourse; organization, interpretation, and function (Schiffrin, 1987). Widdowson (1984) notes that poetry often contains examples of language that do not follow conventional grammatical structures. However, these are not random strings of sentences; rather, they are carefully organized through cohesive links that

connect one sentence to the next (Halliday & Hasan, 1976). Poetry functions as a form of social communication, much like drama or prose, since its structured linguistic patterns can be connected to the specific context in which interaction takes place.

Grammatical analysis of poetry is arguably a new field of interdisciplinary study between literature and language which is attracting interest of linguists in recent times. Functional linguists like Firth, Halliday, Matthiessen, Hassan, Martin, Fawcett, and Mwinlaaru have propagated the need to do literary analysis by applying rigorous grammatical theories such as Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) to literary texts. A key idea in their theory is that language, through its conceptual role, expresses the ways people experience the world. It allows individuals to construct an internal image of reality and interpret both their surroundings and their inner experiences. Therefore, examining grammar focuses on the relationship between vocabulary and structure in a text, taking into account its social, physical, mental, cultural, relational, and situational settings. Examining language within contexts that account for its diverse roles and forms allows deeper insight into how an author's stylistic decisions shape the beliefs, perspectives, and identities of both writers and readers.

One such model of grammar particularly of SFL that has proved very useful in appreciating the meaning inherent in linguistic choices of writers of literary texts (and of course all other text forms) is transitivity. The transitivity framework helps explain how language functions within specific situations, showing how clauses and their elements serve as carriers of meaning. This, in turn, provides valuable insight for interpreting written works, including poetry (Opara, 2012). "A clause serves as a fundamental element that can be used as the foundation for examining texts." Halliday's transitivity framework illustrates how language choices intersect with socially and culturally shaped meanings within texts, aiming to uncover the ideologies embedded in them (Fairclough, 1989, 1995; Fowler, 1977, 1986; Fowler et al.,

1979). It provides a useful linguistic framework for uncovering the main linguistic features of a literary discourse.

Researchers have widely applied transitivity analysis to explore how both speakers and writers use language (Nguyen, 2012). It examines how sentences are organized, focusing on the actions they express, the entities taking part in those actions, and the situations surrounding both the actions and the participants. The core purpose of transitivity is to link grammatical features with semantic elements in order to derive meaning in a stylistic manner through language (Mehmood et al., 2014). Through transitivity analysis, researchers (Mehmood et al., 2014; Darani, 2014; Mwinlaaru, 2012, 2014; Song, 2013; Halliday, 1971) have attempted to demonstrate that linguistic patterns can generate specific meanings and ideologies that are not immediately visible to readers. Put simply, functional analysis, especially transitivity analysis—aims to uncover how meanings connect with expressions, shaping the arrangement of linguistic elements within a text (Nguyen, 2012). Thus, the idea of transitivity has been applied to provide deeper insight into how language functions within literary works. Comprehending narratives depends on their situational or contextual background, and this research seeks to demonstrate how meaning is conveyed through clauses that portray lived experiences in Atukwei Okai's poetry.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Scholars have increasingly turned their attention to examining transitivity within literary works. This growing interest stems from the recognition that literature mirrors lived experiences, and that particular linguistic choices can uncover the perspectives or outlooks of either the character or the author in a text (Cunanan, 2014). Some studies have been conducted in the area of linguistic analysis of literary texts especially in the African terrain (Darani, 2014),

which explore the relationship between linguistic structures and socially constructed meaning in literary works of art, drawing on Halliday's transitivity framework rooted in Systemic Functional Linguistics (Mehmood et al, 2014; Song, 2013; Nguyen, 2012; Martin & Rose, 2003, Matthiessen, 1995; Halliday 1985, 1994). The transitivity theory of SFL has been adopted to study the construction of personality, theme and the shaping of characters in stories, including varying genres of literature. For example, Afrianto and Zuhud (2014) employed the transitivity system to analyse Donne and Blake's poems, then specifically, the study investigated mental and relational processes in the poem.

Available literature shows that works on poetry that have employed transitivity model of Systemic Functional Linguistics approach are few (see Haroon & Arslan, 2021; Qasim, Qasim & Arshad, 2021; Yeibo, 2012). Majority of these studies have been confined to non-African texts with very few studies on African poetry. Among the few is a study by Yeibo (2012), which examined aspects of textual cohesion in J. P. Clark's poems. Similarly, Ogungbemi (2016) examined the ideological square and transitivity in the poetry of Remi Raji, combining van Dijk's approach to Critical Discourse Analysis and Halliday's transitivity framework. Additionally, Larbaoui (2019) analyzed Okot p'Bitek's poem "Song of Lawino" using the linguistic framework of transitivity.

In Ghana, the only existing study on transitivity analysis in poetry is by Botchwey et al. (2022), who explored how linguistic structures connect to socially constructed meanings in Atukwei Okai's poem "The Oath of the Fontomfrom." The research focused on analyzing the poet's selection of processes and how these were commonly arranged throughout the work. The current study attempted to expand the analysis to three of Atukei Okai's poems to examine the differences in the process types in the three poems and to account for the differences in the process types. The findings from this study, will provide a relatively enough grounds for researchers to draw a categorical conclusion on the choices Atukwei Okai makes in his poems.

1.4 Purpose of the Study

The aim of this research is to employ Halliday's transitivity model to examine the kinds of processes and the roles of participants represented in the chosen poems: The Oath of the Fontomfrom, The Pioneer, and Walewale Chorus. Also, the study aims at examining the differences in the process types identified in the three poems. Lastly, the study seeks to examine what accounts for the differences in process types found in the selected poems of Atukwei Okai.

1.5 Objectives of the Study

The study was guided by the following objectives:

1. To identify the distribution of process types found in the selected poems of Atukwei Okai.
2. To examine the differences in the process types in the three poems.
3. To account for the differences in the process types in the three poems.

1.6 Research Questions

This research was meant to find answers to the following questions:

1. What is the distribution of the process types found in the selected poems of Atukwei Okai?
2. What are the differences in the process types in the three poems?
3. What accounts for the differences in the process types in the three poems?

1.7 Significance of the Study

This research will prove valuable in language instruction, academic inquiry, and theoretical development, as it allows scholars to recognize how the language employed in the chosen poems operates in shaping meaning from a systemic perspective. Through this approach, a fresh dimension of interpretation becomes accessible to individuals who wish to examine poetry by investigating processes and their associated meanings.

Because the study applies transitivity in the examination of literary works, it adds to ongoing discussions about the distinctions and overlaps between literary criticism and stylistic analysis. Moreover, it can serve as an extra resource in the teaching of functional grammar, with particular emphasis on transitivity within literary texts. Ultimately, the study stands as a foundation for future research on the functional aspects of language and meaning.

1.8 Delimitation of the Study

The study will focus only on selected poems from the Ghanaian poet, Prof. Atukwei Okai, specifically *The Oath of the Fontomfrom and other poems*. The research will mainly center on the use of transitivity within the clauses of the chosen poems, with particular attention to the kinds of processes and the roles of participants highlighted by the poet. Other issues like the circumstance's elements pertaining to transitivity analysis will be put aside.

1.9 Organisation of the Study

The opening chapter offers an overall introduction to the research. It outlines the background that prompted the study and presents the research problem, along with the aim, guiding questions, and objectives. The chapter also highlights the importance of the study and

clarifies its scope. The second chapter, on the other hand, focuses on the theoretical foundation of the research and examines existing literature relevant to the subject. It will situate the present study in relation to existing literature. Chapter three explains the methodology of the study. It defines the approach and the related design upon which this study is hinged, the data, data collection procedure, sampling techniques employed and the justification. The chapter will explain also the analytical framework employed in this study. Chapter four is the presentation of the data analysis followed by scholarly discussion of the tendencies gleaned from the data in relation to the relevant existing literature. Chapter five presents the summary of the findings, the conclusions drawn from the study and recommendations that are necessitated by the findings of the study.

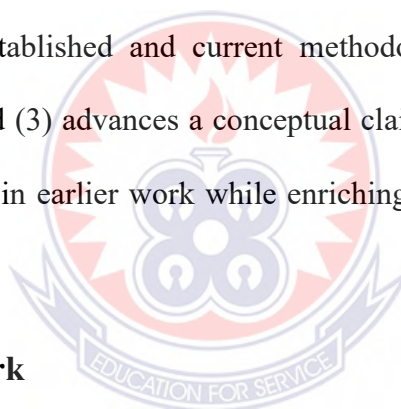


CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter forms a comprehensive survey and synthesis of scholarly studies on the topic of the present study by providing critical review of existing knowledge of poetry analysis, transitivity and transitivity in literary texts globally, in Africa and in Ghana to allow me to establish the theories, methods and gaps in existing research. The chapter demonstrates how the study: (1) tackles the shortcomings discovered in the review and assessment of prior research, (2) applies both established and current methodological as well as theoretical frameworks to the subject, and (3) advances a conceptual claim that proposes an appropriate remedy for issues overlooked in earlier work while enriching existing scholarship with new evidence.



2.1. Transitivity Framework

The research was anchored in the theoretical framework of the Transitivity model within Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) as proposed by Halliday and Matthiessen (2014). SFL views language as a tool for creating meaning through a range of choices. Halliday (1973) describes the Transitivity System in SFL as a network of options that allow speakers or writers to express both their interactions with the external world and their inner thoughts, alongside the participants, processes, and circumstances in which these experiences occur. Put simply, transitivity illustrates the ways language is employed to capture and convey our internal reflections and external realities within social contexts. The grammatical and semantic decisions individuals make when expressing themselves reveal both their internal stance and

outward perspective, based on the idea that discourse is shaped by how one interprets a situation and the meanings one intends to communicate (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014).

Halliday (1985, p. 53) describes the transitivity system as a framework representing the clause's ideational metafunction. This ideational role of the clause focuses on conveying and expressing meanings or concepts. Its function is that of "representing 'processes' or 'experiences': actions, events, processes of consciousness and relations". He Halliday (1976) described the concept of "process" in a broad sense, applying it to any phenomenon that may be conveyed through a verb; whether it represents an action, condition, connection, or existence. He also emphasized that these "processes" communicated in language reflect how we perceive and interpret the world. He notes:

"Our most powerful conception of reality is that it consists of "goings-on": of doing, happening, feeling, being. These goings-on are sorted out in the semantic system of the simultaneously in another grammatical function expressing the reflective, experiential aspect of meaning. This...is the system of TRANSITIVITY. Transitivity specifies the different types of process that are recognized in the language, and the structures by which they are expressed" (Halliday 1985, p. 101)

The lexicogrammatical category of transitivity enables the analysis of the experiential function of people's perception of the world through the way they use language. As Halliday (1994) puts it, "language enables human beings to build a mental picture of reality, to make sense of what goes on around them and inside them" (p. 106).

The transitivity framework in linguistics is now commonly applied to examine both spoken and written language. It focuses on how sentences are organized, breaking them down into processes (expressed through different verb types), the participants who take part in these processes (found within noun groups), and the surrounding circumstances (conveyed through adverbial or prepositional phrases). This system belongs to the ideational function of language, realized within the clause, which, as Downing and Locke (1992:110), "permits us to encode,

both semantically and syntactically, our mental picture of the physical world and the worlds of our imagination”.

The concept of transitivity is often recognized as a method of classifying verbs based on whether or not they take an object. In this context, however, the idea is applied in a much wider sense. Within Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG), transitivity is viewed as a framework for analyzing entire clauses rather than focusing only on verbs and their objects (Thompson, 1996). It also serves as a tool for representing human experience through the interaction of processes, participants, and circumstances (Martin et al., 1997). The system allows an analysis of the meaning of clauses through the study of “choice of process types and participants roles seen as realizing interactants, encoding of their experimental reality: the world of action, relation, participants and circumstances that give context to their talk” (Eggins, 1994). The central idea of the transitivity framework is that human experiences are made up of different kinds of events; such as actions, occurrences, perceptions, interpretations, states of being, and transformations (Halliday, 1994, p. 106). These experiences are conveyed through the clauses people use in communication. Depending on how individuals perceive the world, shaped by what they have lived through, they articulate their thoughts in specific ways, which the transitivity system identifies as processes.

Transitivity, as outlined above, deals with how processes are structured together with the participants and circumstances that accompany them. Variations in the type of process typically lead to differences in transitivity, since each process type is linked to specific functional roles for participants. In addition, the selection of transitivity patterns reflects how a speaker interprets and represents experience. Analyzing transitivity begins with categorizing the various process types. Butt et al. (1995) explain that most English clauses follow a structure that can be functionally described through participant, process, and circumstance, with the process serving as the core element. This claim aligns with the view of Gerot and Wignell

(1995), who emphasize that transitivity is primarily shaped by the process. Both participants and circumstances depend on the type of process involved. This means that varying processes call for different participants within distinct situations.

In Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG), the idea of “process” is generally understood as activities or occurrences such as acting, happening, perceiving, experiencing, thinking, or simply existing. Processes are expressed through verbs and can be grouped based on whether they describe actions, communication, mental states, or conditions of being. Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) identify six categories of processes within the transitivity system: material, mental, relational, behavioural, verbal, and existential. While verbs are often described as “action words,” in reality, many do not denote actions but instead convey states of existence or possession.

2.1.1 Material Processes

As construed by the transitivity system in the grammar, often the speaker or writer articulate “what we experience as going on ‘out there’, in the world around us” (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014, p. 214). They explain that “external” experiences typically deal with tangible actions or events, such as preparing food, composing text, or engaging in physical movement. These are referred to as Material Processes. In conventional terms, they are described as “action words.” At the core, material processes indicate that a subject performs an activity or carries out an action, which may also affect another subject or object.

Illustration: A hunter consumes sizable prey.

Halliday (2004, p. 196) emphasizes that material processes do not always involve tangible or physical actions; they can also represent abstract activities or occurrences.

Illustration: The runners withdrew from the competition.

A key way to recognize a material process is by testing it with questions such as, “What action did A perform?” or “What occurred to A?” In addition, it signals a unit of transformation within the sequence of events, brought about through the application of energy (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). Typically, this energy is supplied by the participant identified as the Actor or Agent.

2.1.2 Mental Processes

Defining a verb merely as “an action word” is too limited, since it does not capture every type of process. This makes it necessary to recognize categories beyond material processes, as communication is not always about actions. People frequently express their thoughts and emotions. Halliday (1994, 2004, 2014) refers to the processes that represent thinking, feeling, and perceiving as mental processes.

Egins (1994) explains that the main difference between mental and material processes lies in the kinds of questions they invite. On closer analysis, the emphasis is not on tangible deeds or physical actions, but on inner experiences; such as thinking, feeling, or perceiving. Therefore, when dealing with mental processes, it makes more sense to ask “what did A think, feel, or know about B?” rather than “what did A do?” In a similar vein, Halliday (1994, pp. 114–117) outlines clear guidelines for distinguishing mental processes from material ones, offering further insight into how this aspect of language operates, as shown below:

- i. Cognitive activities necessarily require the presence of at least one human being; the individual whose mind carries out the process. When a non-living or non-human entity is portrayed as experiencing such a process, it is essentially given human qualities through that depiction. For example, in the phrase “the sleeping village reflected on the event in its dreams,” the village is personified as if it were capable of thought. In

contrast, material processes do not demand human involvement, since the difference between conscious and unconscious participants has no relevance in that context.

- ii. When it comes to the second key participant in a mental process clause, the element that is experienced, considered, or noticed, the situation is almost the opposite. In fact, the range of entities that can serve this role is not limited to a specific grammatical or semantic type; it is even broader than the range of participants allowed in a material process. What fills this role may be not just an object or entity, but also an entire proposition or fact.
- iii. In a material process, all participants are treated as “things.” This means they are understood as elements of our experience, whether external realities or products of thought and imagination, such as a person, animal, object, institution, abstract idea, or even a process like an action, event, condition, or relationship. Any of these “things” can also function as the focus of awareness in a mental process. For instance, in the sentence Frank hated mice, “mice” is the “thing” and could just as easily appear within a material process. On the other hand, take the example Frank is unhappy that you arrived late. Here, what Frank perceives is not a tangible entity but a fact. A fact, unlike a thing, cannot serve as a participant in a material clause. From a grammatical standpoint, facts can be experienced, seen, felt, or thought, but they cannot perform actions, nor can actions be carried out upon them.
- iv. A further way to distinguish mental processes from material ones lies in their use of tense. Mental processes typically sound most natural in the simple present tense, for instance: I dislike gossip, rather than I am disliking gossip. In contrast, material processes are more naturally expressed in the present continuous, as in: They are working late, instead of They work late.

- v. The fourth requirement is that numerous though not all mental processes allow for reversibility. In other words, these processes can work in both directions. When describing them, either the experiencer (Sensor) or the object of experience (Phenomenon) can serve as the subject without shifting the clause into the passive voice. For instance, one may say John dislikes it or it appeals to John, and both remain active forms. By contrast, material processes lack this kind of two-way flexibility. Here, the second participant, known as the Goal, may only take the subject position through passivization. Finding genuine examples of reversibility in material processes is difficult. A potential case could be I take the train versus the train carries me, yet this feels more like an isolated coincidence than evidence of a consistent pattern. Likewise, lexical pairs such as buy/sell, give/receive, or borrow/lend do not illustrate this property, since they do not generate parallel active constructions like I buy it / It sells me or I borrow it / It lends me.

This distinction highlights that material processes describe actions or activities; things people actually do. Such processes can be tested or replaced with the verb do. For instance: What did Grace do? She ate my food. Or, What Grace did was eat my food. In contrast, mental processes involve experiences of the mind, such as thinking, feeling, or perceiving. These are not actions in the same sense, so they cannot be expressed through do. For example, it would not be natural to say, What Grace did was ponder the question.

2.1.3 Relational Processes

When material processes are understood as actions and mental processes as perceptions or thoughts, the third core type, relational processes can be described as processes of *being* or *having*. According to Butt et al. (1996), the key feature of relational processes lies in their role of linking a participant to either an identity or a description. In simple terms, they indicate that

something *is*, *was*, or *will be*. For this reason, they are often referred to as processes of existence or being. However, the verbs used are not limited to “be” alone; others such as *seem*, *become*, *appear*, *remain*, *look*, *have*, or *feel* also serve this purpose.

Relational processes are divided into two main categories: **attributive** and **identifying**. In the attributive form, a quality or characteristic is assigned to an entity. In contrast, the identifying form involves assigning a specific identity to an entity.

Halliday (2004:219–220) outlines four main traits of attributive clauses that set them apart from identifying clauses:

1. The noun group functioning as the attribute usually does not represent a fixed entity and is commonly indefinite.
2. The verbs that express the process typically belong to the “ascriptive” group, such as *become*, *grow*, *turn*, *seem*, *look*, *sound*, *smell*, *remain*, or *get*.
3. Questions that probe such clauses are generally framed as *what?* *how?* or *what...like?*
4. These clauses cannot be reversed and have no passive voice forms.

Example: *The movie is entertaining.*

On the other hand, Halliday (2004:220) lists features of identifying clauses that contrast with those above:

1. The noun group used as the identifier is typically definite.
2. The verbs representing the process belong to the “equative” class, including *act as*, *represent*, *mean*, *indicate*, *play*, *illustrate*, *realize*, or *suggest*.
3. The interrogative form used to explore these clauses is usually *which?* or *who?* sometimes expressed as *which/who...as?*
4. These clauses are reversible in structure.

Example: *The scorpion is the most dangerous creature of the Sahara.*

2.1.4 Behavioural Processes

The behavioural process refers to actions that involve both the body and the mind, such as eating, dreaming, smiling, or coughing. Its boundaries are not clearly defined, as it contains elements that are physical as well as mental (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). Halliday characterizes this process as lying midway between mental and material activities. It is for this reason that the meanings they realize are midway between materials on one hand and mental on the other.

Lock (1996) calls this kind of processes mental-action processes since this kind of process shares the characteristics of both mental and material processes. Behavioural processes represent outer manifestations of inner workings, the acting out of processes of consciousness and physiological states. The participant who is behaving is called Behavior. As a rule, a behavioural process verb is intransitive (it has only one *participant*) and indicates an activity in which both the physical and mental aspects are inseparable and indispensable to it. In this process, there is only one participant, namely: behavior (the agent who behaves).

The majority of behavioural processes of clauses have one participant only. The Participant who is behaving, called Behavior, is typically a conscious being like Sensor, but the process functions more like the one of doing. Rarely, a further Participant occur named Behaviour, as with ‘salty tears’ in *cry salty tears*, ‘a sigh’ in *breathe a sigh*, ‘blood’ in *sweat blood*, ‘sweet dreams’ in *dream sweet dreams*.

Halliday (2004, p. 251) states that the boundaries of behavioral process are indeterminate; but they can be recognized from the following kinds as typical:

- i. (Near mental) processes of consciousness represented as forms of behaviour, e.g. look, watch, stare, listen, think, worry, dream.
- ii. (Near verbal) verbal processes of behaviour, e.g. cry, laugh, smile, frown, sigh, snarl, whine.

- iii. Physiological process, e.g. breathe, cough, faint, shit, yawn, sleep.
- iv. Other psychological processes e.g. breathe, sneeze, cough, hiccup, burp, faint, shit, yawn, sleep.
- v. (Near material) bodily postures and pastimes, e.g. sing, dance, lie (down), sit, (up, down).

2.1.5 Verbal Processes

Verbal process represents process of ‘saying’. Saying here has to be interpreted in a rather broad sense; it covers any kind of symbolic exchange of meaning such as in:

The signpost says danger.

Some verbs used to express the verbal processes include *talk, say, ask, reply, suggest, praise, insult, slander, and flatter*. It has a participant named Sayer, who is the doer of the process of verbalization. Halliday (1985: 240-241) categorizes the projection of Verbal Processes as follows:

- i. Stating: statement, report, news, rumour, claims, assertion, argument, insistence, proposition, assurance, and imitation.
- ii. Questioning: question, query, inquiry, argument, despite.
- iii. Offering: offer, suggestion, proposal, threat, promise.
- iv. Commanding: order, command, instruction, demand, and request.

Bloor and Bloor (2004) say that sometimes, the Sayer uses some extra element of meaning related to the speech act realized by the usage of some verbs as *urge, explain, remind, challenge, beg, promise, grumble, agree, report, lisped, growled, whisper, sneer, snarled, barked, bawled, babbled on, gasped*. The process also has other participants named Receiver,

Verbiage, and Target. Receiver is the person to whom the verbalization is addressed, for example, as in *I asked her if she had heard him*. Verbiage represents what the Sayer said but instead of representing it as a quotation of what the actual words used (Quoted) or the proposition expressed in those words (Reported), it is rather to refer to what is said by classifying it in terms of its character as an expression. But, Quoted and Reported are not participants in the clause because they are separate clauses from the clause containing Sayer and Process (Bloor & Bloor 2004). Verbiage can be seen in such expressions as: *ask a question, state your case, talk my language, speak English, and tell the facts*. It can also be a clause that is not a projection of speech or thought, as in *He told me what I want to know*. There are two kinds of Verbiage, that which refers to the content, as in *describe the apartment*, and that which specifies the nature of verbal process, such as *tell a story*.

Target is a fairly peripheral participant and does not occur with direct or indirect speech, except incidentally. It is the person or thing which is “targeted” by the process as in *Former party officials criticized party leadership*. Lexical verbs which accept a Target include: *describe, explain, praise, flatter, blame, condemn, castigate*. The commonest Circumstance in verbal process is manner (Eggins 2004: 235). Following are examples:

<i>Abraham</i>	<i>whispered</i>	<i>something to</i>	<i>Kennedy</i>
Sayer	Verbal Process	Verbiage	Receiver

<i>Ernest</i>	<i>Sometimes</i>	<i>Condemns</i>	<i>me</i>	<i>to the other teachers</i>
Sayer	Circumstance	Verbal Process	Target	Receiver

2.1.6 Existential Processes

The final process type is one that expresses the mere existence of an entity without predicating anything else of it. It is Existential Process. Existential process has only a participant named Existent. The process has two main forms of grammatical relation, with a copular verb and an empty *there* as Subject and with a copular verb, the Existent as Subject and usually a circumstantial adjunct. This is easy to be identified as the structure involves the use of the word *there*. The '*there*' signals the process type but does not function as a location circumstance, nor does it represent a participant. Halliday (2004: 257) says 'the word *there* in such clauses has no representational function; but it is needed as a subject.

Further, Eggins (1994) says that, the structural *there* in an existential process does not receive any functional label, as it not encoding any representational meaning. It is left unanalyzed for transitivity, although in mood analysis it is of course assigned the subject role, for example:

<i>The books</i>	<i>Are</i>	<i>on the table.</i>
Existent	Existential Process	Circumstantial Adjunct

<i>There</i>	<i>will be</i>	<i>a fight.</i>
	Existential Process	Existent

It is important to distinguished between *there* used as an existential Subject, and *there* used as a circumstance of location. While structure *there* is usually unstressed, circumstantial *there* is usually stressed and often carries an intonation contour:

Structural *there*: *There is a book on the table, and a bag on the chair.*

Circumstantial *there*: *There is your book on the table.*

The process types, their participants are summarised in Table 2.1 below.

Table 2.1: Process type, Category of Meaning and Characteristic Participants

Process Type	Category of Meaning	Participants Directly Involved	Participants Obliquely Involved
material: action event	“doing” “doing” “happening”	Actor, Goal	Recipient, Client; Scope; Initiator; Attribute
behavioural	“behaving”	Behaver	Behaviour
mental: perception cognition desideration emotion	“sensing” “seeing” “thinking” “wanting” “feeling”	Senser, Phenomenon	
Verbal	“saying”	Sayer, Target	Receiver, Verbiage
relational: attribution identification	“being” “attributing” “identifying”	Carrier, Attribute Identified, Identifier, Token, Value	Attributor, Beneficiary Assigner
existential	“existing”	Existent	

Source: Halliday & Matthiessen (2014, p. 311).

2.2 Relevance of Transitivity to Literary Analysis

A text in Halliday’s terminology is a “chunk of language that is actually spoken or written for the purposes of communication by real people in actual circumstances” (Bloor, et al 1995, p.4). Bloor, like many linguists, asserts that language is a means of representing the world or more specifically a means of representing ‘worlds’ perceived or imagined (p.105). The Hallidayan theory of transitivity suits literary analysis well because an important feature of transitivity is its insistence on studying actual instances of language that has been used by speakers and writers. Transitivity must be seen as a central part of the analysis of literary text. Simpson, (1994, p.104) describes transitivity usage as follows:

“It has been employed to uncover how certain meanings are foregrounded while others are suppressed or obfuscated. In this way, the transitivity model provides one means of investigating how a reader’s or listener’s perception of the meaning of a text is pushed in a particular direction and how the linguistics structure of a text effectively encodes a particular ‘world-view’.

A text in systemic functional grammar is an instantiation of the system. This means that the text is studied as a process or as a product; in other words, interpreting a text means showing how it derives from the system and employing structural notations with brief discussion of some of the options from which the structural functions are derived (Halliday, in van Dijk, 1985, p.30). The theory of transitivity can therefore function as a useful tool in revealing the process of a character’s mental transformation, participants’ classes, participants’ activities sequence and building up a picture of the participant and his or her world.

Language systems do not simply present reality in an unbiased way; instead, they shape, arrange, and categorize the subjects they describe. They carry within them assumptions about how the world is structured; essentially, perspectives or ideologies (Fowler, 1986, p.27). According to Fowler, the transitivity model provides a tool for uncovering how the grammatical choices in a text reveal the author’s worldview or ideological position. Such an analysis can, therefore, offer new insights into how a text is understood. A central idea in this approach is that examining language, style, or texts across disciplines should not be limited to identifying unusual or nonstandard linguistic patterns. Rather, it can serve as a useful method for clarifying the features and meanings present in any text, whether conventional or unconventional, and whether literary or non-literary.

2.3 Transitivity and Text Analysis

Texts have been studied from a number of theoretical perspectives: discourse analysis (DA), critical discourse analysis (CDA), speech acts (SA) analysis, genre analysis (GA), and grammatical analysis. Texts often studied include: books (short stories, novels, poems, drama), newspapers, periodicals, brochures, advertisements, government documents, political speeches, social media posts and comments, interviews, and conversations. Judging from their communicative ends, these texts have been categorized into genres such as literary discourse, political discourse, academic and educational discourse, media and communication discourse, religious discourse, health discourse, environmental discourse, legal discourse, and business discourse among others.

Transitivity framework has been applied in analysis of a number of these discourse categories, including political discourse (see Abrafi Adjei & Ewusi-Mensah, 2016; Abrafi Adjei et al, 2015; Kondowe, 2014; Alvi and Baseer, 2011; Wang, 2010), legal discourse (see Bock & Duncan, 2006; Holopainen, 2005; Figueiredo, 1998), and language and media discourse (see Sabbachat et al, 2014; Zheng et al, 2014; Tabrizi & Nabifar, 2013; Bustam, 2011; Li, 2010; Iwamoto, 2008). For instance, Abrafi Adjei and Ewusi-Mensah (2016) analyzed President J. A. Kufuor's 2008 farewell address to Ghana's parliament through the lens of Halliday's transitivity theory. Similarly, Tabrizi and Nabifar (2013) investigated how the transitivity model is employed in English newspaper articles covering both political issues and health-related topics, while Bock and Duncan (2006) used transitivity framework to explore how two different narrators at a hearing of South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) represented the same set of events, showing how the different narrators' process choices shaped their construal of their roles and perspectives of experience. These illustrations highlight how broadly the transitivity framework can be applied to different kinds of texts. In his work *Application of Transitivity as Discourse Analysis Instrument*, Sasongko

(2011) explained that transitivity elements reflect the types of processes and the roles of participants within a given discourse. His approach to transitivity serves as a valuable tool for uncovering a character's psychological changes, identifying participant categories, tracing sequences of their actions, and constructing a clear portrayal of each participant. Examining the use of this analytical model demonstrates that a thorough grasp of transitivity components is essential for fully understanding the characteristics of participants in any discourse.

2.4 Transitivity Analysis and Literary Studies

Human beings frequently express their ideas and experiences through artistic creations (Iwamoto, 2008). Authors of literature (whether crafting stories, plays, or poems) use language as a tool to build imaginative worlds. Each literary piece can be seen as a miniature reflection of how people behave, feel, think, and what they consider significant, either personally or collectively within a community or institution. Literature is never neutral; it is shaped by underlying ideologies and intentions. The decisions writers make while producing their works often serve to advance particular meanings or viewpoints. In everyday life as well, the language we encounter has the power to shape how we perceive individuals, locations, and events, and in this way, it becomes a strong medium for influencing thought (Teo, 2000). Writers of novels, dramas, and poetry often guide readers toward certain interpretations by carefully selecting vocabulary and grammatical structures. This happens because readers usually immerse themselves in the lives of fictional characters, sometimes relating to their thoughts and behaviours, and imagining how they might respond if faced with similar situations in reality (Gallardo, 2006).

The transitivity framework, which originates from Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics, offers a powerful method for uncovering the techniques authors use to present and justify their perspectives, experiences, and beliefs. As Goatly (2000) explains, linguistic analysis exposes hidden patterns that go unnoticed in surface-level meanings, and critical reading is enriched by such examinations because it highlights aspects of a text that usually remain obscured.

The transitivity framework has been used by many researchers in analyzing literary texts of diverse genres (short stories, novels, drama, poems) from diverging viewpoints. Halliday's essay, "Linguistic Function and Literary Style: An Inquiry into the Language of William Golding's *The Inheritors*" (first published in 1981 and reissued in 2019), stands as a groundbreaking study in applying transitivity to literary criticism. In it, Halliday examines how clauses are structured in terms of processes, participants, and circumstances. He demonstrates that Golding relies heavily on material processes and uses relatively few mental ones to highlight a restricted sense of thought. This linguistic choice conveys limited awareness of cause-and-effect and an incomplete grasp of human agency, mirroring the perspective of Lok, the Neanderthal protagonist, whose world is increasingly overtaken by a more advanced human society. He analysed three passages from the *Inheritors* and observed the various transitive and intransitive patterns. Halliday, in this sense maintained dual sense of the term "transitivity" in the analysis including the traditional sense as "status of the verb phrase object complementation" and the functional sense as "representation of experiences through verbal processes and participants in circumstances". The latter sense was later developed as a system of functional grammar in the systemic functional linguistics. Subsequently, a number of linguistic scholars have replicated the analysis of various form of literary texts using SFL framework and particularly with transitivity model, and the practice have gained much scholarly attention in recent few decades.

Darani (2014) investigates how linguistic patterns interact with socially shaped meanings within a literary work. Using Halliday's transitivity model from Systemic Functional Linguistics (Halliday 1985, 1994; Matthiessen, 1995; Martin & Rose, 2003), her research focuses on uncovering the persuasive techniques embedded in George Orwell's *Animal Farm* (1945) from a semantic and grammatical perspective. The analysis centers on the different process types (material, mental, verbal, existential, relational, and behavioural) that make up the ideational function. In this study, Darani examined the verbal expressions representing these processes in the text. The findings showed that material processes occurred most frequently, while mental, verbal, existential, behavioural, and relational processes appeared less often. The disparity in frequency between material processes and the other categories was particularly striking. Based on the novel's persuasive strategies, it was assumed that the characters were compelled to carry out certain actions while avoiding others. The dominance of material processes suggests that the characters' persuasion was demonstrated through compliance with instructions; that is, persuasion manifested itself in action. The study concludes that influencing others is more effective when they are encouraged to take action and reshape their own behaviour (material processes), rather than relying primarily on stirring emotions (mental processes) or embedding specific phrases in their minds (verbal processes).

Mwinlaaru (2014) offers a fresh interpretation of the central concerns in Achebe's *Anthills of the Savannah* by examining how narrative perspective, choices in transitivity, and symbolic elements interact with the portrayal of Chris, one of the main characters, as well as with the broader themes of struggle and transformation in the novel. The research reveals that shifts in narrative voice and transitivity patterns; ranging from inaction (material) to introspection (mental), to advocacy (verbal), and finally to defiance (material/behavioural); trace Chris's journey throughout the story. These shifts highlight his evolution from a state of weakness and futility, through confusion and fear, to eventual renewal and courage. This

linguistic and narrative structuring of Chris's role, along with his symbolic act of rescuing a young girl from assault near the novel's conclusion, reinforces the overarching theme of struggle and change. Through Chris's development, Achebe calls on the educated yet indifferent individual to actively participate in reshaping society through resistance. The deliberate transitivity patterns linked to Chris are strategically chosen to map out a sequence of narrative moments that chart his growth; from helplessness and despair to action, and from anxiety and uncertainty to boldness and resistance.

Mehmood et al. (2014) reinterpret the theme of love in Oscar Wilde's short story "The Nightingale and the Rose" by applying Halliday's transitivity framework in a more concentrated manner. Their analysis demonstrates how Wilde positions the idea of love (initially appearing to lean toward the nightingale as the protagonist) through a lens that evokes sympathy. By examining the processes linked with the central characters, the study draws attention to Wilde's well-discussed notion of opposites, presenting the nightingale and the young philosophy student as contrasting perspectives on love that counterbalance one another. The findings, grounded in transitivity theory, rest on the premise that linguistic form is deliberate and serves a communicative purpose. The analysis reveals that material processes are central in depicting actions throughout the story. Verbal processes further clarify events and conditions, while relational processes intensify the overall impact by emphasizing physical acts that build an external picture of Wilde's fictional world. Collectively, these elements reinforce Wilde's hallmark philosophy of aestheticism and the principle of art for art's sake, inviting readers into an imaginative space where his artistry unfolds.

In a similar vein, Song (2013) utilizes the transitivity model of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) to analyze William Faulkner's "A Rose for Emily." By examining various processes, the study shows how they contribute to thematic construction and character

development. Through examples of the six process types (material, mental, behavioural, relational, verbal, and existential) Song identifies how Faulkner highlights the core themes of isolation and loneliness. Emily, symbolizing the weight of tradition in the eyes of the community, attempts to resist these restrictions in pursuit of personal happiness. Her passion for Homer, intensified before facing communal interference, ultimately drives her to kill him and preserve his body to remain with him. Although her actions appear abnormal, they can be interpreted as a desperate act of resistance. The persistent gossip, social scrutiny, and disapproval from townspeople create a heavy burden, reflected in the numerous mental and verbal processes associated with her. These processes provide a clearer picture of Emily's experiences as revealed through transitivity analysis.

Nguyen (2012) also applies Halliday's transitivity theory to explore personality construction, focusing on the main character in Hoa Pham's "Heroic Mother." The article seeks to demonstrate how linguistic choices in transitivity portray and shape the character's personality. The study offers linguistic evidence that supports textual interpretation, giving readers a structured view of who acts upon whom or what within the protagonist's world. This approach equips readers to better grasp the meaning of the narrative. The analysis reveals that the protagonist, described as a heroic mother, endures feelings of loneliness, monotony, and neglect from her family. Furthermore, the study highlights how the interaction of language and textual observation deepens our understanding of the character's struggles and identity.

Mwinlaaru (2012) employs transitivity analysis to examine the narrative style in a significant section of Ngugi's *Weep Not, Child*. His research demonstrates that the arrangement of processes used to describe characters' actions, events, and lack of action reflects the psychological stance adopted by the narrator. He contends that the author often shifts responsibility away from the oppressors, instead directing the audience's focus toward

the victims of political unrest within the novel. This stylistic choice emphasizes the universal theme of human suffering. The study highlights the value of exploring the intersection of language and literature, showing that detailed examination of linguistic patterns in a text can uncover the writer's artistic strategies and the meanings they produce.

Similarly, Cunanan (2011) illustrates how specific linguistic resources can reveal the perspective of either the writer or the persona in a literary piece. Using systemic functional grammar, he seeks to heighten awareness of how language structures operate in Virginia Woolf's *Old Mrs Grey*. His work demonstrates the connection between linguistics and literature by offering an alternative model suitable for literature-based language programs. Cunanan's article aims to guide students toward understanding how language contributes to the authenticity of fiction. He shows that readers can grasp the subtle and subjective mind style of the author or narrator by paying attention to linguistic patterns. His analysis identifies 41 Participants in the text: 10 primary and 31 secondaries, divided as 18 Actors/goals, 33 Existents, 6 Carriers of attributes, 8 Identified possessors, 14 Sayers, 14 Sensors/phenomena, and notably, no Behavers. Mrs. Grey, the central figure, is represented in multiple roles: Actor or goal (8), Existent (6), Carrier (3), Possessor (1), and Sayer (7). Through passive constructions such as *used*, *flung*, *was jerked*, *was thrown*, and *crawl*, the persona portrays Mrs. Grey as weakened. As an Existent, her state of being is captured with expressions like *sat*, *was running*, *go*, *don't go*, and *pass*. When functioning as a Carrier or Identifier, she is assigned attributes with *am* and *don't seem*. Through interior monologue, her role as a Sayer is emphasized with *pray*, *can't read*, *can't write*, and *speak*. Finally, as a Sensor, she is linked with *was looking*, *change the focus*, *saw*, *could not see*, *hear*, and *wish*. According to Cunanan, transitivity offers readers a way to access the persona's inner thoughts and perceptions. By applying this framework, the reader shares Mrs. Grey's sensory experiences and reflections,

strengthening the relationship between language use and literary appreciation in a way that feels less abstract and more concrete.

Gallardo (2006) investigates how Bernard Shaw's play *Pygmalion* (1913) portrays its central male and female figures by analyzing their language through the lens of transitivity within lexico-grammar. Drawing on Cameron's (1995) argument that the play, often seen as a critique of class, can also be interpreted as a commentary on gender, the study demonstrates that male characters are represented as logical and rational, while the female character is depicted as emotionally driven in personal interactions. By examining material, mental, and relational processes in the characters' speech, Gallardo explores who holds greater agency in action and how this power is linguistically constructed. Ultimately, the research underscores the role of language in shaping perceptions of reality and highlights its significance in understanding gender dynamics, aiming to raise broader social awareness.

Opara (2000) enriches the study of speech in Emecheta's works by applying transitivity theory to her narrative style. The article examines excerpts of dialogue at both grammatical and contextual levels to illuminate how events and experiences are linguistically structured. The analysis emphasizes how gender issues are foregrounded through transitivity choices in systemic theory. Opara concludes that Emecheta's use of grammar reveals how meaning is constructed, particularly around gender. She notes that the writer frequently relies on material processes to organize groups, embedding particular meanings within clauses and placing emphasis on events. These high-transitivity clauses reflect direct, action-oriented depictions, contrasting with reporting clauses that often highlight mental processes such as thought, perception, and emotion. By employing situational clauses, Emecheta ensures her ideas remain focused and compelling, while also granting her female characters dignity and strength, thereby reshaping women's representation through a feminist lens. The article's methodological

approach significantly contributes to gender studies by showing how linguistic decisions reflect thematic concerns in discourse, stressing that contextual grammatical choices actively generate meaning.

Adika and Denkabe (1997) merge transitivity analysis with Grice's (1975) cooperative principle and the use of reference terms in their study of the opening passage of Ayi Kwei Armah's *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*. Their research unfolds in three phases: the first involves identifying verbs, subjects, and objects to map out transitivity patterns; the second classifies and codes these verbs for pragmatic analysis; and the third integrates the findings into a broader interpretive framework. Their study shows that characters are identified and shaped through referential expressions tied to participant roles and the types of processes they are involved in. The research highlights how lexico-grammatical strategies establish participant roles in narrative transitivity patterns, thereby clarifying how readers process texts and why they arrive at particular interpretations.

Hubbard (1994) examines the interplay between transitivity and characterization in Salman Rushdie's *The Moor's Last Sigh*. The novel, though built on multiple interwoven narratives, finds cohesion in its themes, especially through the figure of Aurora (the narrator's outspoken mother) and her complex relationship with her husband Abraham. By analyzing transitivity patterns across selected passages, Hubbard demonstrates how specific linguistic features reinforce the perception that Aurora, alongside other female figures, dominates both the story and the male characters around her. More broadly, the research illustrates the usefulness of transitivity as a tool for uncovering how readers construct their understanding of fictional characters.

2.5 Collision of Transitivity and Stylistic Analysis of Literary Texts

Generally, stylistic analysis is concerned with structuring of language to extract meaning from texts. In this sense, transitivity becomes a linguistic resource for such meaning extraction through critical analysis of texts. Kennedy (1982) examines a passage from Joseph Conrad's *The Secret Agent*, focusing on how linguistic choices shape the depiction of participants. He explores why the description of the consecutive murder scene creates a sense of detachment, making it appear as though the killer bears little responsibility for her actions. The use of transitivity, he argues, shifts agency away from the murderer, producing this effect of distance. In the same study, Kennedy also considers Joyce's *Two Gallants* from *Dubliners*, showing how systemic functional grammar helps uncover the dynamics of dominance and subordination between the two male characters.

Another relevant example is Burton's feminist stylistic reading of a section from Sylvia Plath's *The Bell Jar*. Burton (1982) highlights the imbalance of authority between a doctor, a nurse, and a female patient. Her analysis illustrates how the patient is portrayed as powerless, unable to shape either communication or events within the hospital setting, while the medical staff are presented as active agents who control outcomes. Similarly, Kies (1992), in his work *The Uses of Passivity: Suppressing Agency in Nineteen Eighty-Four*, investigates the language of George Orwell's novel. Kies demonstrates how the state renders an individual's actions and thoughts passive, showing how totalitarian power strips the character of agency and autonomy.

Silva (1998) explores the opening scene of the 1951 film adaptation of Tennessee Williams' *A Streetcar Named Desire*, focusing on its Portuguese subtitles. Her aim is to analyze how transitivity patterns contribute to the portrayal of Blanche Dubois in both the original English script and the translated version. Through her study, Silva finds that in both cases Blanche is depicted as egocentric and ineffective, unable to project her actions, emotions, or

words onto others. She also notes that structural differences between English and Portuguese led to certain shifts in the translated text. Nevertheless, Silva concludes that both versions convey comparable meanings and ultimately construct a similar image of the protagonist.

2.6 Transitivity Analysis of Poetry

In recent years, the effort to explore transitivity as a tool for literary interpretation has expanded to include poetry, marking a shift from earlier studies that focused on other types of texts. Haroon and Arslan (2021) applied a transitivity framework to Imdad Hussein's poem "The Old Building," concentrating on how linguistic patterns connect with the poem's overall meaning. The transitivity analysis of this poem reveals the material process is the most frequently used processes one major process that continuously appears throughout the poem. The material process that appears most frequently reflects the repeated actions performed and sustained by the participants involved. In this poem, the poet introduces an imaginative and comparative vision where he associates himself with an abandoned structure. Through this image, he conveys the emptiness within a person, the ruined state of human existence, and uses the picture of an old, desolate building to represent his own environment marked by discomfort and despair.

In a similar line of inquiry, Qasim, Qasin, and Arshad (2021) examined Iqbal's Makalma Jibrā'il-o-Iblīs (Gabriel and Lucifer), employing Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar transitivity framework to investigate how ideology is embedded at the clause level. Their study aimed to uncover the ways ideology is shaped through language and how texts embody significant layers of meaning. They concluded that the poem's primary process type was verbal, followed by material processes. This outcome suggests that the poem's meaning potential

reveals an ideological dimension situated in a spiritual context, predominantly expressed through verbal processes, with material processes as secondary.

Khalid and Mushtaq (2015) also explored transitivity as a communicative tool by conducting a stylistic analysis of three early poems by Langston Hughes: *The Negro Speaks of Rivers* (1921), *Mother to Son* (1922), and *I, Too* (1926). Their study sought to interpret these works, each addressing the theme of Black identity, while highlighting Hughes' stylistic preference for simplicity, spontaneity, and adaptability in poetic expression. By investigating the transitivity patterns in these poems, they showed how such patterns contribute to communication and implied meanings. Their findings reveal that Hughes uses both material and mental processes as key indicators, aiding readers in understanding relationships between agents, actions, and circumstances within the poems.

Afrianto et al. (2014) employed descriptive analysis to examine Shakespeare's sonnets and determine the kinds of processes employed within the poetic structure. After reviewing three sonnets, they identified four of Halliday's six process types: material, mental, relational, and existential. Their analysis revealed that material processes occurred most frequently, followed by mental, relational, and then existential ones. Since their research primarily focused on mapping out the types of transitivity processes in the sonnets, they concluded that the selection of these processes is closely tied to the poet's intent and the thematic messages conveyed in the compositions.

Ji and Shen (2005), in their work *Transitivity, Indirection and Redemption in Sheila Watson's The Double Hook*, argue that stylistic approaches are fundamental to literary interpretation. They contend that the transitivity model, much like other linguistic frameworks in stylistics,

provides a structured method for analyzing an author's language choices, especially when these choices represent a deliberate stylistic strategy. Their article highlights the interplay between transitivity, indirect expression, and the theme of redemption in Watson's novel. They further suggest that transitivity analysis can reveal how writers manipulate language to illustrate the psychological or physical transformation of characters, offering deeper insight into the thematic essence of the narrative.

According to Thompson (1984), the study of language and the theory of ideology as a social semiotic practice are deeply interconnected. Ideological theory often investigates how ideas and meanings influence the outlooks and actions of individuals and communities within society. Thompson emphasizes that although ideology has been conceptualized in multiple ways, it is increasingly evident that language should be at the center of such investigations, since meaning is primarily negotiated through linguistic interaction in social life. Recognizing this connection has opened avenues for linking ideology with branches of linguistics concerned with meaning-making, as well as with applications in literature and social discourse. Addressing ideology, therefore, requires an integrated approach that examines how language functions within social contexts (Hasan et al., 2005). Halliday's ideational metafunction has proven particularly valuable for exploring the representation of ideas in poetry.

2.7 Summary of Chapter

To conclude, transitivity patterns serve as a way of expressing experiential meaning—our understanding of the world, of lived experiences, and of how events are perceived and interpreted. Through the use of transitivity analysis in examining a literary work, it becomes possible to uncover how the context of a situation is structured. This approach helps clarify what the text is essentially addressing.

This chapter has focused on outlining the theoretical foundations and conceptual framework of transitivity analysis. It has also surveyed earlier research on the subject, highlighting both the themes explored and the methodologies adopted in those studies. Findings from the review revealed that the transitivity framework is applicable across a wide range of human activities, with particular relevance in areas such as literary stylistics, literature, media communication, and political discourse, among others. Furthermore, the review pointed out a noticeable gap in existing scholarship, particularly within the Ghanaian literary context, regarding the application of transitivity analysis to literary texts. The upcoming chapter will present the study's methodology, detailing the research design, techniques for gathering data, and the procedures employed for analyzing that data.



CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This study's methodology is outlined in four main sections: the research design, the process of gathering data, the sampling approach, and the techniques used for analyzing the data. Each of these components is described in detail below."

3.1 Research Approach and Design

This study employs a qualitative methodology using a textual analysis framework. A qualitative method is an exploratory process that aims to gain a deep understanding of social realities as they occur in their natural contexts. Denzin and Lincoln (2005) describe it as a context-driven practice that places the researcher directly within the lived environment. It involves a range of interpretive and practical strategies that render social life more observable. Dornyei (2007) emphasizes that the interpretive nature of qualitative inquiry means the findings are shaped by the researcher's own perspective when analyzing the data. Therefore, qualitative research can be seen as a mode of social investigation concerned with how individuals perceive, interpret, and construct meaning from their experiences and surroundings.

Qualitative research basically involves collecting and analyzing non-numerical data such as texts to examine for the purpose of understanding the concepts, opinions, or experiences. It is commonly used in humanities and social science (Bhandari, etal 2022) to answer questions: "What", "Why" and "How" of the phenomena studied.

Caulfield (2022) defines textual analysis as an expansive approach that involves examining, interpreting, and making sense of written material. A text can provide many layers

of information, ranging from its direct wording, grammar, and context of use to the symbolism, underlying assumptions, and cultural values it communicates. Similarly, McKee (2003) views textual analysis as a method that enables researchers to understand the ways people interpret and construct meaning about the world around them.

With textual analysis we could understand details about how ideologies, thoughts and experiences were communicated through the selected texts. The current study was a grammatical (i.e. linguistic) inquiry rather than a literary one; its preoccupation therefore was the language structures and it ignored such elements as the rhyme, meter, rhythm, metaphor and literary devices usually associated with poetry analysis. It thus employed grammatical theory specifically a functional grammar theory, transitivity model of SFL, promotes interpretation of these selected poems.

3.2 Data Collection Procedure

The data for this study consist of **three poems** selected from Atukwei Okai's anthology *The Oath of the Fontomfrom and Other Poems* (2005; first published in 1971 in the United States). The anthology contains twenty-four poems, from which three ("The Oath of the Fontomfrom", "The Pioneer", and "Walewale Chorus") were selected for analysis. These poems were chosen not arbitrarily but for their representativeness of Okai's poetic vision, their thematic depth, and their suitability for transitivity analysis within the Systemic Functional Linguistics framework. The selected poems capture diverse yet interconnected experiences of African identity, history, and social transformation, themes that lie at the heart of Okai's composition and align with the research objective of exploring ideational meanings in African poetry. Electronic versions of the poems were reproduced from the researcher's personal copy of the anthology and used solely for academic analysis.

3.3 Population

The study population comprises three poems from Okai's anthology: *The Oath of the Fontomfrom* (243 lines), *The Pioneer* (114 lines), and *Walewale Chorus* (121 lines), making a total of 478 lines. These poems were not chosen on the basis of the poet's gender, the researcher's personal preference, or convenience. Rather, they were selected because Atukwei Okai is widely recognised as one of Africa's most influential poets, whose works articulate the socio-political and cultural struggles of postcolonial Africa (Okai & Agambila, 2018). The poems exemplify the unique interplay of traditional oral aesthetics and modern literary expression, making them particularly rich for linguistic analysis of transitivity structures. Furthermore, Okai's poems are widely studied in Ghanaian tertiary institutions, underscoring their educational significance. Therefore, analyzing them contributes not only to scholarly discourse on African literature but also to pedagogical understanding of his works, particularly in relation to how language encodes experiences, worldviews, and ideologies.

3.4 Sampling Procedure

The study adopted a purposive sampling technique to select both the poet and the poems. Purposive sampling, a type of non-probability sampling, is appropriate for qualitative research where the aim is not to generalise to a population but to conduct an in-depth exploration of specific texts that are information-rich and contextually relevant (Black, 2010; Palinkas et al., 2015). The researcher's choice of Okai and these three poems was guided by both thematic and methodological considerations.

First, after an exploratory review of poems by several African poets, Okai's works were found to consistently embody themes of African renaissance, identity, and collective memory,

which resonate with the objectives of the study. The selected poems, in particular, address the broader theme of evoking the spirit of a new Africa while reflecting lived realities of the African society, thereby offering fertile ground for transitivity analysis of experiential meanings.

Second, the linguistic style of the poems is predominantly prosaic, a quality that makes them more accessible for clause-level analysis without sacrificing their poetic depth. This stylistic trait enables a systematic identification of process types and participants, which is central to the Systemic Functional Linguistics framework adopted in the study. Thus, purposive sampling was not only justified but necessary to ensure the selection of texts that could best address the research questions.

3.5 Data Analysis Procedure

This research applied the transitivity framework developed by Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) within Systemic Functional Linguistics. The core components of this framework (processes and participants) guided the stages of examination. The procedure for analyzing processes unfolded as follows: initially, the text was broken down into individual clauses. Dependent clauses were treated as distinct units of analysis since they function as components of a clause complex (equivalent to what traditional grammar calls a sentence). Each process within the clauses was then identified and classified into one of six categories: material, mental, relational, behavioral, verbal, or existential. The next phase involved comparing the distribution of these process types across the poems. Finally, the third step interpreted the variations according to Halliday and Matthiessen's (2014) transitivity model in SFL.

3.6 Summary of Chapter

This chapter outlined the overall research framework, including how data was gathered, the sampling approach applied, the techniques used for analysis, and the reasons behind these choices. The following chapter will focus on presenting and interpreting the findings from the two major parts of the analysis. The first part will report the outcomes of the transitivity study on the process types identified in the chosen poems. Furthermore, the next chapter will explore the communicative meanings conveyed through the use of these process types in the poems.



CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis of data of the sampled poems from Atukwei Okai's anthology employing transitivity model of Halliday' (1985) Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). The analysis is done as a direct response to the research questions as demonstrated as follows:

4.1 Research Question 1: What is the distribution of the process types found in the selected poems of Atukwei Okai?

In the three poems selected for this study, Atukwei Okai uses a plethora of processes which reflect consciously or unconsciously his ideological perspective of the literary world of his creation. The following analysis examines the process categories used in each poem. Following the examples of Halliday and Matthiessen (2014), the Process function is taken together with those participant functions which are critical to the distinction between one process type and another, and this will be the pattern of presentation throughout the analysis of the process types. With the corpus analysed into one hundred and ninety-seven ranking clauses (main and subordinate), the process in each clause is entered as a distinct clause and assigned a category: material, mental, relational, verbal, behavioural, and existential. First, the distribution of the process types is presented in Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1: Frequency distribution of process types

Process Type	Freq.	%
Material	107	54.3
Mental	29	14.7
Relational	23	11.7
Verbal	20	10.2
Behavioural	13	6.6
Existential	5	2.5
Total	197	100

Across the three poems, material processes are frequently used. They constitute over 54% (107 clauses) of the total 197 distinct clauses identified in these poems. The second most frequent process type is the mental process (29 clauses) representing 14.7% followed by relational processes (23 clauses) representing 11.7%, verbal processes (20 clauses) representing 10.2%, behavioural processes (13 clauses) representing 6.6%, and existential processes (5 clauses) representing 2.5%.

4.1.1 The material processes

The material processes are further analysed into doings and happenings, whether or not they have agents and/or goals.

4.1.1.1 Material doings

Eighty-one of the material processes are doings in the corpus. These will be discussed on poem by poem basis starting from “The Pioneer”.

Material processes in “The Pioneer” include feeding, approaching, clothing, lending, making, sitting, hiding, consoling, putting, giving, building, carrying, reconstructing, furnishing, returning, moulding, collecting, carving, weaving, melting, and teaching as seen in the following clauses:

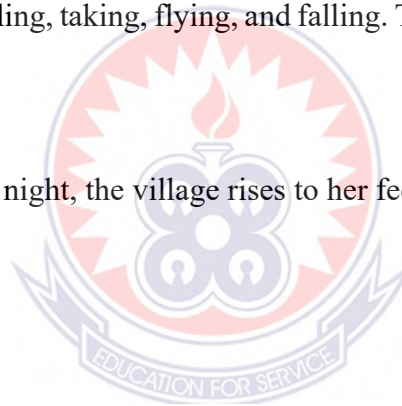
1. The fruits of the tall trees, the waters of the silent springs and streams **feed** me.
2. For my bed and pillow I **approach** the leaves.
3. The animals **clothe** me with their skins.
4. The hare has **lent** me her feet.
5. To me **has been lent** the neck of the giraffe.

Material processes in “The Oath of the Fontomfrom” are rising, awakening, leaping, reaching out, sprawling, clutching, posting, keeping, erasing, sitting, going, seeking, catching, lying, tearing, standing, breathing, shedding, breaking, burying, massacring, squeezing, carving, heating, raining, burning, crawling, taking, flying, and falling. These are evident in such clauses as follows:

1. In the middle of a moonless night, the village rises to her feet from sleep.
2. The living are awakened.
3. The males are leaping
4. The males are reaching out for spears and arrows and bows
5. But the drummer of the village is sprawling dead on his floor

Material processes in “Walewale Chorus” include coming, giving, bundling, shaking up, doing, washing, crumbing, deserting, sitting, drinking, charging, meeting, lurking, springing, pouncing, landing, kissing, rolling up. These are expressed in clauses including:

1. **Come** unto me
2. And I **will give** you rest.



3. **Bundle** them together
4. **Shake** them up together
5. But what *he* has **done to** me

4.1.1.2 Material happenings

There are twenty-six happenings across the three poems. These include:

a. In “*The Pioneer*”; ‘allowing’, letting, and ‘finding’ as used in:

1. **Do not allow** my sister.
2. **Don’t allow** them into any bush
3. For the mortar I **must find** a head.

b. In “*The Oath of the Fontomfrom*”; arousing, sending, guiding, leading, visiting, starving, paralyzing, strengthening, and staying as shown in the following clauses:

1. The village **aroused** not by owl, not by cock
2. And the faithful Fontomfrom **is sending**
3. My voice **guided** them here
4. My voice **led** them here
5. Because when you **want to starve** the ocean

- c. In “*Walewale Chorus*” – happening, testing, labouring, stirring up, separating, going, starting, going on, thirsting, feasting, rising, stopping, rejecting, waiting, letting, and seeking as used in clauses such as:

1. What **has happened** to the rainy season?
2. The devil **tested** the Lord
3. All ye that **labour**
4. **Stir** them **up** together

4.1.1.3 Material participants

This sub-part of the analysis is to highlight the key elements that influence the decision to allocate processes to material type. The participants of the material processes identified in the data include Actor, Goal, and Recipient. From this point, I present the analysis of the elements which perform each Participant role.

4.1.1.3.1 Actor

The Actors in “The Pioneer” include: *the fruits of the tall trees, the waters of the silent springs and streams; the animals; the hare; your memory; my sisters; they* (i.e., my sisters); *our father; I* (twelve times); and ‘the understood *you*’ (three times) as seen in examples below (Participants are indicated by underlining following the example of Halliday and Mathhiessen (2014)):

1. The fruits of the tall trees, the waters of the silent springs and streams feed me.
2. For my bed and pillow I approach the leaves.
3. The animals clothe me with their skins.
4. The hare has lent me her feet.
5. ___ Give to sisters and brothers gifts meant for me

The performers in “The Oath of the Fontomfrom” consist of the village itself, the men (appearing three times), the speaker or narrator (mentioned twice), the collective “we,” a female figure, the pronoun “they” (appearing six times), the women and young girls, the men and boys, a paternal figure, human hands, the absence of hands, a singular hand, the speaker’s own voice, the devoted Fontomfrom, her feathers, the cloud, the owl and the cock, blazing flames, the fire, and the dove belonging to us, as reflected in several examples below:

1. In the middle of a moonless night, the village rises to her feet from sleep
2. The males, [[now armed,]] post themselves all around the village
3. That I sat at the feet of my father not just for nothing
4. When, in the past, the women and girls had gone down to the stream’s water
5. And the men and boys had gone far behind the hills for the forest’s venison and fruit
6. And the roofs of the children’s hut had been visited by the flames of fire

The Actors in “Walewale Chorus” include: *I* (eleven times), *we*, *he* (two times), *they* (four times), *you* (six times including the refrain *all ye that labour*), *only a midnight rainfall*, *hell*, *cassava-coloured serpents* (six times), *what*, *the devil*, *my radar system*, some of which are seen in the following examples:

1. Their under table crumbs I am deserting
2. They are drinking
3. How many times do we have to meet God
4. But minus what originally, he [God] gave to you and us all; two firm feet for the ground

5. The devil tested the Lord

The elements performing the Actor role can be categorised severally. However, in this analysis, I group them into human and non-human distinctions and frequency. There are predominant human Actors and the persona, *I*, has more frequency than all the others put together. In “The Pioneer”, for example, the persona, *I*, has the Actor frequency of twelve out of total eighteen human Actors as found in clauses such as follows:

1. For my bed and pillow I approach the leaves.
2. how I have consoled them in my arms I shall [soon] carry home the firewood.
3. And I must furnish it into a home
4. For the spears I must melt some spear head.

The other human Actors in “The Pioneer” include the addressee (*my dear mother* or simply ‘the understood *You*), *our father*, *my sisters* (or *they*) as seen in the following clauses:

1. Do not put any food or fruit aside for me
2. My sisters to sit by the fire
3. They to hide in any corner
4. Our father had built for us a house

The dominant persona, *I*, Actor is also found in “Walewale Chorus”; it has frequency of eleven (11) out of twenty-three (23) human Actors. Some of the clauses with the persona as the Actor are as follows:

5. I come charging
6. Now I am going to start walking
7. Now I am going to stop crawling

8. I am rising

The other human Actors in “Walewale Chorus” include: *we*, *you* (including the ‘understood *You*’), *he* (God / man), *they* (perhaps, the one God above and the ten gods here below), and *the devil* as seen in the clauses below:

1. Come unto me
2. They are drinking
3. How many times do we have to meet God
4. But minus what originally he [God] gave to you and us all; two firm feet for the ground
5. The devil tested the Lord

The preponderance of human Actors and, particularly the persona, *I*, performing the Actor role as a participant in these two poems signals that the respective speakers mostly place emphasis on their own actions and that of other members of the community within their physical environments.

There are equally dominant human Actors in “The Oath of the Fontomfrom”, including *I*, *we*, *she*, *they* (the adversaries), *the males*, *the women and girls*, *the men and boys*, and *our father* as evident in the following clauses:

- 1st person nominals: *I*, *we*: as are evident in the following clauses:
 1. That I sat at the feet of my father not just for nothing
 2. We ... crawl
- 2nd person nominals: *you* (explicit and understood) in the following clauses:
 1. Let no hand carve our tomb
 2. Because when you want to starve the ocean || You paralyze its source, the river
- 3rd person nominals such as: *the village* (personified), *males*, *women and girls*, *men and boys*, *they*, *father*, *she* as are in the following clauses:

1. In the middle of a moonless night, the village rises to her feet from sleep
2. The males are leaping
3. When, in the past, the women and girls had gone down to the stream's water
4. And the men and boys had gone far behind the hills for the forest's venison and fruit

The non-human Actors have different elements in these poems. In "The Oath of the Fontomfrom", the Actors include human body parts such as hand (as in *human hands*, *no hand*, *the hand*) and voice (as in *my voice*) and *our dove*. Here are few clauses:

1. Our dove shall fly across the flames of the big bonfires of time
2. No human hands shall erase our spirit out of us

In "The Pioneer", however, the non-human elements performing the Actor role are things in the wild such as *the animals*, *the hare*, *the fruits of the tall trees*, *the waters of the silent springs and streams* and one abstraction, *your memory* as seen in the following clauses:

1. Your memory has made me
2. The hare has lent me her feet

The non-human Actors in the in "Walewale Chorus" include things such as *only a midnight rainfall*, *hell*, *cassava-coloured serpents* (six times), *they* (petrol, water, coconut oil, kerosene, palm oil, groundnut oil), and *my radar system* as seen in the following clauses.

1. My radar system rejects the moonlight in your eyes, the sunshine in your smile
2. Only a midnight rainfall can wash away –

The Actor is one of the direct participants, and its presence or otherwise has semantic significance to the meaning construction in the clause. For example, the complete absence of the Actor results in passivation, which signals the writer's or persona's lack of interest in

projecting the agent of the action in the process. In “The Pioneer”, only one material clause is without Actor:

1. To me has been lent the neck of the giraffe

Who did the lending is not stated in this clause and even unspecified in the poem.

In “The Oath of the Fontomfrom”, the Actor-less clauses include:

1. Their faces are kept on the forest
2. I am sought day and night
3. Our farms shall be set ablaze
4. And the blood of our children shed
5. And even I am strengthened

From the forgone analysis, a number relationships exist in the three poems in term of the Actor participant. A key point of convergence across “The Pioneer”, “The Oath of the Fontomfrom”, and “Walewale Chorus” is the dominance of human Actors, particularly the persona (*I*), who assumes central agency in the unfolding experiences of each poem. In “The Pioneer”, the persona *I* appears twelve times out of eighteen human Actors, showing strong self-representation and emphasising survival, human-nature interaction, and family relations. Similarly, in “Walewale Chorus”, the persona *I* is dominant (eleven times out of twenty-three human Actors), underscoring the speaker’s voice in articulating experiences of oppression, resistance, and struggle. “The Oath of the Fontomfrom” also contains frequent first-person nominals (*I*, *we*) but goes further by incorporating collective human Actors such as the males, the women and girls, the men and boys, and the village. This emphasis on both the self and the community underscores a shared sense of collective agency in the poem’s depiction of communal mobilization against aggression. Thus, across all three poems, human Actors,

especially the persona, remain the primary agents of action, signifying a consistent focus on human-centred experiences.

In addition, all three poems employ non-human Actors, though their functions vary with subject matter. In “The Pioneer”, nature is personified as Actor, e.g., *the fruits of the tall trees*, *the waters of the silent springs*, *the animals*, and even abstractions like *your memory*, signalling the poem’s concern with human dependence on the natural world. “The Oath of the Fontomfrom” also uses non-human Actors, but in a more symbolic and ideological way: *the village* (personified), *the hand*, *my voice*, and *our dove* are mobilized as agents of resistance, faith, and continuity. Meanwhile, in “Walewale Chorus”, non-human Actors such as hell, cassava-coloured serpents, only a midnight rainfall, and my radar system symbolize oppression, destruction, and distorted realities. Across the three poems, then, non-human Actors serve as extensions of thematic concerns – either reinforcing survival (“The Pioneer”), communal resilience (“The Oath of the Fontomfrom”), or socio-political critique (“Walewale Chorus”).

A further relationship is evident in the way Actor frequency reflects thematic focus. In both “The Pioneer” and “Walewale Chorus”, the predominance of the persona *I* suggests a personal and individualistic lens through which wider social issues such survival, inequality are explored. By contrast, “The Oath of the Fontomfrom” distributes agency more widely across both individual and collective Actors, signalling its communal theme of solidarity and collective struggle. Despite these variations, all three poems converge in showing the Actor role as a central meaning-making resource: it not only drives the action but also highlights the human condition – whether in relation to nature, oppression, or collective resistance.

In such clauses, the determination of the process type is dependent on the presence of the other material participants, particularly the Goal.

4.1.1.3.2 Goal

Like the Actor, the other main participant of the material process is the Goal. The present data shows some dynamics in the elements that function as the Goal. Like, I have done for the Actor, I present the goals in each poem and go on to categorise them into human and non-human.

The elements functioning as Goal (or simply Goals) across the three poems include dominantly things, which stand in sharp contrast with the Actors. The things functioning as the Goal participant in “The Pioneer” include natural things (such as *leaves, firewood, water, and head* and man-made things (such as *blade, broom, stones steel, head, net, spearheads and a house*). There are few humans Goals including *me, my sisters* and *them* (referring to *my sister*). Here are a few examples of clauses in “The Pioneer” containing Goals (underlined as hinted earlier):

1. Your memory has made me
2. Give to sister and brothers gifts [[meant for me]]
3. I shall soon carry home the firewood
4. Our father had built for us a house
5. For the spears I must melt some spear head

The Goals in “The Oath of the Fontomfrom” include mostly concrete things (such as *spears and arrows and bows, the roofs of the children’s huts, the masks, Our farms, The oven, thorns, the blood of our children, my neck, and our tombstone*), abstraction (*our spirit*) and human (such as *I/me, us, themselves* (referring to *the males* and *my children*). See the examples below from “The Oath of the Fontomfrom”:

1. Human hands shall erase our spirit out of us
2. The roofs of the children's huts had been visited by flames
3. I am sought
4. The hand that carves our tombstone now

Notably, the human Goal participants in “Walewale Chorus” are three, two of whom semantically have the same referent, *God/Lord*; the third is *me* (i.e. the persona). Here are examples:

1. How many times do we have to meet God
2. The devil *Actor* tested the Lord *Goal*

The non-human Goal participants in “Walewale Chorus” include physical concrete things (such as, *two firm feet, flesh, mat, door, them* (petrol, water, coconut oil, kerosene, palm oil, groundnut oil), *their under table crumbs*,) and abstractions (such as *moonlight in your eyes, sunshine in your smile; walking; rest; starving; crawling*) as seen in the following examples:

1. But minus what originally, he gave to you and us all; two firm feet for the ground
2. And I will give you rest.
3. Their under table crumbs I am deserting
4. Now I am going to start walking
5. But my radar system rejects the moonlight in your eyes, the sunshine in your smile

Across the three poems, the Goals (the entities affected by the material processes) show a dynamic interplay between human and non-human participants, but the emphasis and distribution differ in each poem, reflecting the thematic focus of the texts. In “The Pioneer”, the Goals are dominantly non-human concrete things such as *leaves, firewood, water, blade, broom, stones, steel, net, spearheads, and a house*. These signify material survival and the daily

struggles of the persona. However, there are also a few human Goals (*me, my sisters, them*), suggesting that human relationships and kinship obligations are occasionally affected by the material actions.

In “The Oath of the Fontomfrom”, the Goals also include a mix of non-human concrete entities (*spears, arrows, bows, huts, masks, farms, ovens, thorns, tombstone*), abstract entities (*our spirit*), and human participants (*I, me, us, themselves, my children*). The presence of abstraction here, particularly spirit, extends the semantic field of Goals beyond the physical to the symbolic, pointing to deeper cultural and spiritual dimensions of existence.

In “Walewale Chorus”, the Goals shift further toward a blend of human, physical, and abstract domains. Human Goals are few, mostly divine and personal (*God/Lord, me*), highlighting a strong spiritual orientation. The non-human Goals include concrete physical items (*two firm feet, flesh, mat, door, oils, crumbs*) as well as abstractions (*moonlight, sunshine, walking, rest, starving, crawling*). These abstractions suggest emotional, existential, and internal struggles rather than just physical survival.

4.1.2 Mental processes

Halliday and Matthiessen (2004 and 2014) refer to the mental processes as processes that encode meanings of thinking and feeling. These processes make use of senses of a human (or a personified entity) and fall into three categories of meaning – cognition, affection, and perception (Halliday, 2008).

4.1.2.1 Mental cognition

Mental cognition processes identified in the data will be discussed similarly to how the material processes were done beginning with the “The Pioneer”. The following mental cognition processes – expecting, thinking, minding – were discovered in “The Pioneer”. See some examples in 1 – 4 below:

1. **Expect** me ... my dear mother.
2. Do not allow my sisters || to sit by the roadside || **expecting** me.
3. Don’t allow them || to hide in any corner || **thinking** over my absence.
4. Tell them || to reconstruct it a thousand times || **not minding** the destructive, erosive rains

Likewise, the mental cognitive processes in “The Oath of the Fontomfrom” include remembering, aiming, minding, knowing, learning, and aiming as seen in the following examples 1 – 4:

1. Our enemies **refuse** || to **remember**.
2. The hand ... **shall know** this
3. That even before **we learnt** || to crawl
4. That they **aim** at me

Mental cognitive processes found in “Walewale Chorus” include knowing, and recognising. See some examples in 1 - 4 below:

1. I **know** || what I am doing.
2. We **recognise** him in the street.
3. Before we **recognise** his hand.

4. Before we **recognise** his face.

4.1.2.2 *Mental affection*

The affective mental processes identified in the data will be discussed similarly to how the discussion of the cognitive processes has been done beginning with the “The Pioneer” as usual. The affective processes in “The Pioneer” are enduring, worrying, consoling, weeping, sorrowing as seen in examples 1 – 5 below:

1. But [You] **do not worry** because of me.
2. ... me [I] **endure** the sunrays’ bullying, the biting of the ants and the cold nights
3. My sisters ... **sorrowing** over my absence
4. My **sisters** ... **weep**
5. I **would have consoled** them in my arms

There is only one affective mental process (*woeing*) in “The Oath of the Fontomfrom” and is found in the clause below:

1. But unto those native sons, **woe** by whose unshivering, neverless hands

4.1.2.3 *Mental perception*

Very notably, there is no perceptive mental process in “The Pioneer”. However, there is one each in “The Oath of the Fontomfrom” as seen in example 1 and in “Walewale Chorus” as seen in example 2 below. In both instances, the process is *seeing*:

1. their eyes **see(ing)** *before* them and far beyond
2. Do you **see** that man?

4.1.2.4 Mental Participants

These mental processes involve two participants – Sensor and Phenomenon. The Sensor, according to Halliday and Matthiessen (2014), is always a human or a personified participant; it is the participant who has the mind in which the process occurs. I will at this point discuss first the Sensor starting as usual with “The Pioneer”. The Sensor role in “The Pioneer” is performed by three elements – the persona, *I*, and two close relatives of the persona, namely *my sisters* and *my dear mother*. See some examples 1 – 4 below:

1. Expect me ... my dear mother.
2. Do not allow my sisters || to sit by the roadside || expecting me
3. I would have consoled them in my arms
4. ... me [I] endure the sunrays’ bullying, the biting of the ants and the cold nights

In contrast with the Actors of the material processes, which are dominantly carried out by masculine animate participants, the Sensor participants of the mental processes are dominantly feminine. For example, *mother expects* while *father builds a house*.

This observation does not relegate to the background the thinking and feeling processes of the masculine participants or the doing capacity of the feminine. The emphasis however is on the dominancy. We can at least talk of the persona (arguably male) *consoling* the sisters, and the sisters *building* hearth.

The Sensor in “The Oath of the Fontomfrom” mental clauses include: human (such as *we*, *our enemies*, *the one*, and *we* as exemplified in as 1 – 3 below) and personified human body parts (such as *eye* and *hand* as seen in examples 4 – 5 below)

1. Our enemies.... to remember

2. The one [i.e. someone] ... will know
3. That even before we learnt to crawl
4. [their eyes] see(ing) before them and far beyond
5. The hand ... shall know ... this: ...

In “Walewale Chorus”, the elements functioning as the Sensor include *I*, *we* and *you* as seen in the following clauses 1 – 3:

1. I know what I am doing.
2. Do you see that man?
3. We recognize him in the street.

These are in consonance with Halliday’s (2008) claim that the Sensor of a mental process is a human or a personified entity.

With regard to the other main element, the Phenomenon, in the clauses of mental process, i.e. that which is felt, thought about or perceived, the Phenomenon of the processes is dominantly the persona *me*, or something about the persona like *my absence*. So, the mental processes in the *The Pioneer* are a direct interaction between human participants. We may however talk of minority sensing (i.e. enduring) of the persona towards some unfavourable natural phenomenon, such as “the sunrays’ bullying, the biting of the ants and the cold nights”.

In “The Oath of the Fontomfrom”, the role of the set of things that is thought about, perceived, or felt (i.e. the Phenomenon) is played by:

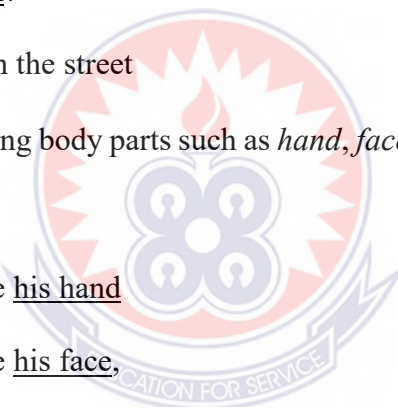
- inanimate thing (i.e., place) such as *before them and far beyond*
 1. their eyes pierce the foliage of darkness || seeing before them and far beyond

- facts such as: *to crawl, this*: (i.e. ‘that even before we learnt to crawl our fathers took us a-hunting’) and *that those [[aimed at]] are those || who are the keepers of their brothers* as exhibited in the following examples:

1. That even before we learnt to crawl
2. Their hand ... know this.
3. That they aimed at me seeing that those [[aimed at]] are those || who are the keepers of their brothers

The Phenomenon in “Walewale Chorus” includes:

- human nominal groups such as *that man*, and *him* in as seen in examples 1 – 2 below.
 1. Do you see that man?
 2. We recognize him in the street
- inanimate things including body parts such as *hand, face*, and *voice* as seen in examples 1 – 3 below:
 1. Before we recognize his hand
 2. Before we recognize his face,
 3. Before we recognize his voice
- other things like *his whip* as seen in the following example:
 1. Before we recognize his whip.
- fact such as *what I am doing* as found in the following example:
 1. I know || what I am doing.



4.1.3 Relational processes

Relational processes deal with states of being and possession, and their core function is to connect a participant with either an identity or a description (Butt, 1995). These processes often involve verbs that establish such links, such as *am*, *is*, *are*, *was*, *will be*, *seem*, *become*, *appear*, *remain*, *look*, *have*, *feel*, and similar forms. Relational processes are generally divided into three kinds of relationships (intensive, possessive, and circumstantial) and each can operate in two modes: attributive or identifying. When these systems overlap, they produce six types of relational clauses: (1) intensive attributive, (2) intensive identifying, (3) possessive attributive, (4) possessive identifying, (5) circumstantial attributive, and (6) circumstantial identifying.

4.1.3.1 Attributive intensive clauses

Attributive intensive processes in “The Pioneer” include *are* and *is* as seen in the following clauses:

1. And our forests **are** rich in these
2. And in forest, our native land **is** rich.
3. This **is not** so.

The attributive intensive processes in “The Oath of the Fontomfrom” include *is* and *am* as seen in the following examples:

1. Where the murdered drummer **is** dead
2. Proud I **am**

The attributive intensive processes in “Walewale Chorus” include *are* and *is* as seen in examples 1 – 3 below:

1. All ye are heavy laden.

2. He is a friend.
3. All **is** well.

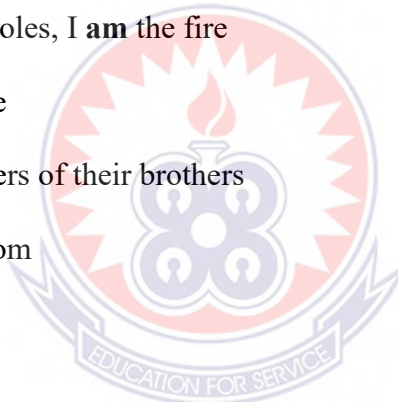
4.1.3.2 Identifying intensive clauses

The identifying intensive clauses in In “The Pioneer” include:

1. This **is** all I need.
2. I **am** the male among you.
3. I **am** our father’s first son.

The identifying intensive clauses in “The Oath of the Fontomfrom” are as follows:

1. Under their sore soles, I **am** the fire
2. those ... **are** those
3. Who **are** the keepers of their brothers
4. I **am** the Fontomfrom
5. I **am** Africa



4.1.3.3 Attributive possessive clauses

The attributive possessive clauses identified in “The Pioneer” include the following examples:

1. My sisters **have** a course.
2. From the moon and the sun, I **have** my light.

4.1.3.4 Identifying possessive clauses

The identifying possessive clauses in “The Pioneer” include the examples below:

1. The elephant skin **is** mine.

2. The nose of the bat **is** mine.
3. Mine **is** the lion's heart.

4.1.3.5 Attributive circumstantial clauses

The attributive circumstantial clauses in “Walewale Chorus” include the following examples:

1. And here ... you **are** still human being.
2. It **is** beyond me to explain.

4.1.3.6 Relational participants

Relational processes are categorised into two modes: attributive and identifying. In the Attributive mode, an entity (i.e., Carrier) has some quality (i.e., Attribute) ascribed to it. Meanwhile in identifying mode an entity (i.e., Identified) has an identity (i.e., Identifier) assigned to them.

The relational participants in “The Pioneer” are Carrier (*our forest* and *our native land*), Attribute (*rich in these* and *rich*) as seen in examples 1 – 2 below. Others are Identified (*mine*) and Identifier (*the elephant skin* and *the nose of the bat*) as in 3 – 4 below:

1. And our forests are rich in these
2. And in forest, our native land is rich.
3. The elephant skin is mine.
4. The nose of the bat is mine

Here, the elements functioning as Attribute are nominal group *rich* and *rich in these*, which describe the Carriers *our forests* and *our native land* respectively. These nominal and adjective elements functioning as the attributes need to ascribe a quality to the nominal group

functioning as the Carrier. The Identifiers include: *all I need, the elephant skin, the nose of the bat, the lions' heart, the male among you*, and *our father's first son* (all nominals).

The Attributes ascribe qualities to the nominal or pronominal Carrier, and including: the 1st person animate participant, *I* or *mine*, (i.e. the persona), and inanimate participants, *our forest*, and *our native land*.

In “The Oath of the Fontomfrom” the relational participants include Carrier (*the murdered drummer, I*), Attribute (*dead, proud*), Identified (*I, those, who*) and Identifier (*the fire, those, the keepers of their brothers, the Fontomfrom, Africa*). These nominal and adjective elements functioning as the Attributes and Identifiers describe or define the nominal groups functioning as the Carrier and Identified.

In “Walewale Chorus” the elements functioning as the Attribute are nominal group and adjective group. The nominal groups are ‘twenty-seven poles’, ‘a friend I know’, ‘human being’, and ‘beyond me’ while the adjective group include ‘heavy laden’, and ‘well’. These elements ascribe attributes to the elements functioning as the Carrier such as ‘all ye’, ‘we’, ‘he’, ‘you’, ‘it’ and ‘all’. The Carrier elements are usually nominal or pronominal.

4.1.4 Verbal processes

The verbal process represents processes of verbalisation including ‘saying’ and any kind of symbolic exchange of meaning such as: *talking, saying, asking, replying, suggesting, praising, insulting, slandering, and flattering*. The verbal processes in the present data are as follows:

A. In “The Pioneer”, the verbal processes include *saying, telling, speaking, singing, calling*, and *answering*. Below are examples of verbal clauses 1 – 5 below:

1. The birds **sing** for me.
2. I **would have told** you this:
3. I ***speak*** the language of the antelope and leopard
4. But during libation you **could call**.
5. And when you ***are answering***.

B. In “The Oath of the Fontomfrom”, the verbal processes are *pealing, weeping, wailing, booming, moaning, sounding, hailing, and warning*. Some examples of the verbal clauses are as follows:

1. In the center of the empty courtyard, the vigilant Fontomfrom ***peals*** forth
2. The Fontomfrom ***keeps on weeping***
3. The Fontomfrom ***keeps on wailing***
4. The Fontomfrom keeps ***on booming***
5. And the Fontomfrom ***keeps on moaning***

C. In “Walewale Chorus”, the verbal processes include *decreeing, telling, warning, and yelling* as seen in the following clauses:

1. And **decreed** by the one God above and the ten gods here below.
2. ... **tell** it upstairs.
3. No bell **will warn** them.
4. **don’t yell!**

4.1.4.1 Verbal participants

The three key participants of the verbal processes are Sayer, Verbiage and Receiver.

4.1.4.1.1 Sayer

The Sayer will be discussed similarly to how the earlier participants and processes have been done beginning as usual with “The Pioneer”. In “The Pioneer”, the nominal elements functioning as the Sayer are human, including the 1st and the 2nd person *I*, *you* and non-human, *the birds* as seen in examples 1 – 3 below:

1. The birds sing for me.
2. I would have told you this:
3. But during libation you could call.

The Sayer in “The Oath of the Fontomfrom” includes the personified *Fontomfrom* (also *the vigilant Fontomfrom* or *the faithful Fontomfrom*) and *I* (i.e., the persona) as seen in the such clauses as follows:

1. In the centre of the empty courtyard, the vigilant Fontomfrom peals forth
2. The Fontomfrom keeps on weeping
3. I hailed
4. And I warned my brothers.

The Sayer in “Walwale Chorus” includes *no bell* and the understood *you* (here, addressee) as in the following examples:

1. No bell will warn them
2. ___ Don’t yell!

From the foregone analysis, the verbal activities are carried out mostly by persona speakers and their addressees (*I* and *you* respectively).

4.1.4.1.2 Receiver

Even though it could be anticipated that the Receiver role would be dominated by the addressee, the data shows something to the contrary. The Receiver participants in “The

Pioneer” are humans, including *you* (i.e. the dear mother of persona)’, *me*, and *my sisters* as seen in the following examples:

1. The birds sing for me.
2. I would have told you this:
3. Tell my sisters || to build the hearth

There is interestingly only one Receiver, *my brothers* (see the clause below), in “The Oath of the Fontomfrom” indicating that almost all the verbal acts are not directed at any particular entity.

1. And I warned my brothers

In “Walewale Chorus”, the only Receiver is *them* (referring to those who ‘sit upstairs drinking’) as seen in the example below.

1. No bell will warn them

4.1.4.1.3 Verbiage

The Verbiage participants in “The Pioneer” include abstract things such as *language of the antelope and leopard, questions*; and facts such as *this: Your memory has made me endure the sunrays’ bullying, to build the hearth*. The analysis reveals strong verbal interactions between humans as Sayer and Receiver in this poem as seen the following examples:

1. I **peak** the language of the antelope and leopard
2. And when you are answering questions on our family
3. Tell my sisters || to build the hearth

In “The Oath of the Fontomfrom” the verbal participants include only the Sayer, and Receiver. There is no Verbiage (i.e. the things that are said, warned, moaned) in this poem.

Such representation portrays a picture of empty verbal actions by the Sayer, which is mostly the *Fontomfrom* (the Akan talking drum used to send messages to the community).

In “Walewale Chorus”, the elements functioning as Verbiage is locution such as *that here d downstairs I’m rising* and *it* (referring to *I am thirsting* in the preceding lines) as seen the following examples:

1. Tell || that here downstairs I’m rising
2. Tell it upstairs [[where they are feasting]]

4.1.5 Behavioural processes

Behavioral processes are understood as partly physical and partly psychological (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004; 20214). Lock (1996) classifies them as “mental-action processes.” They function as outward expressions of inner experiences, reflecting both states of consciousness and bodily conditions. Typically, a behavioral process is expressed with an intransitive verb (involving just one participant) and describes an activity where the mental and physical elements are intertwined and equally essential. In the dataset, such processes appear only in “The Oath of the Fontomfrom.” Some of the behavioural clauses are as follows:

1. My brothers, my people, my brothers, till dawn, your vigil **must last**
2. Our enemies **refuse** || to remember
3. My voice **can never fail** me
4. And I **hurried** home your sires
5. I **breathe**

4.1.5.1 Behavioural participants

Contrary to popular claim that majority of behavioural processes often have only a participant, the Behaver (e.g., Eggins, 2004; Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014), a number of the process in Atukwei Okai's behavioural clauses in "The Oath of the Fontomfrom" have a second participant, the Behaviour. These elements functioning as Behaviours include

- physical things (both human and non-human) such as *me*, *beard* as seen in
 1. My voice can never fail me
 2. The marble that grows a beard
- abstract ideas like *sharpness*, *din*, *clashes*, and *weight* as exemplified in the following clauses:
 1. We already in our time have outlived the sharpness of your sword, the din of the struggle, the clashes of cutlasses
 2. We yet shall outlive the weight of lead
- psychological fact which themselves are analysed into separate clauses, including *to carve our tombstone* and *to die* as seen in the following examples:
 1. hand that shall dare || to carve our tombstone
 2. We shall refuse || to die.

The Behaver in "The Oath of the Fontomfrom" include

- human such as *our enemies*, *we*, *grand brothers* as found in the following examples:
 1. Our enemies refuse || to remember
 2. When you visiting grand brothers got lost at night on the way;
- Non-human (concrete or abstract things) such as *the marble*, and *my voice* as exemplified in the following clauses:
 1. The marble that grows a beard
 2. My voice can never fail me.

4.1.6 Existential processes

"The existential construction typically appears in two grammatical patterns: (1) it uses a linking verb together with the dummy subject *there*, or (2) it employs a linking verb with the Existent functioning as the subject, often accompanied by a circumstantial modifier." In "The Pioneer", there is only one existential clause as seen below:

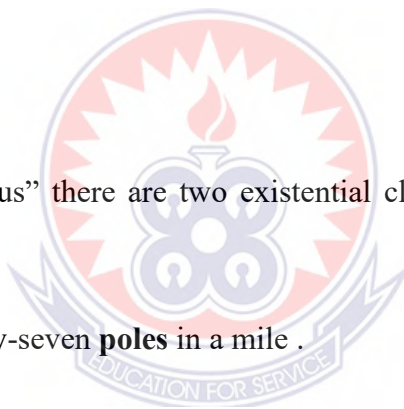
1. I **am** still in the wilderness alone

In "The Oath of the Fontomfrom", there are two existential clauses including the following:

1. Their ears **are** in the village there
2. It **is** not in our day

Likewise, in "Walewale Chorus" there are two existential clauses as seen in the examples below:

1. There ... **are** twenty-seven **poles** in a mile .
2. We **are** poles apart.



4.1.6.1 Existential participant

According to Halliday and Matthiessen (2014), existential process has only a participant named Existent. The Existent

- a. In "The Pioneer" is *I*.
- b. In "The Oath of the Fontomfrom" includes *their ears*, and *it*.
- c. In "Walewale Chorus" is *we*, and *twenty-seven poles*.

Atukwei Okai's choice of processes in the three poems analysed so far clearly reflects his world view and ideological representation. By aggregation, the renowned poet pays considerable attention to his concrete, physical world through his choice of a majority material processes.

4.2 Research Question 2: What are the differences in the process types in the three poems?

The analysis of the differences between the poems studied is presented in three phases including (1) types of process present, (2) the number of processes (dependent on the number of ranking clauses), and (3) frequency of the process types. Table 4.2 below will be our reference for most parts of this analysis.

Table 4.2: Frequency distribution of process types in each poem

Process Type	The Pioneer	The Oath of the Fontomfrom	Walewale Chorus	Total
Material	27 (25.2%)	44 (41.1%)	36 (33.7%)	107 (54.3%)
Mental	10 (34.5%)	8 (27.6%)	11 (37.9%)	29 (14.7%)
Relational	11 (47.8%)	7 (30.4%)	5 (21.7%)	23 (11.7%)
Verbal	7 (35.0%)	8 (40.0%)	5 (25.0%)	20 (10.2%)
Behavioural	0	13 (100.0%)	0	13 (6.6%)
Existential	1 (20.0%)	2 (40.0%)	2 (40.0%)	5 (2.5%)
Total	56 (28.4%)	82 (41.6%)	59 (30.0%)	197 (100%)

4.2.1 Types of processes present

In terms of process types, Table 4.2 shows some amounts of distinction between the poems. "The Pioneer" has five Hallidayan process types namely material, mental, relational,

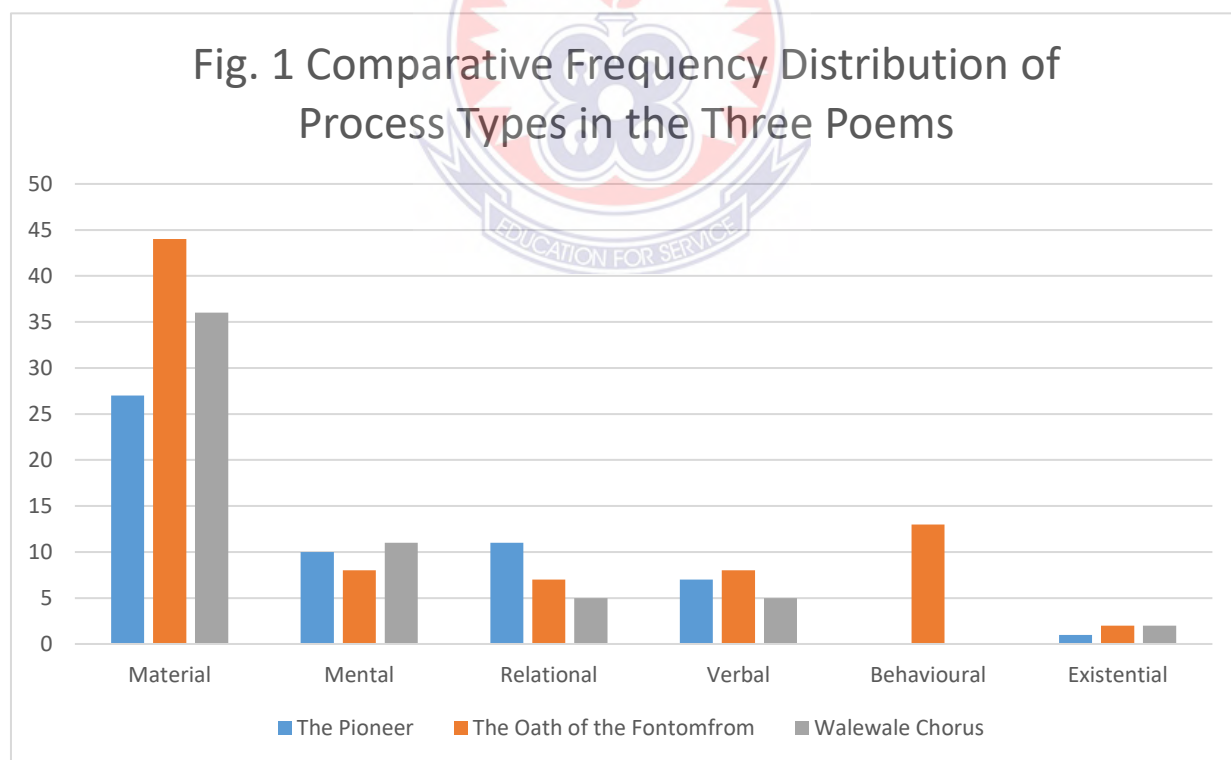
verbal and existential processes. Likewise, “Walewale Chorus” has material, mental, relational, verbal and existential processes. Each of the two poems does not have behavioural processes. On the contrary, “The Oath of the Fontomfrom” has all the six process types.

4.2.2 The number of processes

The frequency of the processes per poem indicates that “The Oath of the Fontomfrom” has the greatest number of processes (82, representing 41.6%), followed by “Walewale Chorus” made up of 59 processes representing 30.0%. The poem with the least number of processes is “The Pioneer” containing 56 processes representing 28.4%.

These numbers are easily appreciated with graphical representation as shown in Fig.

1 below:



In terms of process types, there are frequency differences. For material process type, Table 4.2 and Fig.1 show that “The Oath of the Fontomfrom” employs the most material processes (44 representing 41.1%) followed by “Walewale Chorus” (36 representing 33.7%).

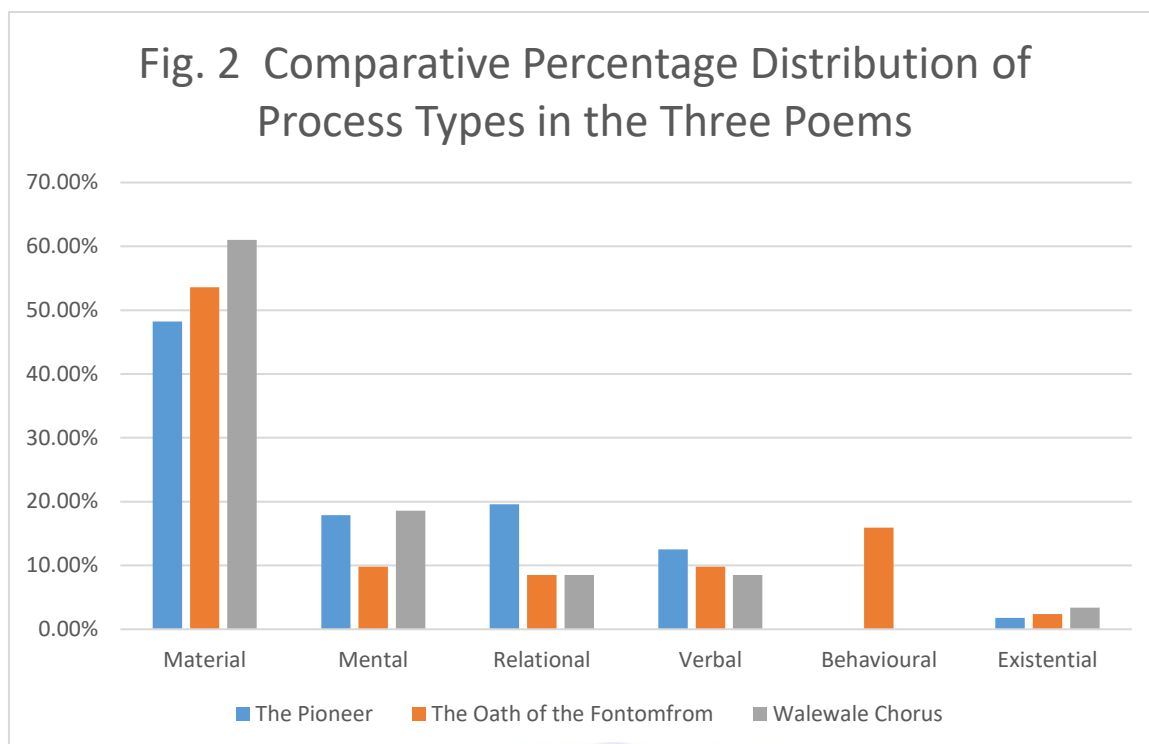
“The Pioneer” has the least material process (27 representing 25.0%). Likewise, “The Oath of the Fontomfrom” employs more verbal processes (8 representing 40.0%) followed by “The Pioneer” (7 representing 35.0%) with “Walewale Chorus” having the least verbal processes (5 representing 25.0%). “The Pioneer” employs more relational processes (11 representing 47.8%), “The Oath of the Fontomfrom” (7 processes representing 30.4%) and “Walewale Chorus” (5 processes, representing 21.7%).

The poems also exhibit some frequency distinctions looking at frequency of the process types poem-by-poem as shown in Table 4.3 below.

Table 4.3: Comparative percentage distribution of process types in the three poems

Process Type	The Pioneer		The Oath of the Fontomfrom		Walewale Chorus	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Material	27	48.2	44	53.6	36	61.0
Mental	10	17.9	8	9.8	11	18.6
Relational	11	19.6	7	8.5	5	8.5
Verbal	7	12.5	8	9.8	5	8.5
Behavioural	0		13	15.9	0	
Existential	1	1.8	2	2.4	2	3.4
Total	56	100%	82	100%	59	100%

From Table 4.3 and Fig. 2, when the frequencies in terms of percentages of the process types were analysed poem-by-poem, they exhibit the following dynamics in the distribution. In all the three poems, the material process type in “Walewale Chorus” tops the chart with 61.0%. What this means is that, material clauses form 61% of all the clauses in “Walewale Chorus”, that is, “Walewale Chorus” expresses dominantly the material experiences than the other two although they also employ a lot of material processes. The existential process type is minimally used in all the three poems. Graphically, this is represented in Fig.2.



The process types can be presented in the following order of frequency from the most to the least frequent:

“The Pioneer” – material, relational, mental, verbal, existential, and behavioural

“The Oath of the Fontomfrom” – material, behavioural, mental/verbal, relational, and existential

“Walewale Chorus” – material, mental, relational/verbal, existential, and behavioural

The tendency in “The Oath of the Fontomfrom” shows a significant deviation from Halliday and Matthiessen’ (2014) categorisation of material, mental and relational processes as major process types and behavioural, verbal and existential processes as minor process types. One remarkable feature of this poem is the frequency of behavioural processes, which is second to the material at the expense of mental and relational process types.

Another significant distinction is the frequency of relational and mental processes in “The Pioneer” and “Walewale Chorus”. While in the former, there are more relational processes, it is the reverse in the later.

These frequency characteristics draw significant distinctions between the three poems authored by the same poet, Atukwei Okai, and show how Transitivity analysis can be used to show linguistic difference in similar text types even of the genre.

4.3 Research Question 3: What accounts for the differences in the process types in the three poems?

This part of the analysis is presented in two broader thematic areas, one of which will have sub-theme. These thematic areas include structural composition and the subject matter.

4.3.1 Structural composition of the poems

This part of the analysis of the poems takes into account the lengths of the poems (word and sentence count), and the subject matters of the poems and to which extent these characteristics influence the distinction in the process types and frequencies in the three poems. The length involves word count and analysis of the poem into clause complexes (i.e., sentence) to establish the number of grammatical sentences in each poem. These numbers are juxtaposed with total number of clauses in each poem to see whether or not there is any correlation between the length and the number of clauses. The results of AntConc parsing are represented in Table 4.4 below:

Table 4.4: The lengths of the poems

Poem	Number of words		Number of sentences		Number of clauses	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
The Pioneer	487	29.4	50	30.1	56	28.4
The Oath of the Fontomfrom	669	40.4	58	36.0	82	41.6
Walewale Chorus	500	30.2	53	32.9	59	30.0
	1656	100%	161	100%	197	100%

From Table 4.4, there is a strong correlation between the lengths of the poems and the number of clauses (i.e., processes) contained in them. “The Oath of the Fontomfrom” with the highest number of words (669 representing 40.4% of the total word count) and sentences (i.e., clause complexes in SFL terminology) is constituted by the highest number of processes (82 representing 41.6% of the total clause count). Similarly, “The Pioneer”, which has the least number of words (487 representing 29.4%) and sentences (50), records the least frequency of processes (56 representing 28.4% of the clause count).

4.3.2 Subject matter

The second phase of the analysis is to establish how the subjects addressed in these poems account for the differences in the process (or clause) types in three sub-thematic areas: including: why the predominance of material processes across the three poems, why there is absence of behavioural processes in “The Pioneer” and “Walewale Chorus”, and why are there more behavioural processes in “The Oath of the Fontomfrom”.

4.3.2.1 *Material processes across the three poems*

The study observed a dominance of material processes in all the three poems because they address social phenomena including socio-natural relationship, social struggle and social discrimination. “The Pioneer” for instance addresses social interdependency between human versus human and human versus nature. The human-nature relations can be categorised into two sets of activities – man-to-nature and nature-man – both of which are physical actions involving mostly the persona and things and show the reliance of man on their physical environment for their survival. Among the man-to-nature interactions are

1. ‘to build The hearth’,
2. ‘carry home The firewood’,
3. ‘to reconstruct it [hearth]’,
4. ‘must furnish it [house]’,

Nature is also portrayed as Actor performing particularly material actions towards man. Some examples include

1. ‘The fruits of the tall trees, / The waters / Of the silent springs and streams / Feed me’
2. ‘The animals clothe me with / Their skins’
3. ‘For my bed and pillow I approach / The leaves’

“The Oath of the Fontomfrom” addresses communal mobilisation to oppose external aggression or attack, ‘our enemies’. It presents

- the doing of the people and the happenings in this situation. Some of these include:
 1. ‘rises / to her feet’,
 2. ‘are leaping and reaching / Out / for spears and arrows and bows’,
 3. guided and led them / here

- The anticipated actions of the enemies should the latter succeed. Some examples are
 1. 'Shall erase / our spirit',
 2. 'to break / my neck, Bury me / alive, massacre my children / And squeeze me into a bottle'.

Similarly, in “Walewale Chorus”, the subject of social segregation is deeply highlighted in a number of contradictory doings and happenings that characterise the yawning gap of inequality between the two ends – the oppressed and the oppressors. These doings include:

1. 'Are feasting',
2. 'Am thirsting'
3. 'Should I go on starving',
4. 'Am going to stop crawling',

All these are actions that require physical interactions between participants (Actors and Goals) characterised under material processes in the transitivity processes.

4.3.2.1 Behavioural processes

The study observed that “*The Pioneer*” and “*Walewale Chorus*” did not exhibit any behavioural processes. Halliday (1994) describes behavioural process type semantically as a ‘half-way house’ between mental and material process. "This type of process combines elements of both mental and physical activities, showing that the two aspects are interconnected and equally essential for it to take place."

However, in these two poems, the poet dwells on the specific physical, mental or verbal acts that emphasise the humans-nature and human-human interactions. “The Pioneer” depicts the narrator’s actions and interactions with the natural world, such as:

1. The fruits of the tall trees, the waters of the silent springs and streams feed me.

2. The animals clothe me with their skins.

This aligns with the poem's focus on the persona's physical experiences and survival in the wilderness. There are also the persona's interactions with their family, particularly his/her mother and sisters, who are depicted through material and verbal processes. Other humans such as *my sisters*, *our father* interact with non-humans such as *the hearth*, *a house* to perform separate either physical (i.e., material) such as *approaching*, *feeding*, *clothing*, *building* or psychological (i.e., mental) processes such as *expecting*, *consoling* and *seeing* with specified Goals such as *me*, *the leaves* or Phenomenon such as *me*, *them (my sisters)*. Likewise, in "Walewale Chorus", activities such *happened*, *tested*, *tested*, *give*, *stir*, *shake* and *separate* expresses only physiological relationship between Things (i.e., Actors and Goals).

On the other hand, "The Oath of the Fontomfrom" exhibited more behavioural processes because it presents a vivid and evocative depiction of a village's response to a dramatic event, the murder of the village drummer. The murder triggers both physical and emotional response from the village. The poet harnesses the behavioural resources of language to convey the unfolding events and the emotional state of the villagers. The interconnection of physical activities, which interplay tightly with emotive state as a result of the murder, accounts for the many behavioural processes. Entities such as *I*, *our enemies*, *we*, *grand brothers*, *the marble*, and *my voice* engage in physio-psychological activities such as *outlived*, *breathe*, *grows*, *dare*, and *refuse* that reflect both the outer experiences and inner consciousness of the poet (or the persona) simultaneously.

4.4 Discussion

As the widely used framework of Halliday and Matthiessen's (2014 following Halliday's (1985, 1994), Halliday and Matthiessen (2004)) Systemic Functional Linguistics theory, transitivity analysis has diverse scope in textual and discourse analysis. It offers readers rich linguistic proof that helps them interpret the characters within a text. Halliday's transitivity framework is particularly fitting for this research since one of its central strengths lies in focusing on real examples of language as they are used by speakers and writers. Language, in this sense, operates as a tool for representing reality; or more precisely, for constructing both imagined and perceived "worlds" (Bloor, 1995, p.105).

Through transitivity, it becomes possible to explore how readers or listeners are guided toward certain interpretations of meaning, and how the linguistic patterns of a text encode a specific perspective or "world-view." As a result, the transitivity system serves as an effective analytical lens for uncovering the mental shifts of characters, the categories of participants, the sequencing of their actions, and the broader picture of their environment. It also highlights the circumstances that shape local discourse contexts, ultimately framing how processes and participants are configured. The present study has focused the spotlight on the processes drawing slightly on the related participants that establish the realisation of the process types.

The analysis of "The Pioneer" examines the clause structures and the process types used to convey the poet's message and depict the persona's (or narrator's) experiences in the wilderness. The poem presents the first-person perspective of a narrator who has chosen to live in isolation in the natural world, rejecting the comforts of civilization. The narrator describes their self-sufficient existence, finding sustenance, shelter, and companionship from the elements and animals of the forest. The poem, thus, portrays active physical human-nature, and human-human interaction within the context of the persona and, by extension, the poet.

Nature here includes both the natural and man-made environment. The natural environment includes forests, land, trees, springs, streams, moon, sun, animals, and leaves while the man-made environment includes hearth, house, broom, steel, and spearhead.

By transitivity analysis, we are able to outline what activities are carried to these natural resources by humans and which ones are carried by elements of nature to humans. The humans (particularly the persona) depend heavily on nature to meeting their basic needs including, feeding (food, water), clothing, light, bedding (or shelter), entertainment. For instance, the persona receives processes acted by the elements of nature including: material processes such as feeding, clothing; verbal process such as singing. He also engages in some material processes such as approaching (the leaves), consoling (my sisters), caring (firewood), and furnishing (house). The human does not carry any exploitative processes towards the natural environment.

By this analysis, we are able to establish that the natural resources wilfully extend services such as feeding, clothing, singing to humans. The only action by the persona towards the natural resource is approaching. Thus, the poet views the human-nature relation as cordial. The use of these various process types and the direct participants contributes to the overall theme of the poem, which explores the narrator's rejection of human society in favour of a self-sufficient life in harmony with nature.

“The Oath of the Fontomfrom” depicts the collective response of a village against an outside threat, where three distinct sets of actors can be identified in the conflict. These groups consist of the speaker, the villagers, and the opposing forces. Through relational expressions, the speaker identifies himself with the figure of the ‘Fontomfrom,’ as seen in lines such as ‘I am the Fontomfrom,’ ‘I was the Fontomfrom,’ and ‘I shall be the Fontomfrom.’ From this perspective, the functions attributed to the Fontomfrom are essentially the speaker's own verbal expressions; crying, lamenting, echoing, groaning, resounding, and sending forth messages. Beyond associating himself with the Fontomfrom, the speaker also adopts other symbolic

qualities such as ‘the fire’ and ‘proud,’ which reflect how he imagines his place within the community: strong, steadfast, and inspirational. His actions extend to cautioning his ‘brothers,’ offering guidance to the ancestors, directing others, unveiling hidden truths, standing firm, enduring hardship, learning, and resisting death. These reflect a blend of physical, mental, spoken, and behavioral processes.

The villagers, in turn, are represented as rising up collectively: the men leap forward, grasp weapons such as spears, arrows, and bows, position themselves strategically, and thrust through the undergrowth. Their contributions are mainly material acts, and when combined with the speaker’s own efforts, they illustrate a unified stance of defiance. The combatants carry out direct physical resistance, while the leaders support these actions with speech and occasional reflection.

“Walewale Chorus” expresses the natural distinction existing between contradictory but related phenomena depicted by ‘poles apart’. The persona represents one such poles and the other is ‘that man’. The persona relates to the latter as ‘a friend’. By transitivity, we are able to account for all activities of the participants, which aligns them to the separated poles. The persona engaged in material processes such as *giving, deserting, coming, rolling up, starting* (walking), *starving, rising, thirsting, seeking*, and *stopping* (crawling). They reflect the persona’s effort to overcome some challenges posed by the domineering activities of the other party, who *sit, drinking*, and *feasting*.

Transitivity analysis of Atukwei Okai’s three poems reveals consequential materialistic world view of the poet. ‘The Old Building’ is set in Pakistan in the Middle East while Okai’s poems are set in Ghana, Africa. Thematically, the former reflects a description of the emptiness in the person’s life. Meanwhile, Okai in the three poems portrays activities involving the person and his. The proof lies in his frequent reliance on material actions, most of which are carried

out by tangible, physical entities, whether human or non-human. This strong emphasis on material processes aligns with the observation of Haroon and Arslan (2021) in their transitivity study of Imdad Hussein's *The Old Building*. However, the resemblance appears to be more accidental than intentional, since the two poems differ greatly, especially in terms of their immediate geographical settings.

The tendency in "The Oath of the Fontomfrom" shows a significant deviation from Halliday and Matthiessen's (2014) categorisation of material, mental and relational processes as major process types and behavioural, verbal and existential processes as minor process types. One remarkable feature of this poem is the frequency of behavioural processes, which is second to the material at the expense of mental and relational process types. The prominence of behavioural processes in "The Oath of the Fontomfrom" sets this poem apart from the others. Unlike "The Pioneer" and "Walewale Chorus", which contain no behavioural processes, "The Oath of the Fontomfrom" shows behavioural processes as second only to material processes. This unique distribution challenges Halliday and Matthiessen's (2014) categorisation of behavioural processes as "minor," since here they carry significant weight in the poem's meaning-making. In light of Ji and Shen's (2005) argument that transitivity patterns are often linked to thematic strategies, the behavioural processes in this poem may be seen as a deliberate stylistic choice by Okai to emphasise human conduct, ritual, or collective performance. This suggests that poetry can flexibly elevate certain process types depending on the socio-cultural or thematic context of the work. This finding broadens the scope of transitivity studies in poetry.

Another key point of convergence between the present findings in terms of the differences in the process types in these three poems studied and existing scholarship lies in the interplay of mental and relational processes. In "The Pioneer", relational processes occur more frequently than mental ones, while in "Walewale Chorus", the reverse is true. This pattern

mirrors Khalid and Mushtaq's (2015) analysis of Hughes' poems, where mental processes were used strategically to convey subjectivity and inner states, complementing the relational ones that grounded identity and existence. Such distribution across Okai's poems reflects how different process types are harnessed to shape thematic concerns: "The Pioneer" leans more on relations of being and identity, while "Walewale Chorus" foregrounds perception and thought. These distinctions demonstrate, as Thompson (1984) and Hasan et al. (2005) note, that transitivity is not merely linguistic but ideological, with poets consciously or unconsciously deploying process types to embody perspectives on human experience, culture, and ideology. Thus, the study enriches the growing body of scholarship that sees transitivity analysis as a powerful lens for capturing both linguistic and ideological dimensions of poetry.

The findings of based on the what accounts for the variations in the process types in the three selected poems – "The Pioneer", "The Oath of the Fontomfrom", and "Walewale Chorus" – studied indicate that the transitivity processes realised in the poems are significantly shaped by both the structural composition of the texts and their subject matter. Structurally, the number of words, sentences, and clauses in each poem strongly correlated with the frequency and variety of processes identified. For instance, "The Oath of the Fontomfrom", which contained the highest word and sentence count, also exhibited the highest frequency of processes, while "The Pioneer", with the least linguistic length, correspondingly displayed the least number of processes. This finding supports the argument advanced by Ji and Shen (2005), who demonstrated that the author's choices of vocabulary, grammar and structure has an indispensable role in meaning-making in texts. Accordingly, in the present study affirms their claim that the quantity and distribution of processes in a poem are not arbitrary but often reflective of the compositional design of the text. The proportionality observed in this study thus reinforces the view that textual length and density directly influence the extent of process variety and distribution in poetic discourse.

More importantly, the subject matter of the poems emerges as a strong determinant of process choice and frequency. Across all three texts, material processes were the most dominant, a finding that resonates with Haroon and Arslan's (2021) analysis of Imdad Hussein's "The Old Building", where material processes underscored the representation of recurrent human actions and interactions with the physical environment. In "The Pioneer", the prominence of material processes such as "to build the hearth" and "carry home the firewood" underscores the human-nature relationship and the reliance of humans on their environment for survival. Similarly, "The Oath of the Fontomfrom" and "Walewale Chorus" deploy material processes to dramatize communal mobilisation against external threats and to highlight social inequality, respectively. This aligns with Khalid and Mushtaq's (2015) observation that poets often employ material and mental processes to render concrete the lived realities of individuals and communities, thereby foregrounding actions as the basis of meaning-making in poetry.

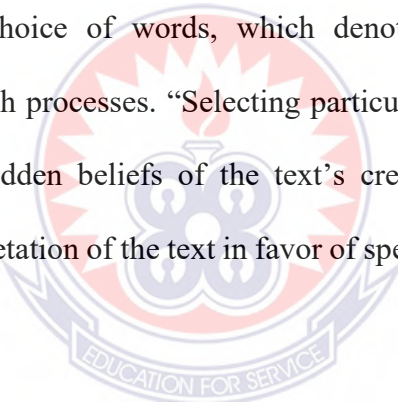
A noteworthy divergence, however, lies in the presence and distribution of behavioural processes. While "The Pioneer" and "Walewale Chorus" did not exhibit behavioural processes, "The Oath of the Fontomfrom" revealed a significant number of them, reflecting the poem's engagement with both the physical and emotional responses of the community to the murder of a village drummer. This finding corroborates Halliday's (1994) characterization of behavioural processes as an intermediate place between material and mental processes. It captures the inseparability of physical and psychological experiences. Ji and Shen (2005) similarly emphasise that transitivity choices can be manipulated to trace character development and thematic progression. In "The Oath of the Fontomfrom", behavioural processes such as "breathe," "dare," and "refuse" reflect not only the villagers' actions but also their psychological resilience and emotional turmoil. This validates Thompson's (1984) and Hasan et al.'s (2005) assertion that ideology and meaning are often mobilised through language in ways that link the individual and collective consciousness with broader social realities.

Taken together, the findings of this study reinforce earlier scholarship that underscores the utility of transitivity analysis in uncovering how poets linguistically encode action, perception, and emotion in ways that resonate with thematic concerns. They also expand existing literature (Thompson, 1984; Ji & Shen, 2005; Hasan et al., 2005; Afrianto et al., 2014) by demonstrating how structural features (length and density of text) interact with thematic content (human-nature relations, communal resistance, and social inequality) to determine process distribution. While past studies (e.g., Qasim, Qasin & Arshad, 2021) have focused primarily on how verbal and material processes construct ideological or spiritual meaning in poetry, the present study reveals the role of behavioural processes in encoding collective emotional responses, particularly in contexts of social disturbance. Thus, the study not only confirms established findings on the predominance of material processes in poetry but also highlights behavioural processes as an underexplored yet crucial resource for understanding how poetry articulates the interplay between action, emotion, and ideology

“Okai’s poetry portrays the speakers’ experiences by emphasizing their bodily connections with the surrounding environment.” In ‘The Pioneer’, for instance, the speaker talks of *I approach the leaves; The fruits of the tall trees, the waters of the silent springs and streams feed me; The animals clothe me with their skins*. Examining a poem through transitivity analysis allows readers to uncover the linguistic patterns that serve as evidence for interpreting its meaning. To begin with, the processes in the poem can be classified and understood based on their categories and functions. In all three poems, it becomes clear that the characters are more frequently involved in material processes than in other types. This pattern highlights how the characters are inclined toward actions—whether concrete or abstract—directed at one another. Secondly, the participants can be examined in terms of their roles and relationships. Evidence shows that human participants are more often engaged in events and actions compared to non-human ones.

Through the lens of transitivity, we gain insight into how the speakers of these poems use language to represent their inner thoughts and experiences of the world. In this context, the speaker essentially represents the poet, meaning that the worldview expressed in the poems reflects the poet's own ideology. According to Van Dijk (2006), ideology encompasses the attitudes, beliefs, values, and doctrines—whether religious, political, social, or economic—that shape how individuals and groups perceive reality and make sense of their world.

A process-participant analysis of texts reveals the way the poet manipulates the language to represent what Bloor & Bloor (1995) describe as his perception of reality or to express his own experience (Halliday, 1985). This is accomplished through the author's linguistic choice, including choice of words, which denote the process types and the participants which perform such processes. "Selecting particular words instead of others can reveal both intentional and hidden beliefs of the text's creator. At the same time, these selections can guide the interpretation of the text in favor of specific ideological perspectives."

The logo of the University of Education, Winneba, is a circular emblem. It features a central shield with a sunburst at the top and a book at the bottom. The shield is surrounded by a wreath. The text "UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA" is written around the top inner edge of the circle, and "EDUCATION FOR SERVICE" is written around the bottom inner edge.

4.5 Summary

"This study has addressed its three guiding research questions by examining the different transitivity features present in the selected poems." The poet's diction is predominantly concrete and reflect his immediate physical environment. This is caused by his frequent use of material processes in all the three poems and concrete participant elements including human and concrete phenomena. The analysis also establishes vigorous activity of the persona in all the poems pointing out that Atukwei Okai put himself into his own writing announcing his physical and mental activities as he interacts with his immediate context.



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the research results, outlines the conclusions, and offers recommendations, including potential directions for future research, in order to tie together the key points of the discussion.

5.1 Summary of Findings

In relation to the research questions guiding this study, the key outcomes can be summarized as follows:



5.1.1 The Process Types

The three poems from Atukwei Okai's anthology of poems: "The Pioneer", "The Oath of the Fontomfrom", and "Walewale Chorus": having been analysed with Transitivity model of Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) reveals that material processes are the most frequent processes followed by mental, relational, behavioural and existential processes in transitivity analysis of the poems. "The Pioneer" recorded a total of 44 distinct processes, including material, mental, relational, verbal and existential processes. There are however no behavioural processes in "The Pioneer". "The Pioneer" depicts the narrator's actions and interactions with the natural world, such as:

1. The fruits of the tall trees, the waters of the silent springs and streams feed me.
2. The animals clothe me with their skins.

This aligns with the poem's focus on the persona's physical experiences and survival in the wilderness hence the absence of the behavioural processes.

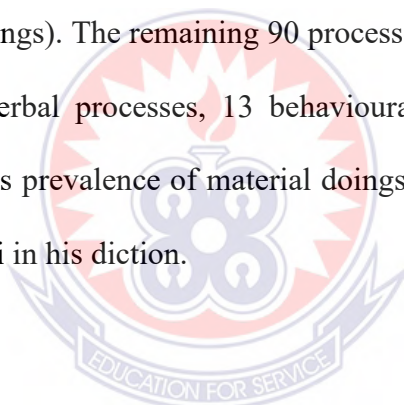
Without repetition, the material processes are 24, representing 55% and including 22 concrete physical and 2 abstract processes. These are carried in 27 distinct clauses. The mental processes are 9, representing 20%; 5 of which denote affection; 3, cognition; and 1, perception. In all, these processes are carried in 10 distinct clauses. The relational processes are 4, representing 9% and carried in 11 clauses. The verbal processes are 6, representing 14% and carried in 7 clauses. There is only 1 existential process, representing 2%, which is carried in only a clause.

“The Oath of the Fontomfrom”, recorded a total of 71 processes, including 40 material process representing 56%, 7 mental processes representing 10%, 3 relational processes representing 4%, 11 behavioural processes representing 15%, 8 verbal processes representing 11%, and 2 existential processes representing 3%. Of the material processes, 32 denote concrete physical doings carried in 36 clauses and 8 abstract happenings carried in 8 clauses. Of the mental processes, 5 denote cognition, 1 denote affective and 1 denote perception. These are carried in 8 distinct clauses. The relational processes are carried in 7 clauses; the behavioural processes are carried in 13 clauses; the verbal processes are carried in 8 clauses; and the existential processes are carried in 2 clauses.

It is worth-noting, that the statistics of the processes recorded in “The Oath of the Fontomfrom” in this study, is the same as the records regarding the processes in the previous study by Botchwey et al (2022) which examined the relationship between linguistic forms and socially construed meaning in Atukwei Okai's poem, “The Oath of the Fontomfrom”. this, interestingly, confirms the reliability of the transitivity model of Halliday and Matthiessen (2014).

“Walewale Chorus” has 44 processes including 34 material processes representing 77% and carried in 36 clauses, 3 mental processes representing 7% and carried in 11 clauses, 2 relational processes representing 5% and carried in 6 clauses, 4 verbal processes representing 10% carried in 5 clauses, and 1 existential process representing 2% and carried in 1 clause. There is no behavioural process in “Walewale Chorus”.

Across the three poems, there are total of distinct 98 material processes representing 61.6%, 19 mental processes representing 11.9%, 18 verbal processes representing 11.3%, 11 behavioural processes representing 6.9%, 9 relational processes representing 5.7%, and 4 existential processes representing 2.5%. In terms of clauses, however, Atukwei Okai used 197 processes in all the three poems. 107 representing over 54% are material (including 81 concrete doings and 26 abstract happenings). The remaining 90 processes include 29 mental processes, 24 relational processes, 20 verbal processes, 13 behavioural processes, and 4 existential processes. The statistics reveals prevalence of material doings and happenings in the process choices made by Atukwei Okai in his diction.



5.1.2 Differences in the process types in the three poems

In terms of the types of processes present in each poem, “The Pioneer” and “Walewale Chorus” do not have behavioural processes. On the contrary, “The Oath of the Fontomfrom” has all the six process types.

In terms of the number of processes found in each poem, the frequency of the processes per poem indicates that “The Oath of the Fontomfrom” has the greatest number of processes (82, representing 41.6%), followed by “Walewale Chorus” made up of 59 processes representing 30.0%. The poem with the least number of processes is “The Pioneer” containing 56 processes representing 28.4%.

In terms of comparing the frequency of the process types in the three poems

“The Oath of the Fontomfrom” dominates in the material, behavioural and verbal process types with 44, 13 and 8 processes respectively, while “Walewale Chorus” dominates the mental process type with 11 processes. Meanwhile, “The Pioneer” dominates in relational process type with 11 processes.

5.1.3 What account for the differences in the process types in the three poems?

There is a strong correlation between the lengths of the poems and the number of clauses (i.e., processes) contained in them. “The Oath of the Fontomfrom” with the highest number of words (669) and sentences (i.e., clause complexes in SFL terminology) contains the highest number of processes (82). Similarly, “The Pioneer”, which has the least number of words (487) and sentences (50), records the least frequency of processes (56).

Also, the subject addressed in each poem contributes to the differences in the process types. The poems address social phenomena including socio-natural relationship, social struggle and social discrimination. This accounted for predominance of material processes across the three poems.

5.2 Conclusion

Transitivity analysis is a common approach for exploring how both speakers and writers use language. It focuses on how sentences are structured through different types of processes, the roles played by participants, and the contexts surrounding their involvement. By applying this method, the study aimed to show that linguistic forms can shape particular meanings and ideologies, even when these are not directly visible to the reader. Put simply, transitivity

analysis helps reveal how wording choices connect with meaning, shaping the overall arrangement of linguistic elements in a text. For this reason, the present research employs the concept of transitivity to better understand language use in literary works, with special attention to the poetry of Atukwei Okai.

The transitivity analysis of Atukwei Okai's three poems – "The Pioneer", "The Oath of the Fontomfrom", and "Walewale Chorus" – has made it apparent the prevalence in the use of concreteness in the linguistic choices of the poet. This has relevance in reader comprehension of the text as it enhances text comprehensibility. The concreteness is as a result of considerable concrete material processes and other processes which appeal to the physical senses of the reader, including hearing as in verbal processes as well as the preponderance use of concrete participants. The prevalence of material processes coincides with a similar finding made by Haroon and Arslan (2021) in their transitivity analysis of "The Old Building" by Imda Hussein and deviates from dominant verbal processes found in Qasim, Qasim and Arshad's (2021) study of Iqbal's "Mukalma Jibra'īl-o-Iblīs (Gabriel and Lucifer)".

Second to the material processes in terms of frequency of use are the mental processes. The human understandably is a thinking and emotional being. The various thinking, feeling and perceptive processes in the clauses of the poems reflect the level of mental activities characterising the participants perceived to be prevailing in the poet's ideological environment. The question of language choices reflects the mind style and ideology as the writer's language choices originate from their linguistic content interfacing the intention of the discourse. In this light, the poet's mental consciousness is second to his physical material world.

The verbal processes come next in frequency pointing to articulatory relations to material and mental world of the speaker. The literary mind of the poet's captures the verbal actions of the both human and non-human living things. Mostly, humans engage in verbal actions as sayer, and minority receiver and verbiage.

In the relational processes, the speaker relates with ‘elephant’s skin’, ‘hare’s feet’, ‘bat’s nose’, ‘lion’s heart’ in “The Pioneer”, and with ‘the Fontomfrom’ in “The Oath of the Fontomfrom”. These associations are with the features in the environment and reveal the impression the speaker has about himself. Of course, these entities symbolise the resilience in terms of endurance, speed, sensitivity, and bravery respectively in “The Pioneer” and mobilisation in “The Oath of the Fontomfrom”.

Two out of the three poems – “The Pioneer” and “Walewale Chorus” – have no behavioural processes in them. Similar finding is revealed in Qasim, Qasim and Arshad’s (2021) transitivity analysis of Iqbal’s “Mukalma Jibra.īl-o-Iblīs (Gabriel and Lucifer)” in which no behavioural processes is found. At least in this study, there are behavioural processes in “The Oath of the Fontomfrom”.

By transitivity analysis, we are able to extract key interpretations from the poems. We are able to establish in “The Pioneer” humans’ dependency on and exploitation of natural resources within their environment for survival. This environment is the forest rich in ‘The fruits of the tall trees’, ‘The waters of the silent springs and streams’, ‘The leaves’ for bedding, and the animal skins for clothing. Beyond the usefulness, some aspects of nature inflict harm to humans. For example, the ‘sunrays’ bullying’, and ‘The biting of the ants and the cold nights. Again, we account for the speaker characteristics and roles. In terms of roles, include: consoling the sisters, furnishing their father’s house into home, returning home with water, moulding a blade into hoe sticks, carving out steels, weaving mats, teaching the sisters among other roles. In terms of characteristics, the speaker describes himself as someone with lion’s heart, elephant’s skin, hare’s feet, only and first male child.

In “The Oath of the Fontomfrom”, the role of Fontomfrom (the twin talking-drum) in societal mobilisation is established with the verbal processes involving the Fontomfrom in ‘wailing’ ‘weeping’, ‘sounding’, ‘booming’, ‘moaning’, and the speaker in ‘warning’,

‘hailing’. Relating the speaker to the Fontomfrom makes it clearer to the reader that the speaker actually metaphorizes himself as occupying the mobilising roles of the talking-drum since in actual sense ‘the drummer ... is sprawling dead ... the broken drumstick clutched in hands. The denotations and connotations of these verbal process hint on the situations in which such mobilisation becomes apparent, in times of danger and external aggression particularly by ‘ill-wishers’. Such is the time the society need to mobilise themselves under the leadership now offered by the speaker to ‘rises to her feet from sleep’, and ‘post themselves all around the village’.

The resilience of the African spirit is further highlighted in the “Walewale Chorus” where oppressed and marginalised resolve in the personality of the speaker to fight back by ‘start walking’, ‘stop crawling’, ‘charging’, ‘rising’, and ‘deserting’.

As the most widely used framework under Halliday’s SFL, transitivity analysis of the poems gives a deeper and clearer understanding of the literary as well as common persons. It can provide a piece of comprehensive linguistic evidence for the readers regarding ‘who/what does, what, to whom/what?’, thus, to arrive at a better understanding of the characters in a literary text.

5.3 Recommendations

Language function is arguably the priority of language researchers and SFL describes the language that functions in different ways, highlighting three main metafunctions, standing for particular prototypes of meaning: experiential, interpersonal and textual. This study has been limited to the experiential level of meaning which largely has adopted the transitivity analysis to explain structure of meaning in the clause. Since the fundamental tenets of SFL stipulate among others that the three levels of meanings operate simultaneously in the clause,

it is important that the same text is subjected to interpersonal and textual analysis such as theme-rheme analysis. This will sufficiently make a case for SFL.

Besides, the application of transitivity analysis can be extended to other prosaic poems of Atukwei Okai to allow adequate generalisation on his overall ideological perspectives as exhibited in his literary works. This will deepen our understanding of both the writer and what he writes.



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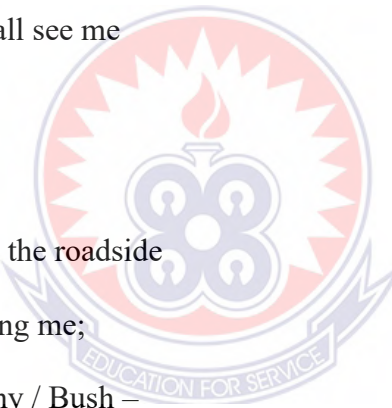
APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

Clause listing in Atukwei Okai's "The Pioneer"

1. Expect me ... my dear mother –
2. Expect me ...
3. but only / When you shall see me
4. ^ I will be Coming;
5. I am still in the wilderness / Alone,
6. But do not worry because / Of me
7. The fruits of the tall trees, / The waters / Of the silent springs and streams / Feed me.
8. From the moon and the sun I have / My light,
9. For my bed and pillow I approach / The leaves.
10. The animals clothe me with / Their skins,
11. The birds sing for me –
12. this is all / I need ...
13. And our native forests are rich / In these,
14. And in forests, our native land / Is rich.
15. I would have told you this:
16. "Your memory has made
17. me[I] endure the sunrays' / Bullying / The biting of the ants and the / Cold nights."
18. This is not so –
19. the elephant's skin / Is mine,
20. The hare has lent me her feet,
21. The nose / Of the bat is mine,

22. mine is the / Lions' heart.
23. To me has been lent the neck of / The giraffe, / The stomach of the camel and the /
Zibra's hair,
24. I speak the language of the antelope / And leopard.
25. Yet expect me ... my dear mother –
- 2ref. Expect me ...
- 3ref. but only / When you shall see me
- 4ref. ^ I will be Coming.
- 1ref. Expect me ... my dear mother –
- 2ref. Expect me ...
- 3ref. but only / When you shall see me
- 4ref. ^ I will be Coming;
26. Do not allow my sisters
27. (to) ^ my sisters sit / By the roadside
28. ^ my sisters are Expecting me;
29. don't allow them into any / Bush –
30. ^ my sisters are Looking out for me ...
31. don't allow them
32. (To) ^ my sisters hide / In any corner
33. ^ my sisters are thinking
34. and ^ my sisters are sorrowing / Over my absence;
35. Don't let
36. my sisters have a cause
37. (To) ^ my sisters weep
38. Otherwise they shall cry the more,



39. ^ my sisters are Thinking
40. Of how I would have consoled them / In my arms,
41. Had I been there with them at home,
42. Do not / Put any food or fruit aside / For me;
43. Give to my sisters and my brothers gifts / Meant for me,
45. But during libation you could call / My name,
46. And when ^ you are answering questions on / Our family
- 1ref. Expect me ... my dear mother –
- 2ref. Expect me ...
- 3ref. but only / When you shall see me
- 4ref. ^ I will be coming.
47. Expect me ... my mother
- 2ref. Expect me ...
- 3ref. but only / When you shall see me
- 4ref. ^ I will be Coming;
48. Tell my sisters
49. (to) ^ my sisters build / The hearth –
50. I shall soon carry home / The firewood.
51. Tell them
52. (to) ^ my sisters reconstruct it / A thousand times,
53. ^ my sisters Not minding the destructive, / Erosive rains.
54. Our father had built for us / A house;
55. And I must furnish it into / A home;
56. To the pot I must return home / With water,
57. For the hoestick I must mold / A blade,



58. For the floors I must collect / A broom,
59. To the courtyard I must carve / Out some steels,
60. For the mortar I must find / A head,
61. To the rooms I must weave / Some mats,
62. For the spears I must melt some / Spearheads,
63. And teach my sisters my sisters
64. how / (To) my sisters man them.
65. I am the male among you,
66. I am our father's first son.
- 47ref. Expect me ... my mother –
- 2ref. Expect me ...
- 3ref. but only / When you shall see me
- 4ref. ^ I will be coming.

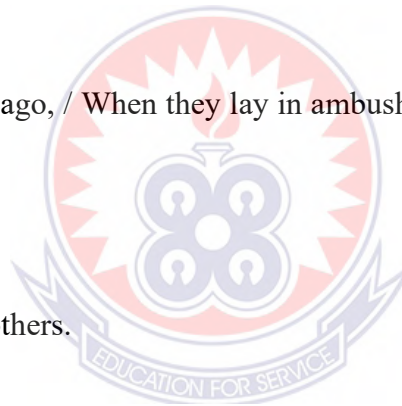


Clause listing in Atukwei Okai's "The Oath of the Fontomfrom"

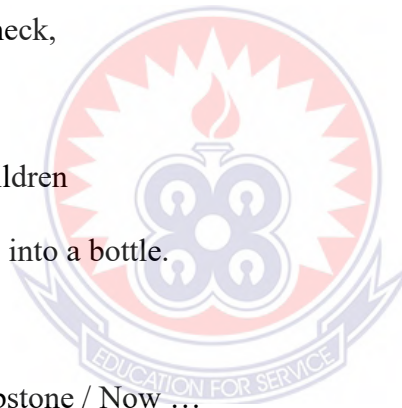
1. In the middle / of a moonless / night, / The village rises / to her feet / from sleep,
2. ^ the village is Aroused / not by owl, / not by cock. Manner-Means
3. In the center / of the empty / courtyard, / The vigilant / Fontomfrom / peals forth –
4. And the living / are awakened!
5. The males / are leaping
6. and ^ the males are reaching Out / for spears and arrows and bows;
7. The Fontomfrom keeps on / Wailing
8. And ^ the Fontomfrom keeps on weeping
- 7ref. And ^ the Fontomfrom keeps on wailing!

9. The Fontomfrom / keeps on / Booming
10. And ^ the Fontomfrom keeps on moaning
- 9ref. And ^ the Fontomfrom keeps on booming!
11. But the drummer / of the village / Is sprawling / dead / on his floor,
12. The broken drumstick / clutched in hands.
13. The males, / now armed,
14. ^ the males Post themselves / All around the village;
15. Their faces / are kept / on the forest;
16. Their eyes pierce / the foliage of darkness,
17. ^ their eyes are Seeing before them / and afar beyond:
18. Their ears / are in the village there,
19. Where the murdered / drummer is dead –
20. But the faithful Fontomfrom / Is sounding,
21. And ^ the faithful Fontomfrom is sending,
- 20ref. And ^ the faithful Fontomfrom is **sounding!**:
22. My brothers, / my people, / my brothers, / Till dawn, / your vigil must last.
23. It is not in our day
24. that human hands / Shall erase / our spirit out of us.
25. That I sat / at the feet / of my father / Not just for nothing,
26. Our enemies / refuse to remember.
27. My voice / can never fail me;
28. When your visiting / great grandbrothers / Got lost at night / on their way,
29. My voice / guided
30. and ^ my voice led them / here.
31. When, in the past, / the women and girls / Had gone down / to the stream's water,

32. And the men and boys / Had gone / far behind the hills / For the forest's / venison and
fruits,
33. And the roofs / of the children's huts / Had been visited / by flames of fire,
34. I hailed
35. and ^ I hurried home your sires.
36. My brothers / my people, / my brothers
37. I am sought,
- 37ref. I am sought
38. because / When you want to starve / the ocean,
39. You paralyze / its source, the river;
- 37ref. I am sought
40. because / two harvests ago, / When they lay in ambush for us / On the market day / in
the white Woods,
41. I discovered
42. And ^ I warned my brothers.
- 37ref. I am sought,
- 37ref. I am sought / day and night
43. Because I have torn down / the masks / From the faces of our ill-wishers.
- 37ref. I am sought
44. Because of where / I stand,
45. Because of my friends / and how / I breathe;
46. Under their sore soles / I am the fire!
47. Proud I am
48. And ^ I am even strengthened
49. That they aim / at me –



50. ^ they are seeing
51. that Those aimed at
52. ^ those are those
53. Who are / The keepers of their brothers!
54. But / Unto those native sons, woe
55. By whose unshivering, / nerveless hands
56. Our farms / shall be set ablaze
57. And the blood / of our children ^ shall be shed!
58. Yet they shall still seek / after me –
59. They shall seek
60. ^ they (to) break / my neck,
61. ^ they Bury me / alive,
62. ^ they massacre my children
63. And ^ they squeeze me into a bottle.
64. Let no hand
65. ^ hand carve / our tombstone / Now ...
66. we have already / in our time, Outlived / the sharpness of the sword, / The din of the
struggle / the clashes of cutlasses;
67. We shall yet outlive / the weight / of lead.
- 64ref. Let no hand
- 65ref. ^ hand carve / our tombstone / Now ...
68. the one to dare will know
70. The oven ^ that is / heated on a pond,
71. And the cloud / that rains thorns;
72. The marble / that grows a beard,



73. And the upward-falling / rain [the rain that falls upward];
74. The fire that burns / out of stone.
75. The hand / that shall dare
76. ^ the hand (to) carve / Our tombstone / Now shall know
78. And ^ the hand shall ever remember / this:
79. That / even before / we learn
80. ^ we (to) crawl
81. Our father took us a-hunting!
- 64ref. Let no hand
- 65ref. ^ hand carve / our tombstone / Now ...
82. we shall refuse
83. ^ we (To) die
84. Our dove / shall fly / across the flames / Of the big bonfires / of time –
85. But her feathers / shall stay unburnt, / Like water / on the back / of a duck –
86. She will not fall / from her flight –
- 82ref. And we shall refuse,
- 82ref. ^ we shall refuse
- 83ref. ^ we (to) die!
- 64ref. Let no hand
- 65ref. ^ hand carve / our tombstone / Now ...
- 82ref. Because we shall refuse
- 83ref. ^ we (to) die
87. I am / the Fontomfrom –
88. Listen!
89. Fontomfrom! ... Fontomfrom! / Of you the living, / I am / the Fontomfrom –

88ref. Listen!

90. Fontomfrom! ... Fontomfrom! / Of your great sires, / I was / the Fontomfrom –

88ref. Listen!

91. Fontomfrom! ... Fontomfrom! / Of all your offsprings, / I shall be the Fontomfrom –

88ref. Listen!

92. Fontomfrom! ... Fontomfrom! ... / Fontomfrom! ... Fontomfrom! ... / I am the
Fontomfrom –

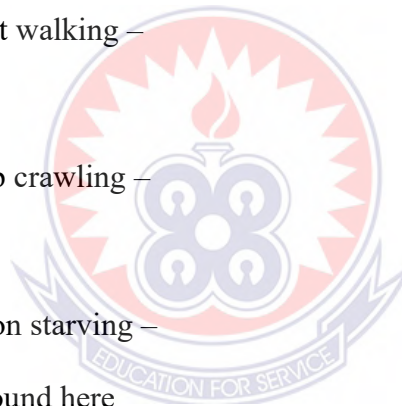
93. I am Africa!

APPENDIX C

Clause Listing of Atukwei Okai's "Walewale Chorus"

1. What has happened to the rainy / Season? / And every day of the forty / Days,
2. The devil tested the Lord.
3. Come,
4. come unto me / All ye that labour, / And are heavy laden –
7. And I will give you rest.
8. There are twenty-seven poles / In a mile –
9. And we are poles apart.
10. Imported petrol ... and water ... Esiam coconut oil ... and water / Sheabutter oil ...
and water ... / Abokobi kerosene ... and water ... / Royal palm oil ... and water ... / Raw
groundnut oil ... and water ... / Bundle them ... together ...
11. Stir them up ... together ...
12. Shake them up ... together ...
13. They shall separate themselves – / Like David from Goliath, / Like Satan from St. Paul,
/ Like the clouds from the grass, / Like Jesus from Judas.

- 3ref. Come,
- 4ref. come unto me / All ye that labour, And ^ all ye are heavy laden –
- 7ref. And I will give you rest.
14. Do you see that man?
15. He is a friend
16. I know,
17. But what he has done / To me,
18. only a mindnight / Rainfall can wash away –
19. A midnight rainfall / Agreed upon
20. and ^ a midnight rainfall decreed / By the one God above / And the ten gods here below.
21. Now I am going to start walking –
22. Come hell!
23. Now I am going to stop crawling –
- 22ref. Come hell!
24. How long should I go on starving –
25. ^ there is No well / Around here
26. and I am thirsting –
27. Go
28. tell / It upstairs
29. where they are feasting –
- 27ref. Go
29. tell
30. That here downstairs I'm rising –
- 27ref. Go
- 29ref. tell!



33. Their under table crumbs I'm deserting –
- 22ref. Come hell!
- 21ref. Now I am going to start walking –
- 22ref. Come hell!
34. They sit upstairs
35. ^ they are drinking –
36. No bell / Will warn them
37. I come
38. ^ I am charging –
39. Don't yell!
40. I know
41. what I am doing –
42. All's well!
- 23ref. Now I am going to stop crawling –
- 22ref. Come hell!
- 27ref. Go
- 32ref. tell!
- 22ref. Come hell!
- 3ref. Come,
- 4ref. come unto me / All ye that labour, / And are heavy laden –
- 7ref. And I will give you rest.
43. How many times do we / Have to meet God
44. before / We recognize him in the street?
45. Before we recognize / His hand and his face, his voice / And his whip!
46. His hand ^ is in the affairs of man,



47. His face ^ is in / The waltz of dawn and dusk,
 48. his voice / ^ is In the rain's / Downpour,
 49. his whip ^ is in the thunder's / Teasing?
 51. You were faithful to your daily / Dishonesty – / Towards your partner;
 52. and God / Happened to be also faithful to / His law / Of fair play;
 53. and here you are / Still a human / Being,
 54. but ^ you are minus
 55. what originally / He gave / To you and us all; two firm feet / For the ground.
 3ref. Come,
 4ref. come unto me / All ye that labour, / And heavy laden –
 7ref. And I will give you rest.
 56. It is beyond me
 57. ^ I (To) explain,
 58. but my radar system / Rejects the moonlight / In your eyes, the sunshine in your smile,
 59. ^ the sunshine Meaning
 60. that / Behind the well-kept rosebushes / Surrounding / Your house of pastoral-pure
 promises, / Cassava coloured / Serpents are lurking,
 62. ^ cassava coloured serpents are waiting
 63. ^ cassava coloured serpents (to) spring
 64. And ^ cassava coloured serpents pounce
 65. And ^ cassava coloured serpents land
 66. and ^ cassava coloured serpents kiss some innocent / Flesh;
 67. so, / Let me
 68. ^ I roll up my mat
 69. and ^ I seek / Your door.



- 3ref. Come,
4ref. come unto me / All ye that labour, /And heavy laden –
7ref. And I will give you rest.

APPENDIX D

Raw analysis of the selected poems

MATERIAL CLAUSES IN *THE POINEER*

- PMC1. The fruits of the tall trees, the waters of the silent springs and streams *Actor*
feed *M. Process* me *Goal*.
- PMC2. From my bed and pillow *Circumstance* I *Actor* approach *M. Process* the
leaves *Goal*.
- PMC3. The animals *Actor* clothe *M. Process* me *Goal* with their skins *Circumstance*.
- PMC4. The hare *Actor* has lent *M. Process* me *Target* her feet *Goal*.
- PMC5. To me *Target* has been lent *M. Process* the neck of the giraffe *Goal*.
- PMC6. Your memory *Actor* has made *M. Process* me *Goal* endure(Mental) the
sunrays' bullying.
- PMC7. Do not allow *Mt Process* my sister *Goal*.
- PMC8. To sit *Mt Process* by the roadside expecting *circumstance* me *Goal*.
- PMC9. Dont allow *Mt Process* them *Goal* into any bush looking out *circumstance*.
- PMC10. To hide *Mt Process* in any corner *circumstance*.
- PMC11. Thinking *Mt Process* over my absence *circumstance*.
- PMC12.
- PMC13. Dont let *Mt Process* my sisters *Goal* have a course *circumstance*.

PMC14. Thinking of how *circumstance* I would have consoled *Mt Process* them *Goal*
in my arms *circumstance*.

PMC15. Do not put *Mt Process* any food or fruit *Goal* aside for *circumstance* me
Target.

PMC16. Give *Mt Process* to sisters and brothers *Target* gifts meant for me *Goal*.

PMC17. To build *Mt Process* he hearth *Goal*.

PMC18. I *Actor* shall [soon] carry *Mt Process* home *Target* the firewood *Goal*.

PMC19. To reconstruct *Mt Process* it *Goal* a thousand times *circumstance*.

PMC20. Our father *Actor* had built *Mt Process* for us *Target* a house *Goal*.

PMC21. And I *Actor* must finish *Mt Process* it *Goal* into a home *circumstance*.

PMC22. To the pot *circumstance* I *Actor* must return *Mt Process* home *Goal* with
water *circumstance*.

PMC23. For the hoestick *circumstance* I *Actor* must mold *Mt Process* a blade *Goal*.

PMC24. For the floors *circumstance* I *Actor* must collect *Mt Process* a broom *Goal*.

PMC25. To the courtyard *circumstance* I *Actor* must carve out *Mt Process*
stones steel *Goal*.

PMC26. For the mortar *circumstance* I *Actor* must find *Mt Process* a head
Goal.

PMC27. To the room *Circumstance* I *Actor* must weave *Mt Process* some net
Goal.

PMC28. For the spears *Circumstance* I *Actor* must melt *Mt Process* some
spear head *Goal*.

PMC29. And I *Actor* must teach *Mt Process* my sister *Goal*

MENTAL CLAUSES IN THE POINEER

- PMTC1 Expect *Mental Process* me *Phenomenon*...my dear mother *sensor*.
- PMTC2 Expect *Mental Process* me *Phenomenon*
- PMTC3 But only when *Circumstance* you *sensor* shall see *Mental Process* me
Phenomenon coming *Circumstance*
- PMTC4 But do not worry *Mental Process* because of me *circumstance*.
- PMTC5 Yet expect *Mental Process* me *Phenomenon* my dear mother *sensor*
- PMTC6 Expect *Mental Process* me *Phenomenon*
- PMTC7 But only when *Circumstance* you *sensor* shall see *Mental Process* me
Phenomenon coming *Circumstance*
- PMTC8. Expect *Mental Process* me *Phenomenon* my dear mother (Sensor).
- PMTC9. Expect *Mental Process* me *Phenomenon*
- PMTC10. When *Circumstance* you (Sensor) shall see *Mental Process* me
Phenomenon
- PMTC11. Expect *Mental Process* me *Phenomenon* my dear mother *sensor*
- PMTC12. Expect *Mental Process* me *Phenomenon*
- PMTC13 But only when *Circumstance* you *sensor* shall see *Mental Process* me
Phenomenon coming *Circumstance*
- PMTC14 Expect *Mental Process* me *Phenomenon* my mother *sensor*
- PMCT15 Expect (*Mental Process* me *Phenomenon*
- PMCT16. But only when *Circumstance* you *sensor* shall see *Mental Process* me
Phenomenon coming *Circumstance*.
- PMTC17. Not minding *Mental Process* the destructive , Erosive rains *Phenomenon*
- PMTC18. Expect *Mental Process* me *Phenomenon* my mother *sensor*
- PMTC19. Expect *Mental Process* me *Phenomenon*

PMTC20. But only when *Phenomenon* you sensor shall see *Mental Process* me
Phenomenon coming *Circumstance*

RELATIONAL CLAUES IN THE POINEER.

PRC1. I *Carrier* am *Relative Process* still in the wilderness alone *Attribute*

PRC2. From the moon and the sun *Circumstance*, I *Possessor* have *Relative Process*
my light *Possession*.

PRC3 This *Carrier* is *Relative Process* all I need *Attribute*

PRC4 And our forests *Carrier* are *Relative Process* rich in these *Attribute*

PRC5. And in forest *Circumstance*, our native land *Carrier* is *Relational Process* rich
Attribute.

PRC6. This *Carrier* is *Relative process* not so *Attribute*.

PRC7. The nose of the bat *Carrier* is *Relational process* mine *Attribute*.

PRC8. Mine *Carrier* is *Relational process* the lions heart *Attribute*.

PRC9. I *Carrier* am *Relational Process* the male among you *Attribute*.

PRC10. I *Carrier* am *Relational Process* our father's first son *Attribute*.

VERBAL CLAUSES IN THE POINEER

PVC1. I *Sayer* would have told *Process* you *Target* this *Verbiage*.

PVC2. I *Sayer* speak *Verbal Process* the language of the antelope and leopard
Verbiage

PVC3. The birds *Sayer* sing *process* for me *Target*.

PVC4. But during libation *circumstance* you *Sayer* could call *Verbiage*.

PVC5. And when *Sayer* you are answering *Verbal Process* questions on our
family *Verbiage*.

PVC6. Tell *Verbal Process* my sisters *Target* to build the hearth *Verbiage*.

PVC7. Tell *Sayer* them *Target* to reconstruct it a thousand times *Verbiage*.

APPENDIX E

Raw analysis of the selected poems

MATERIAL CLAUSES IN *THE OATH OF THE FONFOMFROM*

FMC1. In the middle of a moonless night, *Circumstance* the village *Actor* ris
material process to her feet from sleep *circumstance*.

FMC2. Arouse not by owl, not by cock. In the centre of the empty courtyard,
Circumstance the vigilant Fontomfrom *Actor* pearls forth *Material process*

FMC3. The males *Actor* are leaping *Material process*

FMC4. The males *Actor* are reaching out *Material process* for spears and arrows and
bows

FMC5. But the drummer of the village *Actor* dead *Material process* on the floor
Circumstance

FMC6. The broken drumstick *Actor* clutched *Material process* in hands
Circumstance

FMC7. The males now armed, *Actor* post *Material process* themselves *Goal* all
around the village *Circumstance*.

FMC8. Their eyes *Actor* pierce *Material process* the foliage *Goal* of darkness
Circumstance.

FMC9. But the faithful Fontomfrom *Actor* is sending *Material process*

FMC10. My brothers, my people, my brothers, till dawn *Circumstance* your vigil
Actor must last *Material process*.

FMC11. That human hands *Actor* shall erase *Material process* our spirit out of us

FMC12. that I *Actor* sat *Material process* at the feet of my father not just for nothing
Circumstance.

FMC13. My voice *Actor* can never fail *Material process* me *Goal*

FMC14. When *Circumstance* your visiting great grand brothers *Actor* got lost
Material process at night on their way *Circumstance*

FMC15. My voices *Actor* guided *Material process* them *Goal* here *Circumstance*

FMC16. My voice *Actor* led *Material process* them *Goal* here *Circumstance*

FMC17. When in the past *Circumstance*, the women and girls *Actor* had gone
Material process down to the stream's water. *Circumstance*

FMC18. And the men and boys *Actor* had gone *Material process* far behind the hills
for the forest's venison and fruits *Circumstance*.

FMC19. And the roofs of the children's huts *Actor* had been visited *Material process*
by flames of fire *Circumstance*.

FMC20. I *Actor* hurried *Material process* home *Goal* your sires *Target*

FMC21. When you *Actor* want to starve *Material process* the ocean *Goal*

FMC22. You *Actor* paralyze *Material process* its source the river *Goal*.

FMC23. When *Circumstance* they *Actor* lay *Material process* in ambush for us on
the market day in the white woods *Circumstance*

FMC24. I *Actor* discovered *Material process* my brothers *Goal*

FMC25. Because *Circumstance* I *Actor* have torn down *Material process* the masks
from the faces of our ill-wishers *Goal*

FMC26. Because of where *Circumstance* I *Actor* stand *Material process*

FMC27. Our farms *Actor* shall be set ablaze *Material process*

FMC28. And the blood of our children *Actor* shed *Material process*

FMC29. Yet they *Actor* shall still seek after *Material process* me *Goal*

FMC30. They *Actor* shall seek to break *Material process* my neck *Goal*

FMC31. They *Actor* shall seek to bury *Material process* me *Goal* alive *Circumstance*

FMC32. They *Actor* shall seek to massacre *Material process* my children *Goal*

FMC33. And they *Actor* shall seek to squeeze *Material process* me into a bottle

Circumstance

FMC34. Let no man *Actor* carve *Material process* our tomb stone now

Circumstance.

FMC35. We *Actor* have already outlived *Material process* the sharpness of the sound.

FMC36. We *Actor* have already outlived *Material process* the din of the struggle

FMC37. We *Actor* have already outlived *Material process* the clashes of cutlasses.

FMC38. We *Actor* shall yet outline *Material process* the weight of lead

FMC39. Let no hand *Actor* carve *Material process* our tombstone now

Circumstance.

FMC40. And the cloud that *Actor* rains *Material process* thorns.

FMC41. The marble that *Actor* grows *Material process* a beard.

FMC42. And the rain that *Actor* falls *Material process* upward *Circumstance*

FMC43. The fire that *Actor* burns *Material process* out of stone *Circumstance*

FMC44. The hand that *Actor* shall dare to carve *Material process* our tomb.

FMC45. Let no hand *Actor* carve *Material process* our tombstone now

Circumstance.

FMC46. Our father *Actor* took *Material process* us a-hunting *Circumstance*

FMC47. Our dove *Actor* shall fly *Material process* across the flames *Circumstance*

FMC48. But her feathers *Actor* shall stay *Material process* unburnt like water on the back of a duck *Circumstance*.

FMC49. She *Actor* will not fall *Material process* from her flight *Circumstance*

FMC50. Let no hand *Actor* carve *Material process* our tombstone *Goal* now *Circumstance*.

MENTAL CLAUSE.

FMtC1. That they *Sensor* aim *Metal Process* at me *Circumstance*

FMtC2. The one to dare *Sensor* will know *Mental Process* the oven heated on the pond *Phenomenon*

FMtC3. The hand *Sensor* shall know *Mental Process* this *Phenomenon*

FMtC4. The hand *Sensor* shall ever remember *Mental Process* this *Phenomenon*

FMtC5. The even before *Circumstance* we *Sensor* learnt *Mental Process* to crawl *Circumstance*

FMtC6. You *Sensor* listen *Mental Process*

FMtC7. You *Sensor* listen *Mental Process*

FMtC8. You *Sensor* listen *Mental Process*

FMtC9. You *Sensor* listen *Mental Process*

RELATIONAL CLAUSES

FRC1. And the living *Carrier* are *Relational Process* awakened *Attribute*

FRC2. Their ears *Carrier* are *Relational Process* in the village there *Attribute*

FRC3. Where *Circumstance* the drummer *Carrier* is *Rational Process* dead *Attribute*

FRC4. It *Carrier* is *Rational Process* not in our day *Attribute*

FRC5. I *Carrier* am *Rational Process* sought *Attribute*

- FRC6. I *Carrier* am *Rational Process* sought *Attribute*
- FRC7. I *Carrier* am *Rational Process* sought *Attribute*
- FRC8. I *Carrier* am *Rational Process* sought *Attribute*
- FRC9. I *Carrier* am *Rational Process* sought *Attribute*
- FRC10. I *Carrier* am *Rational Process* sought *Attribute*
- FRC11. I *Carrier* am *Rational Process* the fire *Attribute*
- FRC12. I *Carrier* am *Rational Process* proud *Attribute*
- FRC13. Those aimed at *Carrier* are *Rational Process* those *Attribute*
- FRC14. Who *Carrier* are *Rational Process* the keepers of their brothers *Attribute*
- FRC15. I *Carrier* am *Rational Process* the Fontomfrom *Attribute*
- FRC16. I *Carrier* am *Rational Process* the Fontomfrom *Attribute*
- FRC17. I *Carrier* was *Rational Process* the Fontomfrom *Attribute*
- FRC18. I *Carrier* shall be *Rational Process* the Fontomfrom *Attribute*
- FRC19. I *Carrier* was *Rational Process* the Fontomfrom *Attribute*
- FRC20. I *Carrier* am *Rational Process* Africa. *Attribute*

VERBAL CLAUSES

- FVC1. But the faithful Fontomfrom *Sayer* is sounding *Verbal Process*
- FVC2. *Sayer* is sounding *Verbal Process*
- FVC3. I *Sayer* hailed *Verbal Process* home *Circumstance* your sires Verbiage
- FVC4. I *Sayer* warned *Verbal Process* my brothers *Verbiage*

BEHAVIOURAL CLAUSES

- FBC1. The Fontomfrom *Behaver* keeps on wailing *B. Process*
- FBC2. and *Behaver* keeps on wailing *B. Process*
- FBC3. The Fontomfrom *Behaver* keeps on booming *B. Process*
- FBC4. *Behaver* and keeps on *B. Process*

- FBC5. *Behaver* keeps on booming *B. Process*
- FBC6. Our enemies *Behaver* refuse *B. Process* to render *Circumstance* my voice
- FBC7. Because of my friends and how *Circumstance* I *Behaver* breathe *B. Process*
- FBC8. We *Behaver* shall refuse *B. Process* to die
- FBC9. And we *Behaver* shall refuse *B. Process* to die
- FBC10. *Behaver* refuse *B. Process* to die
- FBC11. Because *Circumstance* we *Behaver* shall refuse *B. Process* to die

APPENDIX F

Raw analysis of the selected poems

WALEWALE CHORUS MATERIAL CLAUSES

- WMC1. What *Actor* has happened to *M. Process* the rainy season *Goal*?
- WMC2. The devil *Actor* tested *M. Process* the Lord *Goal*
- WMC3. Come *M. Process* unto me *Circumstance*
- WMC4. Come *M. Process* unto me *Circumstance*
- WMC5. All ye that *Actor* labour *M. Process*
- WMC6. And I *Actor* will give *M. Process* you *Goal* rest *Target*.
- WMC7. Imported petrol and water
- Esiam coconut oil and water
- Sheabutter oil and water
- Abokobi kerosene and water
- Royal palm oil and water
- Raw groundnut oil and water.
- Bundle *M. Process* them *Goal* together *Circumstance*

- WMC8. Stir *Goal* them up *M. Process* together *Circumstance*
- WMC9. Shake *M. Process* them *Goal* up together *Circumstance*
- WMC10. They *Actor* shall separate *M. Process* themselves *Goal* like David and
Goliath *Circumstance*.
- WMC11. Come *M. Process* unto me *Circumstance*
- WMC12. Come *M. Process* unto me *Circumstance*
- WMC13. All ye that *Actor* labour *M. Process*
- WMC14. And I *Actor* will give *M. Process* you *Goal* rest *Target*
- WMC15. But what he *Actor* has done *M. Process* to me *Goal*
- WMC16. Only a midnight rainfall *Actor* can wash away *M. Process* a midnight
rainfall *Goal*
- WMC17. Now I *Actor* am going to start *M. Process* walking
- WMC18. Come *M. Process* hell
- WMC19. How long *Circumstance* should I *Actor* go on starving *M. Process*, no well
around here *Circumstance*.
- WMC20. And I *Actor* am thirsting *M. Process*
- WMC21. Where *Circumstance* they *Actor* are feasting *M. Process*
- WMC22. I *Actor* am rising *M. Process*
- WMC23. Their under table *Actor* crumbs *M. Process*
- WMC24. I *Actor* am deserting *M. Process*
- WMC25. Now *Circumstance* I *Actor* am going to start walking *M. Process*
- WMC26. Now *Circumstance* I *Actor* am going to stop crawling *M. Process*
- WMC27. How long *Circumstance* should I *Actor* go on starving *M. Process* no well
around here *Circumstance*
- WMC28. And I *Actor* am thirsting *M. Process*

- WMC29. Where they *Actor* are feasting *M. Process*
- WMC30. I *Actor* am rising *M. Process*
- WMC31. Their under table *Actor* crumbs *M. Process*
- WMC32. I *Actor* am deserting *M. Process*
- WMC33. Come *M. Process* hell
- WMC34. Now *Circumstance* I *Actor* am going to start walking *M. Process*
- WMC35. Come *M. Process* hell
- WMC36. They *Actor* sit *M. Process* upstairs *Circumstance*
- WMC37. They *Actor* are drinking *M. Process*
- WMC38. I *Actor* come *M. Process* charging *Circumstance*
- WMC39. Now *Circumstance* I *Actor* am going to stop crawling *M. Process*
- WMC40. Come *M. Process* hell *Actor*
- WMC41. Come *M. Process* hell *Actor*
- WMC42. Come *M. Process* unto me *Circumstance*
- WMC43. Come *M. Process* unto me *Circumstance*
- WMC44. All ye that *Actor* labour *M. Process*
- WMC45. And I *Actor* will give *M. Process* you *Goal* rest *Target*
- WMC46. How many times *Circumstance* do we *Actor* have to meet *M. Process* God
- Goal*
- WMC47. But minus what originally *Circumstance* he *Actor* gave to *M. Process* you
- and us all; two firm feet at the ground *Goal*
- WMC48. Come *M. Process* unto me *Circumstance*
- WMC49. Come *M. Process* unto me *Circumstance*
- WMC50. All ye that *Actor* labour *M. Process*

WMC51. And I **Actor** will give **M. Process** you **Goal** rest **Target** but my radar system
rejects the moonlight **Goal** in your eyes **Circumstance**

WMC52. My radar system **Actor** rejects **M. Process** the sunshine **Goal** in your smile
Circumstance

WMC53. Serpents **Actor** are waiting **M. Process** to spring

WMC54. Serpent **Actor** are waiting to pounce **M. Process**

WMC55. Serpent **Actor** are waiting to land **M. Process**

WMC56. Let me **Actor** roll up **M. Process** my mat **Goal**

WMC57. Let me **Actor** seek **M. Process** your door **Goal**

WMC58. Come **M. Process** unto me **Circumstance**

WMC59. Come **M. Process** unto me **Circumstance**

WMC60 all ye that **Actor** labour **M. Process**

WMC61. And I **Actor** will give **M. Process** you **Goal** rest **Target**.

WMC62. Serpents **Actor** kisses **M. Process** some innocent **Goal** flesh.

MENTAL CLAUSES

WMtC1. Do you **Sensor** see **Mt Process** that man? **Phenomenon**.

WMtC2. Agreed upon **Mt Process** by the one God above **Sensor** and the ten gods
below.

WMtC3. I **Sensor** know **Mt Process** what I am doing **Phenomenon**.

WMtC4. We **Sensor** recognize **Mt Process** him **Phenomenon** in the street
Circumstance.

WMtC5. Before **Circumstance** we **Sensor** recognize **Mt Process** his hand
Phenomenon.

WMtC6. Before *Circumstance* we *Sensor* recognize *Mt Process* his face

Phenomenon.

WMtC7. Before *Circumstance* we *Sensor* recognize *Mt Process* his voice

Phenomenon.

WMtC8. Before *Circumstance* we *Sensor* recognize *Mt Process* his whip?

Phenomenon.

WMtC9. Before *Circumstance* we *Sensor* recognize *Mt Process* his hand

Phenomenon in the affairs of man *Circumstance.*

WMtC10. Before *Circumstance* we *Sensor* recognize *Mt Process* his face

Phenomenon in the waltz of dawn and dusk *Circumstance.*

WMtC11. Before *Circumstance* we *Sensor* recognize *Mt Process* his voice in the
rains down pour *Circumstance.*

WMtC12. Before *Circumstance* we *Sensor* recognize *Mt Process* his whip
Phenomenon in the thunders teasing *Circumstance.*

EXISTENTIAL CLAUSES.

WEC1. There ... are *Existential Process* twenty-seven poles *Existent* in a mile.

RELATIONAL CLAUSES.

WRC1 All ye *carrier* are *Relational Process* heavy laden *Attribute.*

WRC2 And we *carrier* are *relational Process* twenty-seven pole *Attribute* in a mile
Circumstance.

WRC3 All ye *Carrier* are *relational Process* heavy laden *Attribute.*

WRC4 He *Carrier* is *Relational Process* a friend I know *Attribute.*

WRC5 And here ... you *Carrier* are *Relational Process* still human being *Attribute.*

WRC6 All ye *Carrier* are *Relational Process* heavy laden *Attribute*.

WRC7 It *Carrier* is *Relational Process* beyond me *Attribute* to explain
Circumstance.

WRC8 All *Carrier* is *Relational Process* well *Attribute*.

WRC9 All ye *Carrier* are *Relational Process* heavy laden *Attribute*.

VERBAL CLAUSES.

WVC1 And decreed *Verbal Process* by the one God above *Sayer* and the ten gods
here below.

WVC2 ... Go tell *Verbal Process* it *Verbiage* upstairs *Circumstance*.

WVC3 ... Go tell *Verbal Process* it *Verbiage* upstairs *Circumstance*.

WVC4 ... No bell *Sayer* will warn *Verbal Process* them *Verbiage*.

WVC5 ... Don't yell! *Verbal Process*.

WVC6 ... Go tell *Verbal Process*.

WVC7 ...Go tell *Verbal Process* .

WVC8 ... Your house of pastoral–pure *Sayer* Promises *Verbal Process* cassava-
coloured *Verbiage*.