



**ANALYSING THE ETHNOGRAPHY OF
COMMUNICATION IN WOLE SOYINKA'S ALAPATA APATA:
A SOCIO-FUNCTIONAL PERSPECTIVE**

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Abstract:

The aim of this paper is to carry out a linguistic analysis of Wole Soyinka's play entitled *Alapata Apata*. The contention is that, like several West African writings, Wole Soyinka's literary works are influenced by his culture and mother tongue. In order to find out how the writer has made culture-based assumptions in the speech of the characters of his play, the paper is hinged upon Saville-Troique (2003)'s theory of ethnography of communication and Eggins (2004)'s theory of interpersonal meaning advanced by systemic functional linguistics. The descriptive methodology based on quantitative and qualitative approaches has been adopted in the study. The analysis reveals, at the sociolinguistic level, that the writer has used such interlingual features as Nigerian Pidgin, code-switching, code mixing and other linguistic devices to represent his artistic and ideological perspective of the African literature. The study of interpersonal meaning shows that various mood-types including declarative, interrogative, imperative, and features of modality are used by interactants to realize the tenor of discourse which is the role- relationship that exists among the characters of the play. By describing the factors that help to highlight the way communicative events achieve their objectives, this study has made it easy to decode some utterances meanings that facilitate the understanding of the language of the play.

Keywords: ethnography of communication, Nigerian Pidgin, code-switching, code mixing, mood, modality, African literature

Resumé:

Cet article se propose de faire une analyse linguistique de la pièce de théâtre de Wole Soyinka intitulée *Alapata Apata*. L'argument qui sous-tend l'étude est qu'à l'instar de plusieurs œuvres littéraires de l'Afrique de l'Ouest, la culture et la langue maternelle ont une influence significative sur les œuvres de Wole Soyinka. Afin de pouvoir décrire la manière dont l'auteur a utilisé des stratégies linguistiques basées sur la culture dans les

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discours des personnages de l'oeuvre, la théorie de l'ethnographie de la communication développée par Saville-Troique (2003) et celle de la signification interpersonnelle de Eggins (2004) proposée dans la linguistique systémique fonctionnelle ont été exploitées. La méthodologie descriptive basée sur l'approche mixte est adoptée dans cette étude. L'analyse sociolinguistique révèle que l'auteur a fait usage des éléments sociolinguistiques tels que le pidgin nigérian, l'alternance codique, le mélange codique et d'autres techniques linguistiques pour représenter la perspective artistique et idéologique de la littérature africaine. L'étude de la signification interpersonnelle a révélé que plusieurs catégories de mode à savoir le mode déclaratif, le mode interrogatif, le mode impératif aussi bien que les traits de modalité sont utilisés par les personnages pour faire ressortir la teneur du discours qui représente le rôle et la relation qui existent entre les personnages de la pièce de théâtre. A travers la description des facteurs qui mettent en exergue les objectifs des actes de communications, cette étude a permis de décoder les significations des énoncés qui facilitent la compréhension de la langue de la pièce de théâtre.

Mots-clés : ethnographie de la communication, pidgin Nigerian, l'alternance codique, le mélange codique, mode modalité, littérature africaine

1. Introduction

Until recently, scholars who work on language studies are more inclined to address the relationship existing between language and culture. In Wardhaugh (2010)'s opinion, a structure of a language determines the way in which speakers of that language view the world. Language is culture-dependent. This means that what people do through language varies from one culture to another. Yule (2007) has pointed out that "*in the study of the world's cultures, it has become clear that different groups not only have different languages, they have different world views which are reflected on their languages*" (p.246). In the context of African literature, it is commonly noticed that scholars depict some familiar and unfamiliar situations through the use of some varieties of the dialect of English, which reflect their culture and traditions. For that purpose, given that language is a vehicle of communication, the way communication functions in various cultural environment falls within the framework of ethnography of communication.

The present article focuses on the study of the ethnography of communication in Wole Soyinka's play *Alapata Apata*. In fact, Wole Soyinka is a writer who, through multilingualism technique, displays features of Yoruba culture in his literary text creation. *Alapata Apata*, which literary means "*the butcher on the rock*", is one of his most recent plays. The play centers on Alaba, the main protagonist, who, after having dealt in butchery for many years has decided suddenly to retire from his job. As he is the best and most influential butcher in the village, he becomes very popular due to his special way of making his roasted meat "*suya*". This becomes the talk of his hometown and even abroad. When he has decided to go on retirement, he keeps his *suya* lovers, in and outside his

village, in a very critical phase and people could not still figure out the reasons of his sudden decision. He, then, adopts the habit of sitting on a rock located in front of his house doing nothing. This leads him and his friend into constructing a new signboard carrying a written postal to inform the public about his decision. The signboard in question has been produced by a student of the school but due to his inadequate knowledge of the Yoruba language and the illiterate state of Alaba, they are misled with the inappropriate Yoruba accent which gives "*Alapata Apata*" a new meaning from the "*butcher on the rock*" to a title "*the ruler of Apata (the rock)*" this unknown intent spread all over the town. Unconscious to Alaba, underneath the rock are raw materials needed by the government and some private stakeholders in power but due to Alaba's presence on the rock, their attempt to get the wealth has not been easy. The conflict in the play is centered on the rock and the resource underneath.

The main objective of this paper is to analyse some features of communicative events in the play with a special focus on the social and cultural contexts in which they occur. In order to carry out sociolinguistic and functional analyses of the play, the paper seeks to answer the following research questions:

- How does communication function within the cultural and situational context of Wole Soyinka's literary artifact?
- How does language influence the components of the selected speech events of the play?
- How do characters' utterances realize the tenor of discourse in Wole Soyinka's selected excerpts of his play?

Before any attempt to provide answers to these questions through the different analyses, this paper discusses the theoretical framework and methods of analysis.

2. Theoretical preliminaries

2.1 Ethnography of communication

According to O' Grady et al. (2011), ethnography of communication is a way to analyse discourse by using the same sort of methods that anthropologists might use to study other aspects of culture. It is a theory that was first developed by Dell Hymes (1972). Paltridge (2012, p. 5) contends that "*Hymes's work was a reaction to the neglect, at the time, of speech in linguistic analyses and anthropological description of cultures. His work was also a reaction to views of language which took little or no account of the social and cultural contexts in which language occurs*". It is an approach to analysing language which has been designed to increase awareness of culture-bound assumptions. Saville-Troique (2003) observes that the ethnography of communication is directed at the description and understanding of communicative behaviour in specific cultural setting and also directed toward the formulation of concepts and theories upon which to build a global metatheory of human communication. Wardhaugh (2010, p. 259), on his part, observes that ethnography of a communicative event is a description of all the factors that are relevant in understanding how that communicative event achieves its purposes. According to Saville-Troique

Muriel (2003), there are certain factors that are taken into account for the analysis of the communicative events. These include:

- Genre or type of events: it can include poems, proverbs, riddles, lectures, etc.
- Topic or referential focus: it is what people are talking about.
- Purpose of event: it includes the reasons for the talk.
- Setting: the location, time and day.

Warhaugh (2007) contends that it is the concrete physical circumstances in which speech takes place.

- Key: the emotional tone of the event;
- Participants: characteristics of those present and their relationship.
- Message form: it includes the code and channel.
- Message content: the specific details of what the communication is about.
- Act sequence or ordering of the speech acts.
- Rules for interaction: the prescribed orders of speaking.
- Norms for interpretation: the shared understanding.

Through these factors, Hymes considers aspects of speech events such as who is speaking to whom, about what, for what purpose, where and when, and how these impact on how we say and do things in culture-specific settings (Paltridge, 2012).

In Saville-Troique (2003)'s opinion, undertaking ethnography of communication requires the knowledge of the communicative repertoire of the given area. This is defined by Gumperz quoted by Saville-Troique (2003) as all varieties, dialects or styles used in a particular socially-defined population, and the constraints which govern the choice among them. Holmes (2004) also contends that "*language varies according to its uses as well as its users, according to where it is used and to whom, as well as according to who is using it. The addresses and the context affect our choice or variety, whether language, dialect or style*" (p.235). Some of features of language varieties identified in this study include:

- Nigeria Pidgin English: Originally, a pidgin is a language which has no native speakers. It is developed as a means of communication between people who do not have a common language (Holmes, 2008, p. 84). Hudson (2001) goes further to argue that "*a pidgin is itself a language, with a community of speakers who pass it on from one generation to the next, and consequently with its own history*" (p.62). Yule (2007), on his part, advocates that "*various English pidgins, characterized by an absence of any complex grammatical morphology and a limited vocabulary, are still used. In the case of Nigeria, the variety of pidgin, known as Nigeria Pidgin, is firstly viewed as "some kind of 'bad' English, that is, English imperfectly learned and therefore of no possible interest*" (p. 58). But this assumption has quickly been rejected since it is commonly recognised that Nigerian Pidgin draws most of its lexicon on Standard English and indigenous languages.
- Code switching/ code mixing: It is a phenomenon in which speakers switch from one language to another within the same conversation (Mc Gregor, 2004). As observed by Wardhaugh (2010), speakers master a lot of varieties of language they speak and whenever they choose to speak, they decide to switch from one code to

another or they mix codes even within sometimes very short utterances and thereby create a new code.

- **Borrowing:** It has to do with the use of words from other languages. Mesthrie et al. (2009) say that it is *"a technical term for the incorporation of an item from one language to another. These items could be (in terms of decreasing order of frequency) words, grammatical elements or sounds"* (p.243). As a matter of fact, through borrowing, different languages may be mixed up with each other. Hudson (2003) thinks that *"whereas code-switching and code-mixing involved mixing languages in speech, borrowing involves mixing the systems themselves, because an item is 'borrowed' from one language to become part of the other language"* (p.58)

2.2 Interpersonal meaning

As said earlier, this study also focuses on an aspect of the systemic functional linguistics, more specifically the grammar of interpersonal meaning. It is the meaning which accounts for the way language is used to facilitate the communicative acts among the interactants and to express and understand feelings, attitude and judgments. Bloor & Bloor (2004) maintain that in this type of meaning, *"language is used to participate in communicative acts with other people, to take on roles and to express and understand feelings, attitudes and judgments"* (p. 11). For Eggins, *"the systems of mood and modality are the keys to understanding the interpersonal relationships between interactants. By looking at the grammatical choices speakers make, the role they play in discourse, we have a way of uncovering and studying the social creation and maintenance of hierarchic, socio-cultural roles"* (p. 187).

Mood is the grammar of clause as exchange which outlines the different speech functions including offer, statement, question, and command which are realized through mood choices such as declarative, interrogative and imperative. As for modality, Halliday & Matthiessen (2014) advocate that it *"refers to the area of meaning that lies between yes and no- the intermediate ground between positive and negative polarity"* (p. 691), whereas Eggins (2004) posits that *"modality is a complex area of English grammar which has to do with different ways in which a language user can intrude on her message, expressing attitudes and judgements of various kinds. Modality is divided into two main parts including modalisation, the expression of probability and usuality and modulation which is the expression of obligation and inclination. Actually, both mood and modality patterns are meant to realize the tenor of discourse which is "the social role relationships played by interactants"* (Eggins, 2004). These roles are exemplified through power, contact and affective involvement.

3. Method

To carry out the different analyses, sampling method is adopted in this paper. For that purpose, four excerpts have been selected from the corpus. The rationale for choosing the texts is that the communicative events have the same setting. First, the analysis of each communicative event is carried out within the framework of ethnography of communication through the qualitative research design and the different components of

the events are analysed therein. Regarding the functional analysis, various types of mood patterns are identified in the selected texts through the following keys put in brackets: DM= declarative mood; IntM= interrogative mood; ImpM= imperative mood. In addition, modal operators which exemplify features of modality, identified in the extracts are marked in bold types and underlined.

As a matter of fact, the mood and modality elements identified in the text are analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively. The aim of the quantitative approach is to have a clear idea of the frequency of mood and modality patterns in each selected text and provide a comparative study of the four extracts.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Analysis of communicative events in the extracts

This section focuses on the analysis of communicative events in excerpts selected from the play under study. Four sequences of conversations have been chosen. Each one has been described through the theory accounted for in the previous section.

A. Extract one

1st Mech: 1-Na him be dat! (DM) 2-E still siddon same place (DM). 3-No be so I tell you? (IntM)

2nd Mech: 4-Every morning, all day? (IntM) 5-Are you sure? (IntM)

1st Mech: 6-All day (DM). 7-E be like say e wan' scare people. (DM)

2nd Mech: 8-How **would** that pay? (IntM).

1st Mech: 9-Why e dey siddon dere? (IntM). 10-Why on top dat rock? (IntM).

2nd Mech: 11-How do I know? (IntM) 12-You worry too much. (DM).

1st Mech: 13-And you **fit** sleep (DM).14-while fire dey burn for your roof (DM). 15- Why e go siddon for rock? (IntM).

2nd Mech: 16-That's his business. (DM) .17-Don't we have enough to worry about? (IntM). 18-Like that new head- tie your wife is nagging you about. (DM).

1st Mech: 19-Dat na me own *wahala*. (DM). 20-Dis na public (DM). 21-Dis no be public thoroughfare again? (IntM).

2nd Mech: 22-So? (IntM).

1st Mech: 23-No be in sitting room. (DM).

2nd Mech: 24-Nor his dining room. (DM) 25-Or office. (DM) 26-Or private bar. (DM) 27- But he eats there (DM) 28-you say (DM), 29-drinks there (DM), 30-conducts I don't know what other business there (DM). 31-So? (IntM)

1st Mech: 32-Next ting 'e go begin dey shit there. (DM)

2nd Mech: 33-That's different. (DM) 34- It **would** then become a health concern. (DM) 35- Something real for the government to worry about. (DM)

1st Mech: 36-One full month, just siddon one place? (IntM) 37-Me I tink (DM) 38-say na one kin'world you dey live for heaven sake (DM) 39-You never hear of voice snatcher. (DM)

2nd Mech: 40-Voice snatcher? (IntM) 41-What's that? (IntM)

1st Mech:42- Inside which kin' world you dey live for heaven sake? (IntM) 43-You never hear of voice snatcher before? (IntM)

2nd Mech: 44-No. (DM) 45-Tell me about them. (ImpM)

1st Mech: 46-Voice snatchers? (IntM) 47-Dose ones na agents of the devil. (DM) 48-They catch your voice, (DM) 49-den trap am, (DM) 50-seal am up inside bottle. (DM) 51-Or inside calabash gourd. (DM)

2nd Mech: 52-Then do what with it? (IntM)

1st Mech: 53-Anytin' Take your voice make money. (DM) 54-Send am go harassment dere enemies. (DM) 55-Use am for extort money from your family or whatever. (DM) 56-Any kin' bad business. (DM)

2nd Mech: 57-Well, he can't be very efficient. (DM) 58-We've passed here countless times (DM) 59-and we're still talking. (DM) 60- I can hear you. (DM) 61-You can hear me. (DM) (pp.2-4)

The above sequence focuses on the conversation between two motor mechanics that are passing near the rock on which Alaba is seated. This attitude of sitting on the same place arouses the interpretation of everybody in the village. In a dramatic genre, the two participants are trying to explain the reason why Alaba remains seated on the same place. They assume that there is a mysterious reason that can explain such an attitude. For them, his aim is to snatch voices with his powerful charm (known as *olughohun*) and use them for harmful purposes. The message form is that 1st Mech is trying to provide 2nd Mech with explanations regarding what has brought Alaba to display such an attitude and 2nd Mech doubts him. The act sequence includes information giving and turn-taking through questions and answers. As for the rules of speaking, one can notice that 1st Mech is more informed about the situation and chooses to speak first whereas 2nd Mech reacts through questions in order to get more clarifications. The key or emotional tone is friendly and sarcastic. Regarding the norm for interpretation, it can be said that in the Yoruba culture, one is more attentive to the change one notices in people's behavior. Given that Alaba who is used to selling roasted meat suddenly shifts from this job to doing nothing except sit on the rock, the latter is now viewed as an evil doer or someone who has hidden precious resources inside the rock.

Actually, varieties of English constitute the communicative repertoire (Saville-Troique, 2003, p.9) of this play. In this sequence, Nigerian Pidgin English is the variety which is used by the writer. Viewed from its cultural and situational context (Egins, 2004), this variety is used in an informal situation as a lingua franca to facilitate the communication and the understanding of what each party is trying to say. Consider the following sequence:

1st Mech: Na him be dat! E still siddon same place. No be so I tell you?

2nd Mech: Every morning, all day? Are you sure?

1st Mech: All day. E be like say e wan' scare people.

2nd Mech: How would that pay.

1st Mech: Why e dey siddon dere? Why on top dat rock?

2nd Mech: How do I know? You worry too much.

1st Mech: And you fit sleep while fire dey burn for your roof. Why e go siddon for rock?

This sequence can be translated as:

1st Mech: *There he is! He always sits down at the same place. Isn't what I am telling you?*

2nd Mech: Every morning, all day? Are you sure?

1st Mech: All day. *It is as if he wanted to scare people.*

2nd Mech: How would that pay?

1st Mech: *Why does he sit down there? Why is it on the top of that rock?*

2nd Mech: How do I know? You worry too much.

1st Mech: *And you can sleep while fire is burning in your roof. Why is he sitting down on the rock?*

Although these sequences in reveal the comic attitude of the two mechanics, they are meant not only to display that Pidgin “*is the language of the illiterate or marginalized literate; the language of informal, relaxed situations ... a means par excellence of achieving specific literary effects*” (Elugbe & Omamor, 2007, p. 133), but also to outline the cultural environment in which the communicative events is taking place. We now consider the second excerpt:

B. Extract two

Boy:1- *O dàbo sah* (DM)

Alaba: 2-*N lé.* (DM) 3-*Ba nki Tisà* (DM)

Boy: 4-*Ngo j'ise* (DM)

Alaba: 5-*Hey, omo* (DM)

Boy: 6-*Sah?* (IntM)

Alaba:7-*Are you still keeping the world in your assembly hall?* (IntM) 8-*On the tall shelf?* (IntM)

Boy: 9-*Sah?* (IntM)

Alaba: 10-*The world.* (DM) 11-*You know that round atlas map of the word.* (DM)

12-*The one Queen Victoria gave to the school at her coronation.* (DM) 13-*Is it still in the assembly hall?* (IntM)

Boy: 14-*Oh, the globe sah.* (DM) 15-*Yes, we still have it.* (DM)

Alaba:16- *Ah yes, the globe—that's* (DM) 17-*what we used to call it.* (DM) 18-*Have they straightened it yet?* (IntM)

Boy: 19-*Straightened it sir?* (IntM)

Alaba: 20-*Hey, don't they teach you people English at school anymore?* (IntM) 21-*You know* (DM) 22-*what is straight* (DM) 23-*and what is crooked,* (DM) 24- *don't you?* (IntM)

Boy: 25-*Yes sah.* (DM)

Alaba: 26-That's (DM) 27-what I'm asking you (DM). 28-The globe, or whatever you call it (DM).29- It used to be bent— like this. (DM)30- Did they ever straighten it out, (IntM) 31-or did they buy a new one? (IntM)

Boy: 32-I don't know baba. (DM) 33-But the one which is there (DM) 34—It's just like you said— titled slightly, at an angle. (DM) 35-Not that it is bent or crooked. (DM) 36-All atlas globes of the world are like that. (DM)

Alaba: 37-So they left it (DM) 38-as it was all these years? (IntM) 39-Huum. (DM) 40-The headmaster said (DM)41-he had to order a new one from England(DM)—42-just imagine—all the way from England, (ImpM)43- and he wanted my father to pay for it (DM) 44-Of course my – your grandfather, Pa Alonge ---refused.(DM)

Boy: 45-I am sorry, baba. (DM)

Alaba:46- Nothing to be worry about, (DM) 47-you never knew him. (DM)48-He was a stubborn man, a man of principles. (DM) 49-But who paid for his principles? (IntM) (*Taps his chest*). 50-Just reminding you (DM) 51-that your father condition didn't begin yesterday. (DM)52-*Won ni, amokun eru ori e wo.* (DM) 53-*O ni—ah, à t'isale ni.*(DM) 54-You know (DM) 55-what that means, (DM) 56-don't you? (IntM)

Boy: 57-No, Baba. (DM)

Alaba: 58-Of course you wouldn't. (DM)59-It means, (DM) 60-don't tell the man with K-legs (ImpM) 61-that the load on his head is crooked. (DM) 62-He'll tell you (DM) 63-that the problem did not begin up there but from down below. (DM) 64-The load on his head began to bend (DM) 65-when I was your age, (DM) 66-and all because I used my initiative. (DM)

Boy: 67-Yes, Baba. (DM)

Alaba: 68-Well, let me tell you boy, (ImpM) 69-initiative is like a butcher's knives (DM)— 70-it cuts from both sides. (DM)

Boy: 71-I know, Baba. (DM)

Alaba: 72-Initiative, I'm telling you, (DM)73-is...(DM)

Boy: 74-...What made the rat end up in the snake's stomach. (DM)

Alaba: 75-Ah, you know that eh? (IntM)76-Poor rat. (DM)77-He saw (DM) 78-what he thought (DM)79-was a beautiful speckled belt, (DM) 80-and thought (DM) 81- it would look good on his grandmother's waist. (DM)

Boy: 82-Yes Baba. (DM)83-Can I go now? (IntM)

Alaba: 84-Who's keeping you? (IntM) 85-Go. (ImpM)

Boy: 85-Yes baba. (DM) (pp. 18-21).

The above passage focuses on the debate between Alaba and his son. The setting is beside the rock. The son is about to leave his house for school, Queen Victoria. He is saying goodbye to Alaba when the latter asks after the globe. This becomes the subject of discussion between the father and his son who are the participants of this sequence. The rule for interaction is that, first, in the Yoruba culture, a child must inform his parents before leaving the house; that is the reason why he has spoken first; second, words of wisdom are learnt from elderly people. Actually, Alaba has initiated the conversation

through questions and the son is answering. The act sequence is organized as follows: first, the boy greets his father in Yoruba and the man responds to the greeting. Later, Alaba opens a discussion concerning the globe. Some details about the globe which has been crooked for years are given to the boy. The key is friendly and serious as Alaba wants his son to learn from him. The norm of interpretation leads us to say that elder people use proverbs and symbols to convey their message. Indeed, the globe is a symbol of the world which will forever remain crooked and Alaba's endeavor to straighten the world remains all to no avail.

Like the previous excerpt, features of multilingualism are displayed in this text. First there is a sequence in which the writer has used code switching/mixing device:

Boy: *O dàbo sah*

Alaba: *N lé. Ba nki Tisà*

Boy: *Ngo j'ise*

Alaba: *Hey, omo*

Boy: *Sah?*

The sequence is translated as follows:

Boy: Good bye Sir.

Alaba: Hello, my regards to your teacher

Boy: I will do that

Alaba: Hey, Son

Boy: Sir?

This sequence shows that there is a situational switching in which Alaba deliberately switches from English to Yoruba to show not only that they belong to the same ethnic group but to show the affective relationship existing between the two characters.

Another instance of code-switching occurs in the excerpt: *Won ni, amokun eru ori e wo. O ni--ah, a t'isale ni* (don't tell the man with K-legs that the load on his head is crooked. He'll tell you that the problem did not begin up there but from down below). This is a form of metaphorical code-switching. Alaba uses this Yoruba proverb to elaborate on his explanation regarding the issue he is discussing. The next analysis is carried out in the third excerpt.

C. Extract three

Daanielebo: 1-Be careful Alaba (ImpM). 2-If you cross me (DM), 3-don't think (ImpM) 4-your reputation will save you (DM). 5-You know (DM) 6-what I want (DM). 7-You've got (DM) 8-what I want (DM). 9-I can pay (DM) 10-and pay well (DM). 11-If anyone makes you a better offer (DM), 12-I'll double it (DM). 13-I'll even triple it (DM) 14—just tell me how much! (ImpM)

Alaba: 15-But my good friend, Your Excellency. (DM) 16-I still don't know....(DM)
Daanielebo: 17-I know you (DM) 18- If a priest can be secretive (DM)19— it's all part of your training. (DM) 20- However, business is business. (DM)
Alaba: 21-I keep telling you, (DM) 22- I am not an If a priest. (DM) 23- I was a total failure. (DM) 24-Araba threw me out (DM).25- He said (DM) 26- I was not called by *Orunmila* (DM) 27-and advised me to return to my father's trade (DM). 28-There are good ifa priests all over the place, (DM) 29-they will gladly take your money. (DM)
Daanielebo: 30-You don't fool me, Alaba. (DM) 31-I used to believe that story—not anymore. (DM) 32-You left (DM) 33- because you have surpassed your Master. (DM) 34- You found the source. (DM) 35-You found the original source, (DM) 36-that's (DM) 37- why you keep sitting here. (DM)
Alaba: 38-Your Excellency, I assure you (DM) 39-I don't have anything (DM) 40-that is of interest to someone of your position. (DM) 41-You are a man of total timbre and calibre. (DM) 42- I am just a butcher, retired. (DM) 43-The entire state is yours to do what you want. (DM)
Daanielebo: 44-Well, don't forget that Alaba. (ImpM) 45-Don't forget it (ImpM) 46-I can take (DM) 47-whatever I want (DM) 48-when I want. (DM) 49-You're making me lose patience. (DM)
Alaba: 50-Me? (IntM) 51-My small self? (IntM)
Daanielebo: 52-Your small self? (IntM) 53-Are you making fun of me? (IntM) 54-You are sitting on something this—BIG, (DM) 55-and you keep saying 'My small self? (IntM) 56-Your small self. (DM) 57-Don't be selfish, Alaba (ImpM) 58-I am appealing to your Yoruba self. (DM) 59-If nothing else moves you, (DM) 60- at least, remember (ImpM) 61-you are a Yoruba man. (DM) 62- *Enia kan o ki je k'ilu fe.* (DM) 63-You have to share for the progress of the race. (DM)
Alaba: 64-A-ah I agree with you. (DM) 65-The town cannot put on weight (DM) 66- if only one man is eating. (DM) 67- Still my weighty brother, you leave me confused. (DM)
Daanielebo: 68- What is there to be confused about? (ImpM) 69-Don't we always pray (ImpM) 70-that we should be greater than our fathers? (DM)
Alaba: 71-True, true. (DM) 72-And *Edumare* granted that prayer. (DM) 73-For both of us. (DM)
Daanielebo: 74-No. (DM) 75-For you, yes you became more famous than your father, (DM) 76- but in my case... (DM)
Alaba: 77-Ah, *gomina*, don't commit sin o. (ImpM) 78-Don't commit sin. (ImpM) 79-*Orunmila* is listening. (DM) 80-Don't be ungrateful. (ImpM) (pp.133-135)

This sequence focuses on the discussion between Alaba and Daanielebo. In fact, many protagonists of the play believe that the rock on which Alaba is sitting contains an enormous quantity of mineral resources. Consequently, some of them come to Alaba with a view to taking control of the rock. The purpose of the event is that Daanielebo is trying to take over the inherited rock from Alaba, first by negotiating about the amount of money he can pay Alaba as counterpart, and, secondly by threatening him as the latter is

not responding positively to his request. So, like the previous sequences, the setting is beside the rock, the participants being Alaba and Daanielebo. The key is ironic and sarcastic because Alaba is really aware of Daanielebo's intention. The ordering of speech acts is explaining, convincing, threatening. Indeed, Daanielebo is pressurizing Alaba to leave the rock for him whereas the latter keeps insisting that he does not know what he is talking about. Through the norm of interpretation, we can say that some people always want to take advantage of their position to deprive their neighbor of what they have. In addition, initiated people in Yoruba culture are secretive and they do not speak anyhow.

Moreover, this sequence also contains some features of language varieties. First there are instances of lexical borrowings in the text. For example, we have *ifa* (Yoruba oracle), *Orunmila* (god of the oracle), *Edumare* (The Almighty God), and *gomina* (governor). These items which are purely Yoruba loan words are illustrative of the culture of the interactants. Let's now focus on excerpt four.

D. Extract four

Oluwo: 1-Where is he? (IntM)

Teacher: 2-What do you want? (IntM) 3-Has there not been enough persecution of this great aluminus of Queen Victoria, the first and only Butcherus Emeritus? (IntM)

Oluwo: 4-Teacher, we made a mistake. (DM) 5-The king sent us back to make amends (DM)

Asipa: 6-We've just heard. (DM) 7-On our way back to the palace (DM) 8-we ran into some villagers (DM) 9-who witnessed the big battle. (DM)

Teacher: 10-Ye-e-es? (IntM)

Oluwo: 11-He saved the honor of the village. (DM) 12-He put the soldiers to fight. (DM) 13-Single-handed. (DM) 14-We hear the General cursed him all the way back to Lagos. (DM)

Asipa: 15-Alaba has brought honor to the village. (DM) 16- He made us to re-live the story of our forebears. (DM) 17- We have treated him shabbily (DM) 18- and **will** make amends. (DM) 19- Araba is on his way. (DM) 20- He stopped to have the royal seal placed on the proclamation. (DM)

Oluwo: 21-And what he did to Daanielebo, that hyena (DM) 22-who calls himself Lord of the Jungle! (DM) 23-Alaba simply ordered his smallest son to sweep him out with a broom. (DM) 24-The man ran naked through the village (DM) 25-until he found someone to let him in. (DM) 26-He did himself till nighttime, (DM) 27-then sneaked out dressed like one of his women's Yellow Fever Brigade. (DM) 28-The news is that (DM) 29-he's now completely off his head. (DM)

Teacher: 30-Oh, that was apparent a long time ago. (DM) 31-So now you wish to talk to Aalapata? (IntM)

Oluwo: 32-On royal command (DM)

Asipa: 33-Alaba wishes are our command (DM)

Alaba: 34-I **must** go. (DM) 35-So **must** this thing. (DM) 36-I've thought it over, (DM) 37- and I **can't** go back to dressing those meats. (DM) 38- I **shall** send the fines-goats, turkeys,

guinea-fowl, (DM) 39-anything they want (DM) 40- but, I **can't** prepare them like before. (DM) 41-I have no more feeling for it (DM). 42-I'm going away. (DM)

Teacher: 43-What are you doing, my Butcher Emeritus? (IntM)

Asipa: 44-Away to where? (IntM) 45-This is your home. (DM) 46-The village needs you. (DM)

Teacher: 47-You have not heard the message. (DM) 48-The king has quashed his own order. (DM)

Alaba: 49-He has done what? (IntM)

Teacher: 50-Reversed his judgment. (DM) 51-The guilty verdict. (DM) 52-Voided the fines. (DM)

Oluwo: 53-We rushed back with the royal command. (DM) 54-We were hasty (DM)-55-but we had not learnt of your exploits when we sat in judgment. (DM) 56-*Okunrin mefa!* (DM) 57-*Abe'gun l'oju*(DM) 58-*lai y'oda*(DM). 59-*Ekú werewere ti nre'gi labe ebiti gbo gbe.* (DM) 60-*Jagunlabi.* (DM) 61-You honored the memory of our legendary past. (DM)

Alaba: (*Resumes tugging*). 62-The akiset is still wrong. (DM) 63-Wrong is wrong. (DM) 64-*Esu* tipped the flaps of my *abetiaja* the wrong way (DM) 65-and I misled those pupils. (DM)

Asipa: 66-Does anyone know about what he's talking about? (IntM)

Oluwo: 67-Does it matter? (IntM) 68-The rock is now his. (DM) 69-As a token of royal remorse, (DM) 70- the king has conferred on you this very chieftaincy title. (DM) 71-Your domain is now official—the Alapata of Apata. (DM) 72-What do the people say. (IntM) 73-Have I well-spoken or ill-spoken? (IntM)

All: 74-You have spoken well. (DM)

Teacher: 75-Satisfied? (IntM) 76-The accident of the accent is vindicated. (DM) 77-I knew it! (DM) 78-I knew it! (DM)

Alaba: 79-Are you saying (IntM).....80-Do you mean? (IntM)

Teacher: 81-Alapata Apata Rapata! (DM)

Alaba: 82-Ha! (DM) 83-Whose doing is all this? (IntM) 84-First I thought it was *Orunmila*, then *Esu*, then again *Orunmila*.... (DM)

Araba: 85-You were always a poor student of Ifa. (DM) 86-Else you **would** have known (DM) 87-there is no contradiction. (DM) 88-*Orunmila* brought you back. (DM) 89-*Esu* did his bit. (DM) 90-Ifa has pronounced you Baale. (DM)

The fourth excerpt focuses on the conversation between different protagonists of the play. In fact, Teacher's ambition is to improve Alaba's signpost in conformity with his status as a retired butcher. So, he instructs one of his students to embellish it. Unfortunately, the boy knows very little about the Yoruba language. He does not know where to put the required ascent so that the signpost can display the real meaning. Alaba on his part is too distracted to help the boy. Consequently, a chieftaincy title is unconsciously given to Alaba and this has triggered the anger of royalty. The king and his people fine him heavily for his lack of respect. However, after having repelled Daanielebo and the General, he obtains a royal pardon and a reinstatement of a title he mistakenly gives himself in wrongly applying the ascents. Indeed, the setting of the

passage is beside the rock. The participants in this communicative event are Alaba, Teacher, Asipa, Araba and Oluwo. The purpose here is to show the royal gratitude to Alaba after they have mistakenly fined him and inform him that the king has conferred on him the chieftaincy titled Alapata Apata (the chief of the rock). Information giving and turn-taking through questions and answers constitutes the act sequence in the sequence. The key is relatively formal and friendly. The norm of the conversation is that even if the royalty has the ultimate power in the Yoruba tradition and whatever he gives as order must be strictly obeyed, amends are made when the accused people are innocent. Like the previous texts, there are instances of loan words from Yoruba. These include: *Orunmila* (the Yoruba oracle), *Esu* (a Yoruba deity). There is also an instance of code-switching: *Okunrin mefa! Abe'gun l'oju lai y'oda. Eku werewere ti nre'gi labe ebite gbo gbe. Jagunlabi*. This Yoruba aphorism is uttered by Oluwo to appreciate the efforts of Alaba to get rid of the General and Daanielebo.

The analysis of these four extracts indicates how communication functions through the various factors that are involved in the characters' utterances. The next section focuses on the functional analysis of the extracts.

4.2 Analysis of interpersonal meaning in the excerpts

Basing on the identification of mood and features of modality carried out above, the table below provides the statistics of mood and modality

Table 4: Statistics of mood and modality-types

Mood-types	Frequency and percentage			
	Text 1	Text 2	Text 3	Text 4
Declarative	41 (67.21%)	65 (76.47%)	63 (78.75%)	74 (82.22%)
Interrogative	19 (31.15%)	16 (18.82%)	05 (6.85%)	16 (17.77%)
Imperative	01 (01.64%)	04 (4.70%)	12 (15%)	00 (00%)
Total	61 (100%)	85 (100%)	80 (100%)	90 (100%)
Modality	Text1	Text 2	Text 3	Text 4
Modalisation	06 (100%)	03 (100%)	03 (60%)	03 (42.85%)
Modulation	00 (00%)	00 (00%)	02 (40%)	04 (57.14%)
Total	06 (100%)	03 (100%)	05 (100%)	07 (100%)

The above table shows that in each excerpt, there is a predominance of declarative mood: 41 (67.21%) in text1, 65 (76.47%) in text2, 63 (78.75%) in text3 and 63 (78.75%) in text 4. The use of these declaratives implies that pieces of information are shared among interactants. These declarative mood-types are exemplified with full major and elliptical clauses as well as minor clauses. Interrogative mood ranks second in the first excerpt, 19 (31.15%), second excerpt, 16 (18.82%) and the fourth one, 16 (17.77%). In excerpt 3, it ranks third, 04 (4.70%), indicating that interactants initiate dialogues in the form of questions and answers. These interrogatives include polar, elliptical and WH-interrogatives. As far as modality is concerned, it is noticed that text 1 and text 2 display features of modalisation but no use of modulation is noticed in the two texts. In the third text,

modalisation dominates over modulation, whereas text 4 displays more features of modulation than modalisation.

In text1, the conversation has taken place between 1st Mech and 2nd Mech. They are more concerned with finding out why Alaba takes that habit of sitting on the top of the rock. In order to get further information about such an attitude, 2nd Mech has used more interrogative mood in clauses (4,5, 8, 11, 17, 22, 31, 40, 57) than 1st Mech. The only imperative mood is adopted by 2nd Mech in clause 57 to give order to 1st Mech. Text 2 presents parent-child relationship because the conversation occurs between Alaba and his son. Alaba is asking about the globe of his son's school, Queen Victoria. The exchange of information in this sequence is expressed through the use of declarative mood which is more predominant in the text. In order to require more information about its present state, Alaba uses more interrogative mood-types in such clauses as (7, 8, 13, 18, 20, 24, 31, 49, 56). The son is obliged to answer all the questions put to him by his father. All the interrogative mood-types used by the son are meant to seek more clarification as in (6, 19), and permission as in (83). This indicates that in the Yoruba culture, obedient as well as respect for elderly people are expressed through a polite behavior. Imperative mood-types used by Alaba in this text are meant to share words of wisdom with the son in (42, 60, 68) and give order in (85). Moreover, in text 3, there is a conversation between Alaba and Daanielebo. Exchange of information about the possession of the rock is marked by the use of various declarative mood-types. After Daanielebo has discovered that his attempt to take possession of the rock has not been successful, he adopts a face threatening act (Yule, 2007) through the use of imperative mood-types in clauses (1,3, 14, 44, 45, 57, 60, 68, 69) more than Alaba who only uses them in (77, 78, 80). The interrogative mood-types are marked by informal questions put by Daanielebo in (52, 54, 56) and Alaba in (50, 51). This suggests that the writer has adopted a dialogic mode in this part of the play.

In the fourth excerpt, the exchange of information is illustrated through the high percentage of declarative mood-types: 74 (82.22%). The main reason for the gathering is that after Alaba has repelled Daanielebo and the General, the king has decided to forgive him and he even awards him the title he mistakenly gives himself through the wrong application of the ascents. The use of interrogative mood-types by Teacher, Oluwo, Asipa and Alaba indicate that a friendly atmosphere prevails in the text and interactants respect one another. They include polar, elliptical and WH-interrogatives. The total absence of imperative mood shows that interactants have not given any order or commands to one another. Actually, in the Yoruba-based culture, the king's delegate usually deliver the king's message by giving orders but since they have noticed that they have made a mistake by fining Alaba wrongly, they have come to negotiate with the butcher in order to make amends.

From the above analyses of the mood-types, we can deduce the tenor variables in each text. In fact, in text 1, the use of declarative, interrogative and imperative mood-types and the absence of modulation show that there is equal power between 1st Mech and 2nd Mech. They are walking together towards Alaba's abode, which implies that there is frequent contact between each other. The affective involvement is high because they are

friends. In text 2, the parent-child relationship between Alaba and his son is an indication of unequal power, frequent contact as they both use declarative mood and only Alaba has used imperative mood. The contact between them is frequent and the affective involvement is high. Text 3 displays high proportion of imperative mood, mainly used by Daanielebo, showing that he has more power than Alaba. The contact between them is infrequent, as they do not see each other regularly and the affective involvement between the two interactants is low. In text 4, all the features of modulation are used by Alaba when he is not aware of the fact that the king has forgiven him. For him, he must abide by the royal instruction because, in the Yoruba culture, everybody must obey the king's instruction or leave the royal territory. So, there is an unequal power between Alaba and the king's ministers. However, when he is informed that he has been pardoned a friendly atmosphere has prevailed. Consequently, the contact is frequent, and the affective involvement is high.

5. Conclusion

This paper has surveyed the ethnography of communication in the play *Alapata Apata*. From these analyses, it appears that all the communicative events are Yoruba culturally-dominated. Wole Soyinka's idiolect is generally difficult for readers who are not familiar with his works since most of his literary artifacts aim at transmitting his culture in the English language. In this regard, Adejare (1995) says that "*the English language has been the greater channel for exposing the Yoruba culture to the outside world through the effort of Wole Soyinka in particular*" (p. 198)

From the study of the selected texts, it appears that the Yoruba title of the play which means "*the butcher of the rock*", coupled with the setting, the character's selection and the norm of the communication show the way communication functions within the cultural and situational context of Wole Soyinka's literary artifact. Even though the study has not covered the whole play, the findings also reveal that the use of language varieties including Nigerian Pidgin English, code-switching, transliteration and the use of loan words in the play indicate that features of multilingualism determine the way language influence the components of the selected speech events of the play. Last but not least, the use of declaratives, interrogatives and imperatives combined with the features of modality determine the power, contact and affective relationships existing among the participants of the four communicative events.

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