

THE RHETORICAL STYLE OF CLIMATE CHANGE EDUCATION IN GREG MBAJIORGU'S *WAKE UP EVERYONE*

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ABSTRACT Climate change responses require a multidimensional approach given the context-specific knowledge of climate change education. Hence, this study investigates the rhetorical style of propagating climate change education in a non-formal setting – a typical agrarian Nigerian community – as enacted in Greg Mbajiorgu's play, *Wake up Everyone*. It adopts Olinger's (2016) socio-cultural approach to style to unpack nuances of social meanings which are negotiated in the process of enhancing the people's perception and learning of climate change issues in the symbolic rural environment. Four representative extracts which comprise three conversational exchanges among the characters, and the theme song of the environmental activist's Green Theatre outfit's play-within-a-play, *The New Dawn*, were purposively selected to reflect the following issues: improving education and awareness, building human and institutional capacity on climate change, devising adaptation and mitigation strategies to reduce climate change impact, and giving early warning to forestall environmental disasters. The study reveals that the rhetorical strategies and semiotic resources in the dramatic text essentially localise and also demystify the complex science of climate change with the imaginative design of tactical non-formal adult education strategies to appeal to the environmental and cultural sensibilities of the extremely vulnerable local community.

Key Words: Environmental adult education, climate change, cultural ideology, meaning, non-formal education, rhetorical style.

INTRODUCTION

Research has shown that there is an increasing rate of biodiversity loss and rapidly changing ecosystems globally due to climate change impacts, among other human-induced stressors (Bhattarai, 2017; Sintayehu, 2018; Malhi et al., 2020; Weiskopf et al., 2020). National Academy of Sciences & The Royal Society (2019: 1) note that '[c]limate change is already having a dramatic effect on many ecosystems, leading to questions about what the future will bring.' In response to this global challenge, '[...] researchers are working to improve understanding of the effects of climate change and how ecosystems respond to them, as well as to identify opportunities to manage ecosystems so that they can persist in the face of climate change' (National Academy of Sciences & The Royal Society, 2019: 3). It is instructive to note, however, that although climate change impacts may be widespread, they are not uniform. As a consequence, '[...] climate change responses vary as a function of relative vulnerability due to differences in exposure, sensitivity, and adaptive capacity' (Weiskopf et al., 2020: 2).

Lehtonen et al. (2019: 344) describe climate change as a ‘hyper, super wicked problem’ with implications and solutions which need to be reflected both locally and globally.’ But despite the urgency and importance of the global challenge, Smith et al. (2014: 6) observe that ‘[...] yet it is one that many people choose to ignore and some, even, to deny’. It is, therefore, expedient to design realistic education strategies to improve people’s awareness level and knowledge of the phenomenon. Stevenson et al. (2017) explain that climate change education is about learning in the face of risk, uncertainty and rapid change and it must be understood as a complex social as well as scientific issue characterised by uncertain and context-specific knowledge. Reid (2019: 771) argues that the notion of climate change education is crucial to redirecting teaching and learning, submitting that ‘[e]ducation plays a paramount role in raising awareness and promoting behavioural change for climate change mitigation and adaptation. It helps increase the climate change mitigation and adaptation capacity of communities by enabling individuals to make informed decisions.’ Haider (2019) opines that information and knowledge sharing about climate change must be made accessible to a wide range of people, particularly those most vulnerable.

Despite the exigency and desirability of this advocacy drive, McCright et al. (2013) argue that the science of climate change is exceedingly difficult for educators to teach and for students and audiences of all ages to learn. In a similar vein, Smith et al. (2014: 6) note that ‘[...] climate change has a wider cultural significance, and deeper reach, than research and policy discourses generally tend to recognise.’ Monroe et al. (2019: 792) also argue that ‘[...] designing and implementing programmes about climate change may require a balancing act of increasing knowledge of climate change and acknowledging how cultural ideology plays a role in perception and learning.’ Therefore, in order to meet the information needs of adults on environmental sustainability in the wake of climate change impacts, environmental adult education which blends the basic principles and goals of environmental education with those of adult education has become an integral part of adult education.

Environmental education, according to Oguh (2014), refers to efforts deigned to teach how natural environments function, and particularly how human beings can manage their behaviour and ecosystems in order to live sustainably. Adult education is any training process designed to disseminate information and knowledge towards developing the skills and attitudes of adults to enable them to adjust fully to changes and challenges in their lives and society (Essien, 2019). According to Ndulor & Mbalisi (2019), environmental adult education is that process of bringing transformation and change to adults in society by creating awareness, enhancing values, changing attitudes and improving skills for the actualisation of environmental sustainability. Although environmental adult education could either be formal, informal, or non-formal, it is non-formal environmental adult education that is particularly relevant to addressing climate change issues in rural communities.

Kedrayate (2012) justifies the relevance of non-formal education in terms of its usefulness for remedial purposes where formal education has been unable to

educate all the citizens in a society given the problem of illiteracy. Further importance of non-formal education is implicit in Ololube & Egbezor's (2012) characteristics of the practice in the following areas: relevance to the needs of disadvantaged groups; concern with a specific category of persons; a focus on clearly defined purposes; and flexibility in organisation and methods. On the desirability of adopting less structural methods of learning with flexible and informal techniques in non-formal education, Kedrayate (2012) underlines the place of traditional or indigenous learning techniques such as singing and dancing, ceremonials, and games. Eheazu & Akpabio (2018) argue that non-formal environmental adult education for the grassroots population in Nigeria should address rural communal and societal needs for awareness of the causes of various environmental challenges and the different ways to tackle them.

The play *Wake up Everyone* dramatises the need for sustained concern by all stakeholders – political and community leaders, occupational groups (fish and crop farmers in a local community), and individuals – to rise to the challenge of climate change in respect of acknowledging the reality of the global risk, and working out realistic mitigation and adaptation strategies suitable to the local and cultural dynamics of the agrarian community of Ndoli land. The play is woven around the interventions of the protagonist, Prof. Aladinma, a Professor of Agricultural Extension who assumes the role of an environmental-cum-theatre specialist whose Green Theatre outfit engages a play-within-a-play, *The New Dawn*, to create climate change awareness campaign in Ndoli land. The conflict in the play revolves around the resistance put up by the political class and some conservative local farmers in Ndoli land to the interventions of the environmental activist. The local government chairman Honourable Edwin Ochonkeya rejects Prof. Aladinma's proposal for counterpart funding to mitigate climate change impact in the local community. An adamant farmer also discards the extension services of members of the cooperative society of local farmers. Regrettably, Ndoli land is flooded, the people's farms and crops are washed away and the fishes in the river too are affected. With the devastating impacts, the local community is left to experience famine and attendant food crisis.

The aim of the present study, therefore, is to investigate the rhetorical style of propagating knowledge and information about climate change responses in a local community by exploring the techniques of non-formal environmental adult education in Greg Mbajiorgu's play *Wake up Everyone*. The motivation for choosing to analyse a literary (dramatic) text which explores the critical topic of climate change derives from Butler's (2014: 12-13) standpoint thus:

When we call for more stories about climate change we are not asking for more coverage of climate change in the media. We are asking for more works of literature – writing of the highest order! – that examine, interpret and make sense of this new era. [...]. We want writers who can explore its richness and complexity, its myriad points of view, its ironies and ambiguities, its horror and, of course, its humour.

By applying the principles of rhetoric to analyse the dramatic text, the study draws upon Downing's (2006: 163) submission that '[...] the study of rhetoric is of great value for the study of literary texts and, in the new light of a reinterpreted discipline such as rhetoric, offers an interesting, renewed reading perspective.'

RHETORICAL STYLE

Rhetoric is a field of study devoted to the theory and practice of persuasion as a widely known and used phenomenon in human communication (Árvey, 2004). Rhetoric could be defined as the art of persuasive discourse. Discourse in this sense refers to 'a comprehensive term used by modern linguists to denote continuous forms of spoken and written communication' (Cockcroft & Cockcroft, 1992: 3). The aim of persuasion is to influence attitudes, thoughts, opinions, feelings, beliefs and the behaviours of the audience; it is also an effort to gain public support for an opinion or course of action by the communicator, or to strengthen their already existing opinions and attitudes (Árvey, 2004; Nejad & Sharifi, 2016; Rocklage et al., 2018; Al-Ghamdi & Alghofaily, 2019). Rhetoric, according to Aristotle, may be defined as the faculty of discovering the possible means of persuasion in reference to any subject whatever. Aristotle's *Art of Rhetoric* distinguishes three strategies of persuasion: reasoned proof (*logos*), emotional appeal (*pathos*) and appeal to the good reputation of the speaker (*ethos*).

Cockcroft & Cockcroft (1992: 27) note that '[...] the most basic features of language have an important part to play in persuasion: they lay the foundations of meaning and human contact.' In this light, the study of rhetoric and persuasion has benefited from 'the insights of contemporary linguistics into how the systems of language (sounds, words, grammar) interact with each other and with the context of their use to achieve rhetorical effects' (Cook, 2010: 137). These linguistic resources constitute what Cockcroft & Cockcroft (1992) refer to as 'the persuasive/stylistic repertoire' – lexical choices, syntactic structures, figurative language, schematic devices and sound patterning – available to the persuader. The persuasive repertoire, according to Downing (2006: 160), refers to '[t]he set of procedures or techniques that can be used to enhance discourse, to make it more efficient or persuasive.'

Arakelyan & Muradyan (2016) explain that persuasion involves verbal and nonverbal symbols. Hence, the persuasive/stylistic repertoire of the text we analyse in this study covers what van Leeuwen (2005: 3) refers to as semiotic resources defined as:

[...] the actions and artefacts we use to communicate, whether they are produced physiologically – with our vocal apparatus; with the muscles we use to create facial expressions and gestures, etc. – or by means of technologies – with pen, ink and paper; with computer hardware and software; with fabrics, scissors and sewing machines, etc. Traditionally they were called 'signs'.

The centrality of the notion of semiotic resources to this study will be espoused in the Analytical Framework section. Generally, the semiotic resources we analyse in the dramatic text embody the rhetorical style of the dramatic text in terms of their appropriateness to the message, situation and audience. In so doing, we subscribe to the view of Cockcroft & Cockcroft (1992: 114) thus: 'Just as language has infinite communicative potential, it also has infinitely varied stylistic potential. And when language is used for *persuasive* purposes, close attention to style is even more crucial [...].'

From the foregoing, the study adopts the strategy of rhetorical reading which, according to Haas & Flower (1988: 167-168), '[...] is an active attempt at constructing a rhetorical context for the text as a way of making sense of it.' Based on the reader's schemas for meaning-making which help to 'determine what information in the text is important and to activate relevant knowledge' (McCarthy, 2015: 106), the present readers use the text as clues to construct the underlying meaning of the work beyond the playwright's story which contains a message invariably speaking to a universal of the human condition with respect to climate change responses in a typical rural setting with an adult audience. In constructing a representation of the deeper meaning of the play, therefore, the rhetorical style we describe and characterise in this study is that of the dramatic text as opposed to presumably that of the playwright and/or the protagonist-cum-environmental activist per se. By engaging the text in the reading process, '[...] readers have opportunities to voice their own opinions as well as critically reflect on the language and positions of authors and characters' (Medina, 2004: 146), drawing upon cues in the text which shape and, in turn, are shaped by the readers' linguistic/experiential reservoir.

ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

The study adopts Olinger's (2016) socio-cultural approach to style as the theoretical orientation. In this approach, Olinger (2016) seeks to develop a theory of style beyond some prevailing definitions of style which, among others, consider style in terms of choices selected from the language, and patterns of language features that define a particular author's writing within a rhetorical situation. Olinger (2016: 125) defines style as '[...] the dynamic co-construction of typified indexical meanings (types of people, practices, situations, texts) perceived in a single sign or a cluster of signs and influenced by participants' language ideologies.' Let us now pay attention to the elements which underline the socio-cultural nature of style in this definition.

With regard to the aspect of 'typified indexical meanings', Olinger (2016) states that style shifts our attention from the language or other semiotic resources to the social meanings associated with their use. The social meanings connected to these forms, Olinger (2016) asserts, are the property of indexicality. Two definitions are emphasised by Olinger (2016: 125) to buttress the conception of indexicality. The first is that of the sociolinguist, Mary Bucholtz, who defines style as 'a bundle of

semiotic resources indexically tied to a social type, category, or persona'. The second is that of Brummett who sees style as a 'complex system of actions, objects, and behaviours that is used to form messages that announce who we are, who we want to be, and who we want to be considered akin to'. Therefore, the analysis focuses on certain semiotic resources which define the dramaturgy appropriated to convey messages on prevalent environmental behaviour among the rural dwellers (the people and their practices in an agrarian community) and the text produced to engender behavioural change.

On the question of language ideologies, we know that no text is ideologically neutral. Thus, certain language ideologies which relate to environmental ethic, the need to break the jinx of conservatism in the face of environmental challenges, and mobilisation of all stakeholders for the task of making the environment safe for all, among others, are shared by characters who are environmental activists and their surrogates to sensitise the rural dwellers. The analysis will equally focus on some semiotic resources which convey these underlying ideologies. Further, in negotiating meaning in the dramatic text, the semiotic resources which the study analyses cover both verbal and non-verbal symbols which constitute the multisemiotic signs appropriated in the rhetorical situation to enhance communication of climate change education.

It is instructive that in reading the dramatic text, the present researchers bring to bear on its interpretation views from their own universe of experience in view of the practice of co-construction of meaning. Rosenblatt (1995) explains that meaning is constructed through a transaction between the reader and the text during which process readers bridge the gaps in the text by employing their previous knowledge and disposition as well as their interpretation of the text. Spirovska (2019) explains that the interaction between the reader and a text enhances the development of interpretation of the text and reconstruction of the ideas expressed in the text. In the dynamic reading process, the meanings and interpretations created by the reader are 'a reflection of the reader as well as the text' (Mart, 2019: 79). In regard to the possibilities which the text offers the dynamic reader to explore, Cushing and Giovanelli (2019: 205) state that Text World Theory has important implications for literary reader-response research:

In Text World Theory, participants (writers/readers and speakers/listeners) negotiate rich mental representations of language known as text-worlds, based on the shared and private knowledge between them, and triggered by linguistic content. Meanings are made through an interaction of text and reader: texts project worlds, and readers construct worlds.

Hence, this analytical framework affords us the opportunity as readers to shape meaning as a social construct in the text, thereby underlining the social attitudes and identities constructed by language users in contexts.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Some existing studies have investigated climate change education programme in relation to learning in a formal classroom setting where students as well as teachers are actively engaged. Berger et al. (2015) report an 18-hour elective course that helped teacher-candidates in Ontario, Canada, from many subject areas and all divisions learn more about climate change and various ways to teach it. Stevenson et al. (2017) investigate the learning processes involved in engaging teachers and students in climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies in Australia, addressing the questions of what and how educators should teach and how students might be engaged to learn in preparation for an uncertain future arising from the risks and the human and ecological impacts of climate change. Competente (2019) investigates the attitudes, knowledge and perception of pre-service teachers in the Philippines to climate change and how these can reflect on their teachings in the future.

Relative to the African/Nigerian context, there are some recent studies dealing with climate change education. Boakye (2015) studies the extent of the integration of climate change into science curricula of pre-tertiary schools in Ghana. Ekpoh & Ekpoh (2011) examine the level of climate change awareness among secondary school teachers in Calabar, Nigeria. Ijiga & Ujah (2015) advocate the integration of Climate Change and Environmental Education (CCEE) into the curricula of Nigeria's primary and secondary schools with a view to raising a new generation of citizens that will understand, address, mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change. Ogunseemi & Ibimilua (2016) assess the perception of science teachers about climate change to form a base line for climate change education in schools in Nigeria. The overall tendency of these educational studies on climate change in the African/Nigerian context is that there are inadequacies in the curricula designed to teach students the subject of climate change in addition to a generally low level of climate change awareness among the teachers. Hence, the studies propose the need for an innovative educational approach to improve on the curricula of primary and secondary schools and mobilisation of skills and training to equip teachers to rise to the challenge of successfully keying into a practicable Climate Change and Environmental Education (CCEE) scheme.

Generally, extant studies explore climate change education in a formal setting, with students (youths) and teachers being the target audience. The lacuna in the studies is the non-inclusion of adults in local communities in the audiences of climate change education. Interestingly, some studies on adult education in the non-formal setting, particularly lifelong learning and performance have identified some effective learning strategies for adult learners. Lawler (1991) identifies some kinds of effective learning: understand and reduce anxiety; elicit and incorporate expectations; acknowledge and utilise experience; provide and encourage active participation; and identify and incorporate relevant content. European Union (2012) highlights some main steps that should be kept in mind by stakeholders at all stages in the development of a campaign strategy for adult learners, among which are: identify target groups; identify tools and channels to use; develop campaign

messages; promote campaign; and monitor and evaluate campaign. Essien (2019) identifies and discusses some environmental adult education strategies for sustainability of the Nigerian environment, among which are: community participation, community environmental education, community tree planting and public enlightenment strategy. Vaughter (2016) contends that while formal education can teach youths the skills for responding to climate change, the challenge now is to shape non-formal climate change education for adults, stressing that educating seniors on the issue is not only strategic but also an avenue to exploit their capacity as agents of change within their own generations and communities. It is against this backdrop that the present study attempts to investigate the rhetorical style of propagating climate change awareness campaign among adult learners in a local community.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- What are the rhetorical strategies of communicating climate change experience and issues to a typical adult audience in an agrarian community?
- What are the semiotic resources appropriated in the dramatic text to communicate socio-cultural meanings?
- How essential is the rhetorical/stylistic repertoire of the text to the situation, message and audience?

DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

This study is a textual analysis of the play, *Wake up Everyone*, leaning towards the approach of literary rhetoric. Cockcroft & Cockcroft (1992: 4) draw a distinction between functional rhetoric and literary rhetoric as two kinds of rhetorical subjects: functional persuasion is used to describe ‘all kinds of persuasive discourse concerned with everyday life, where real people are being persuaded to a real purpose’, while literary persuasion refers to ‘the techniques by which prose-writers, dramatists and poets seek to convince us of the imaginative truth and emotional significance of their discourse’. Since this study applies the approach of literary rhetoric, its focus is not an analysis of the play in terms of gauging what happened when it was performed, whom it was performed to, and how the audience reacted. Thus, the study will not make claims of the efficacy of the rhetorical strategies in terms of audience response, engagement, or resistance in a real life situation. Rather, it attempts to describe and characterise the rhetorical potential of the means of persuasion in the dramatic text. To avoid any misconception, the means of persuasion we analyse are those designed to provoke behavioural changes

in the members of the target local community in line with some techniques of non-formal environmental adult education designed in the advocacy text to suit the local audience's socio-cultural milieu.

METHODOLOGY

Wake up Everyone is a 78-page dramatic text. Four extracts were purposively selected in relation to how the topic of climate change is enacted by the playwright. The criteria for choosing the four extracts rest on two major premises. First, there are three extracts which capture conversational exchanges among the characters. The first two extracts were selected to reflect aspects of the initial conflict concerning awareness creation about climate change and the intervention sought by the protagonist to mitigate climate change impacts. The third extract shows the link between cause and effect when a character chooses to discard the teachings of extension service workers on how to mitigate climate change impacts on farming activities. The fourth and final extract which is the theme song of the Green Theatre outfit's play, *The New Dawn*, is chosen to reflect the playwright's recourse to the strategy of entertainment-education to teach the topic of climate change to an adult audience.

Besides the selection criterion highlighted above, all the four extracts were purposively selected to reflect the requisites of 'Action for Climate Empowerment' (ACE) as contained in Article 6 of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC, 1992). These are: improving education and awareness, building human and institutional capacity on climate change, devising adaptation and mitigation strategies to reduce climate change impact, and giving early warning to forestall environmental disasters (Reid, 2019: 768). All of these basics span the gamut of the representative extracts and, therefore, run through our analysis. Furthermore, each of the four extracts exemplifies the choice a particular rhetorical strategy designed in the text to engage the audience actively on the subject. It is noteworthy that these rhetorical strategies which constitute the template for dividing the analysis into sections are processed from reading and interpreting the dramatic text in a bid to re/construct its world. It is noteworthy that although the play is set in a typical rural agrarian community in Igbo land in eastern Nigeria, it is basically written in English. There are no aspects of the extracts which were translated from Igbo language.

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

This section is divided into four different sub-sections. Each is devoted to a major rhetorical strategy in the dramatic text to propagate climate change awareness.

PROJECTION OF HUMAN-INDUCED FACTORS OVER RELIGIOUS SENTIMENTS ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE

More often than not, prejudice plays a major role in determining how well an awareness campaign will achieve its objectives, as entrenched religious/cultural beliefs could hamper the success of a typical climate change awareness campaign in a rural community. The excerpt below between Prof. Aladinma and Chairman justifies the view of Lehtonen, et al. (2019: 341) on the need to address ‘the wicked problem of emotional and cultural denial of climate change.’

PROF. ALADINMA: You see Mr Chairman, when the drummer changes beat, the dancer must change his steps. Things are no longer the way they used to be, and even a child must have noticed the changes in our climate. Take the rain for instance, the downpour this year has been heavier than that of any other year. From news reports around the world, natural disasters have become daily occurrence, earthquakes, tsunamis, hurricanes, floods and many others.

CHAIRMAN: But these are expected, Prof. Aladinma. Doesn't the Bible say that in the last days things like these will happen, and ...

PROF. ALADINMA: Come on, Mr Chairman you are beginning to sound like religious fanatics, the Bible this, the Koran that what we now witness are nothing but reactions to man's mindless activities on earth. The soil and the rivers have become unproductive because of the chemicals and oil we pour on them. The floods and erosions we experience are caused by our senseless attempts to reclaim wet lands and our blockages of original water channels and drainages. What about the carbon monoxide from power generators and all kinds of vehicles, or the unfriendly substances flared up into the by oil companies on daily basis? The problems of our world today are created by man, and man can still find solutions to them.

[Wake up Everyone, pp.13-14]

Experts have emphasised the role of human-induced climate change causes (Rosenzweig & Neofotis, 2013; Egorova et al., 2018; Trenberth, 2018; Hegerl et al., 2019 ;Wu et al., 2019). It is interesting how Prof. Aladinma emphasises the anthropogenic forcings of climate change. He uses the rhetorical device of exemplification by listing some of those toxic substances humans unleash on the environment with the use of the semiotic resources ‘the chemicals’, ‘the oil’, ‘the carbon monoxide’, ‘all kinds of vehicles’, and ‘the unfriendly substances’. Generally, these semiotic resources evoke empirical evidence and observations derivable from the science of climate change to justify anthropogenic forcings of climate change. The use of the adjective ‘unfriendly’ to qualify the noun head ‘substances’ summarises the totality of the prevalent and unacceptable environmental practices with which humans negatively impact on biodiversity and ecosystems.

On this note, Prof. Aladinma's argument counters the Christian religious sentiments shared by Chairman in the interrogative sentence: ‘Doesn't the Bible

say that in the last days things like these will happen, and [...]'. In the interrogative, Chairman appears to present a rebuttal (purely based on biblical prophetic declarations) to Prof. Aladinma's scientific propositions on the human-induced causes of climate change. Chairman's reference to the signifier 'last days' is an allusion to the *Holy Bible* in the gospel of II Timothy 3: 1: 'This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come'. In so doing, Chairman exercises his free will as a persuadee not swayed by the rhetorical potential of the persuader's means of persuasion. Cockcroft & Cockcroft (1992: 79) explain that '[...] at all times the persuadee retains the options of counter-arguments or even rejection'. None the less, without prejudice to the veracity of biblical prophetic declarations, Prof. Aladinma still bases his convictions on scientific objectivism occasioned by anthropogenic forcings of climate change.

The import of Prof. Aladinma's response takes us to the mood system in English grammar. The mood system has two basic terms: indicative and imperative (Eggs, 2004; Halliday, 2014). The indicative clause is related to the exchange of information (proposition negotiation), while the imperative clause relates to the performance of an action to provide services (Fanani et al., 2020). The indicative mood is divided into two: declarative and interrogative. Declaratives are statements that serve to provide information, while interrogatives serve to request information. Imperatives have typical speech-function realisation as orders, requests, and directives. This taxonomy will guide our subsequent reference to any type of the mood system which is part of the rhetorical repertoire of the dramatic text. To this end, instead of finding excuses for environmental challenges by explaining them away under any cultural or religious guise, Prof. Aladinma harps on humans as the indisputable causative agent in the declarative mood: 'The problems of our world today are created by man, and man can still find solutions to them'. The rhetorical figure of repetition whereby the agent 'man' is repeated in the statement and the use of passive voice in the verbal group 'are created' which collocates with 'man' as the agent/stressor of climate change both serve as significant stylistic devices. Little wonder that he laments in the declarative sentence: '[...] what we now witness are nothing but reactions to man's mindless activities on earth.' By passing judgement on humans as stressors of climate change in this declarative sentence, Prof. Aladinma dispels cultural and religious sentiments about climate change. In fact, his use of the adjective 'mindless' to qualify the noun head 'activities' sums up people's despicable environmental behavioural practices.

As an environmental activist, it is interesting that Prof. Aladinma does not just raise the alarm, pointing accusing fingers at humans as the causative agents of environmental challenges. He also strategically positions humans as the solution to the problem. The second occurrence of 'man' in the declarative sentence 'The problems of our world today are created by man, and man can still find solutions to them' is philosophically telling. The use of the coordinating conjunction 'and' to connect the two propositions creates some balancing in the identification of the problem and the solution in the compound sentence joined together by the coordinating conjunction. Simply put, finding solutions to climate change impact in society rests solely on a single entity (hu/man/s), with emphasis on their dual role

/ reversal of roles as stressor(s) and correctional agent(s). Interestingly, the feasibility of realising the desirable role of correctional agents derives from the use of the modal auxiliary verb 'can' (expressing ability) and the adverb of concession 'still', which gives room for a redemptive mission.

INVOKING THE DICTUM OF 'PREVENTION IS BETTER THAN CURE' IN CREATING EARLY WARNING

As an environmental activist, Prof. Aladinma tries to raise the people's consciousness to the dangers of climate change and the need for impact reduction. The exchange below is of interest:

PROF. ALADINMA: That is the point. Things have changed. We must learn from other people's experiences. Have you not heard of the flood in Calabar, Lagos and Ibadan recently? All I'm asking is for the Local Government to assist in the initiative to build a dyke that will fortify our river banks so that our land doesn't become vulnerable to flood in the future. I'm only opting for a preventive measure.

CHAIRMAN: So how do you want us to help?

PROF. ALADINMA: Good. The United Nations Development Programme has made provisions for projects like this for rural communities. All we need to access the fund is to provide twenty per cent of whatever the project will cost and a proposal on the need for them to support us through their counterpart funding scheme.

CHAIRMAN: What is the cost of the project?

PROF. ALADINMA: Approximately one hundred and seventy million naira.

CHAIRMAN: What! And what you mean is that the local government should provide thirty something million naira?

PROF. ALADINMA: Only.

CHAIRMAN: Only? Did you say only? From where do you expect us to cough out such an amount of money? By the way, how did you arrive at that intimidating figure?

CHAIRMAN: Look, Professor Aladinma, there is nothing in the local government purse.

PROF. ALADINMA: I don't understand what you mean.

CHAIRMAN: Then let me explain. Seventy percent of local government allocation is spent on workers' salaries, while the remaining thirty percent is all that is left to run the local government. And definitely we cannot remove a kobo from it to embark on white elephant projects like the one you are proposing.

[*Wake up Everyone*, pp.15-16]

There is the use of the first person plural personal pronoun 'we' as the subject of the verbal group 'must learn' in 'We must learn from other people's experiences' to show collective awareness raising and improvement of education. The modal

auxiliary verb 'must' creates a sense of compulsion and necessity. Also, the repetitive use of the possessive adjective 'our' in '[...] to assist in the initiative to build a dyke that will fortify our river banks so that our land does not become vulnerable to flood in the future' evokes an underlying sense of collective responsibility and construction of group identity in environmental protection. Considering the agrarian nature of Ndoli land, Prof. Aladinma uses the semiotic resources of 'river banks' and 'land' as place adverbial elements to showcase the treasured natural resources of the local community (for fish and crop farming respectively) which need protection from flood. Generally, the use of a series of to-infinitive verbs: 'to assist', 'to build', 'to help', 'to provide', 'to access', and 'to support' emphasises the preventive measures that environmental issues deserve instead of waiting for disasters to happen first before emergency measures are taken to save the environment and its inhabitants.

Despite Prof. Aladinma's entreaties, Chairman appears uninterested in this lofty project. Of stylistic relevance in the resistance discourse put up by the Chairman is the series of interrogative sentences in his swift response to Prof. Aladinma's entreaties: 'So how do you want us to help?', 'What is the cost of the project?'; 'And what you mean is that the local government should provide thirty something million naira?'; 'Only?'; 'Did you say only?'; 'From where do you expect us to cough [sic] out such an amount of money?'; and 'By the way, how did you arrive at that intimidating figure?'. While the first two questions in the series appear to seek information or clarification, the remaining questions sound confrontational and underline an outright rejection of the lofty proposal targeted at impact reduction. Chairman's rejection of Prof. Aladinma's proposal despite the persuasive potential of his entreaties has a basis in the literature on rhetoric. Cockcroft & Cockcroft (1992: 4), writing on the possibility of the persuadee rejecting the persuader's entreaties, argue: '[...] the audience's response will not be entirely predictable, however shrewd the rhetorician's choice of the "means of persuasion" [...]. The audience might not realise they are being persuaded; if they do, their response might be compliant, resistant, or variable.' One is not, therefore, surprised with the regrettable tone of finality in the Chairman's confrontational stance: 'Look, Professor Aladinma, there is nothing in the local government purse'.

Rhetorically, therefore, the names given to these two contrasting figures and the divergent roles (in/actions) they play in the crusade for a safe environment by the playwright are instructive. The dramaturgy of naming in this context creates social meanings which are tied to the characters' respective personalities and ideological leanings. 'Madukwe Aladinma', the name of the protagonist in Igbo language literally means 'when people are united, the land will be good', while 'Ochonkeya', the name of the antagonist (Chairman) literally means 'Self-centered'. The protagonist, as his name implies, is a prototype of a committed environmental activist every society needs to champion the crusade of environmental sustainability. Conversely, the playwright appears to present the antagonist as an archetype of insensitive leaders who lack the vision and the political will to respond to climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies in society.

PLAYING UP THE SIGNIFICANCE OF YAM IN IGBO CULTURAL ECONOMY

Since climate change education requires context-specific knowledge, drawing attention to the cultural significance of yam in Igbo society is compelling as a rhetorical strategy. Korieh (2007: 222) notes that ‘when the Igbo talk about farming they talk about yams’. Obidiegwu & Akpabio (2017: 29-30) also observe that ‘[a]mong Nigeria’s Igbo ethnic groups, yam is the most favourite food, and has a purpose in social functions such as marriage, burials and other traditional ceremonies and rituals.’ Thus, the extract below demonstrates the untold calamity that could befall a yam farmer who fails to heed adaptation strategies of planting yam in a season threatened by climate change impacts.

DIMKPA: And who is the stubborn weed here that has denied the tender plant a chance to feel the sunlight? Me or that fellow in your midst who calls himself Okosisi? Ewh! Go to my farmland, go there now, and you will see nothing but an empty womb. Oh! I, Dimkpa, Okaji of Ndoli! The great yam farmer whose efforts had never been ridiculed in the past, I, the pride of yam harvest, whose hands mother earth has always blessed with bounty, now does not have even a yam tuber to boast of this harvest season.

ODUKWE: Is that possible?

DIMKPA: Go there Odukwe, go there and see for yourself. My farmland is dry and barren, with nothing at all to justify all my efforts during the planting season.

UGODIYA: When we invited you for a meeting with Professor Aladinma who offered free extension services to us, did you attend?

DIMKPA: I didn’t, I didn’t because Ozoemena invited me to his daughter’s traditional marriage that same day.

UGODIYA: You have nobody to blame but yourself. We had series of meetings with Prof. on what species of seed yam to plant, when to plant and how to plant in this difficult time of change in climate. We were also introduced to different crop varieties and animal species suitable for our changing climate.

[*Wake up Everyone*, pp. 25-26]

The playwright paints a horrible picture of the misfortunes that await an adamant local farmer who fails to heed adaptation strategies in a planting season with the use of the metaphor ‘empty womb’. The strange collocation of using the adjective ‘empty’ to qualify the noun ‘womb’ is reinforced with the indefinite pronoun ‘nothing’ in the declarative sentence ‘[...] you will see nothing but an empty womb’. The indefinite pronoun creates a visual image of a poor harvest which awaits a recalcitrant farmer for discarding adaptive strategies in response to climate change. Dimkpa’s tone of frustration is projected through the use of exclamation marks in: ‘Ewh! Go to my farmland, go there now, and you will see nothing but an empty womb. Oh! I, Dimkpa, Okaji of Ndoli!’ All these exclamation marks underline his regret when the reality of climate change impacts stares him in the face. They also betray his emotions about fear of the unknown as to the survival of his family in

the year ahead, with no yam in his barn. Of course, at the community level he also faces the unimaginable shame of being stripped of his erstwhile adorable social titles conferring prestige on him as a successful farmer in the locality.

It is against this backdrop that we can understand the interesting cultural dimension which the playwright seems to add to the heightening of the tension of not heeding climate change adaptive strategies in the dramatic text. The coveted cultural accolades 'Okaji of Ndoli', 'the great yam farmer', and 'the pride of yam harvest' are semiotic resources which signify pride, fame and success for anyone conferred with them in the agrarian community. It is regrettable, therefore, that Dimkpa's shunning adaptive strategies in times of climate change has robbed him of these accolades as a successful farmer in the locality. In fact, the cultural signifier of yam appropriated in the text to localise the climate change sensitisation in a typical agrarian Nigerian/Igbo community is significant. Worthy of mention is the fact that these appellations 'Okaji [a great yam farmer] of Ndoli', 'the great yam farmer', and 'the pride of yam harvest' resonate with the culture of yam planting and harvesting in Igbo land, and the cultural significance attached to a bountiful yam harvest at the end of a planting season during the new yam festival. Korieh (2007: 223) writes:

The accumulation of yams and the size of a man's barn defined his status in many Igbo communities. Success in yam production acted as the ladder for social mobility. In most parts of Igbo land, men who distinguished themselves as yam farmers were also recognised and rewarded by their communities with the title of Ezeji or 'yam king.'

This cultural semiotic is elaborately celebrated in Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* (1958: 33) when the protagonist Okonkwo reflects: '[...] Yam stood for manliness, and he who could feed his family on yam from one harvest to another was a very great man indeed.'

It is instructive that Ugodiya makes Dimkpa realise that he is the architect of his own misfortune, having shunned the free agricultural extension services initiated by Prof. Aladinma on how local farmers could adapt to climate change in an agrarian community. The playwright's design of using the cooperative society of local farmers and agricultural extension workers to complement Prof. Aladinma's environmental activism to teach the adult audience resonates with the strategies of acknowledging and utilising experience in addition to providing and encouraging participation (Lawler, 1991). The design is also in line with the non-formal strategies of adult learning in terms of identifying target groups, and identifying tools and channels to use (European Union, 2012). Therefore, repetition of the noun 'meeting(s)' which Dimkpa shunned in order to attend a traditional marriage is instructive. The use of wh- phrases in the nominal groups 'what species of seed yam to plant', 'when to plant', and 'how to plant' sums up the adaptive strategies in a typical agrarian setting which Dimkpa failed to imbibe.

DEPLOYMENT OF ENTERTAINMENT-EDUCATION IN CLIMATE CHANGE NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

Entertainment-education (E-E), according to Singhal & Rogers (2004: 5), is ‘the process of purposely designing and implementing a media message to both entertain and educate, in order to increase audience members’ knowledge about an educational issue, create favourable attitudes, shift social norms, and change overt behaviour.’ Moyer-Guse (2008) explains that entertainment-education is about pro-social messages that are embedded into popular entertainment media content with the intent of influencing behaviour, in conjunction with advocacy groups. Singhal & Rogers (2004: 5-6) explain that the entertainment-education strategy contributes to social change in two ways: ‘it can influence members’ awareness, attitudes, and behaviour toward a socially desirable end’; and ‘it can influence the audience’s external environment to help create the necessary conditions for social change at the system level.’

The appropriation of entertainment-education in raising climate change awareness among the adult audience is mainly through the interventions of Prof. Aladinma’s Green Theatre outfit to reach out to the people. The theatre outfit in the theme song of its play, *The New Dawn*, douses tension in the learning environment while entertaining the audience and also passing important messages about environmental sustainability in the process. For our present purposes, we analyse the semiotic resources in the theme song to enhance the perception and learning of the adult audience. The first two stanzas of the theme song go thus:

To build our world anew
 No burning down our bushes
 No polluting our rivers
 No more deforestation.
 To guaranty our future
 No greenhouse gas emission
 No heating up our planet
 Wake up!

Let’s stop oil pollution
 No more flaring of gases
 No cutting down our forests
 Wake up!

[*Wake up Everyone*, p. 52]

Given that the people need to take action in a positive direction towards saving the environment, the dominant mood used in theme song is the imperative mood to give orders and directives. Such orders and directives are used to induce positive actions in the rural dwellers to save biodiversity and ecosystems. The avowed statement of intent in the song is reinforced with the adverbial phrases ‘To build our world anew’ and ‘To guaranty our future’ to rhetorically create a sense of

urgency and underline the goal of environmental sustainability for which the audience is being mobilised.

The syntactic structure of 'To [...] / No [...]' is very laconic and makes the message a memorable one that the people could easily remember and then pass on to others. In particular, the use of negation 'no' in the syntactically parallel structures 'No [...]' is stylistically significant, as it catalogues the series of untoward actions in the local community which should be eschewed to save the environment. The semiotic resources 'burning', 'polluting', 'heating', 'flaring', and 'cutting' all used as gerunds picturesquely capture the prevalent and harmful environmental practices which destroy biodiversity and negatively affect ecosystems. To regenerate the environment, therefore, the song exhorts the people with the orders/directives 'Wake up!' and 'Let's stop oil pollution'. The exclamation mark in the directive 'Wake up!' expresses strong emotions with which the environmental awareness is being created. The subtle persuasive tone in the repetitive syntactic pattern 'Let's [...]' are rhetorically compelling as shown below:

Wake up wake up everyone
 For new green world agenda
 Let's plant some trees today
 Let's save wildlife from dying
 Wake up!

To cut one tree today
 Let's plant two trees tomorrow
 Let's save our streams and river
 Wake up!

[*Wake up Everyone*, p. 52]

The dominant mood in the repetitive pattern of 'Let's plant [...]' and 'Let's save [...]' is the imperative where these directives are given for safe environmental ethic. The action verbs 'plant' and 'save' and their corresponding objects 'some trees' and 'wildlife' respectively emphasise the semiotic resources for sustaining biodiversity and ecosystems. Repetition of the temporal element 'today' in the directive 'Plant some trees today' and the pre-emptive infinitive phrase 'To cut one tree today' emphasises the urgency with which positive actions to save the environment should be taken. In fact, the regenerative factor of time is brought to the fore in the antithetical structure 'To cut one tree today / Plant two trees tomorrow' where the semiotic resources of 'cut one today' and 'plant two tomorrow' underline how a deliberate attempt at reforestation could actually cancel out the loss(es) to deforestation. It is instructive how 'two' is substituted for 'one' across the time frame, as 'two' in the future supersedes 'one' in the present. This 'substitution by doubling method' in the envisaged mission of saving biodiversity and ecosystems is a compelling logic of regenerating the environment, with no allowance given for any loss to deliberate or ignorant human actions.

Finally, the repetitive pattern of the directives ‘Wake up / Wake up everyone’ with the latter actually replicating the title of the play is instructive. The use of the indefinite pronoun ‘everyone’ is an attempt to include all across age, gender and class in the environmental crusade. The common goal in this regard is towards building a ‘new green world’, where the epithet expressing regeneration ‘new’ and the ‘green’ colour are semiotic resources for that envisioned and coveted world of safe environmental practices. In particular, green colour symbolises safety, freshness, vigour and newness (Caivano, 1998). On the whole, the theme song of the Green Theatre outfit’s play, *The New Dawn*, becomes a kind of article of faith / mantra which continually should propel the rural dwellers to join the global crusade of sustaining biodiversity and ecosystems in the face of climate change impacts.

CONCLUSION

The rhetorical style of the dramatic text as shown in our analysis is an admixture of verbal and non-verbal semiotic resources which generally reinforce the dominant rhetorical strategies designed to shape the perception and learning of the adult audience. In regard to verbal features, there are syntactic devices such as pronominal elements, modal auxiliaries, syntactic parallelism, mood system, lexical choices, and rhetorical figures such as repetition, exemplification, allusion, imagery, and metaphor. All of these features graphically portray the symbolic setting, the inherent environmental hazards, anthropogenic stressors, and the environmental activist’s orientation towards the subject and authoritative disposition to the adult audience. With respect to non-verbal semiotic resources of the text, the dramaturgy of harping on certain characters’ actions and inactions in the wake of climate change impacts, engaging members of the cooperative society of local farmers in the advocacy drive, the dramaturgy of designing a play-within-a-play with the interventions of the Green Theatre outfit, choosing farming as a vocation to teach climate change impact and responses, and emphasising the cultural significance of yam in Igbo cultural economy, among others, are indeed strategic rhetorical appeals imaginatively designed to enhance the adult audience’s perception and learning. Interestingly, the tenets of cultural stylistics applied in the analysis to unpack the social functions of language in the context of teaching an adult audience in an agrarian community about climate change responses underline the view that style is concerned with the construction of social attitudes and identities in texts.

In all, the present researchers’ encounter with the dramatic text by engaging the transactional view of reading literature demonstrates that meaning is created through selective attention of the reader to a number of text’s possibilities. While the text offers the cues which trigger responses in the reader, the reader in turn, drawing upon their linguistic/experiential reservoir/schemas, constructs underlying meaning for the text. In an attempt to integrate information into meaning in the dramatic text, the present researchers have tried to construct meaning by building

interwoven representations of knowledge from the play and generating inferences that connect information in the play with ideas about the world beyond the story. As such, the readers have been able to infuse intellectual and emotional meanings into the patterns of semiotic resources in the text, thereby generating a new text in response to the dramatic text being read. Given that meaning is indeterminate, however, other readers may use different strategies other than those analysed in this study to make sense of the dramatic text and generate entirely new texts. This is where the interactivity between text and reader comes in the transactional belief, as the text does not contain a determinate meaning formulated by the author which reader just takes away from it.

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