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A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE USE OF PIDGIN IN CHINUA ACHEBE'S A MAN OF THE PEOPLE AND AYI KWEI ARMAH'S THE BEAUTYFUL ONES ARE NOT YET BORN

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Abstract

This study attempts to do a comparative study of the use of pidgin on the morphological processes and Pidgin tenses captured in Chinua Achebe's A Man of the People and Ayi kwei Armah's The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born. The secondary data used for this study was generated both texts (A Man of the People and The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born). A random sampling method was used to circumspectly collect and analyze the relevant data needed for this study. This research is anchored on Jaseer Al-Jaseer's Pidginization Theory and it is drawn from Veliyeva Ralpovna's Comparative Analysis approach. The findings of the study show the different and similar style deployed by both authors as depicted in their texts. The result of this study shows the Pidgin tenses and the morphological processes used by the authors in communicating their thoughts to the readers. The findings of this research work unveil the aspects of the Pidgin tenses depicted in the texts. These are: present tenses, past tenses and future tenses. This research work also reveals the Pidgin morphological processes (word formation processes) portrayed in both texts. These are: borrowing, clipping and abbreviation.

Keywords: Pidgin-morphological processes-tenses-pidginization.

Introduction

1.1 Background to the Study

Banjrmasin (2019, 4) views Sociolinguistics as a branch of linguistics that shows "the relationship between language and the context in which it is used." This entails that sociolinguistics reveals the use of language based on context. It shows how users of a language communicate in the society with a medium (spoken/written) and a style of writing (formal or informal) they use to communicate at a particular time. In the same vein, sociolinguistics examines all forms of interactions that take place in the society. Sociolinguistics is a branch of linguistics that exposes language users to the repertoire of a language. In our society today, individuals gain linguistic and communicative competence in a language when they have a profound knowledge of the dialect, register, style and the medium of communication used in that particular language. The knowledge of the repertoire of a language creates an avenue for conversationalists to appropriately use language to share their ideas, feelings and emotions as and when needed in the society. Just the way a fish needs water to survive, in like manner, language needs the society to survive and become relevant. Crystal quoted in Emike et al (2021, 37) submit that sociolinguistics is "the systematic conventional use of sounds, signs or written symbols in a human society for communication and self expression." From time immemorial, humans have devised a way to give names to objects and also produce sounds generally based on their belief system. In this light, they communicate their thoughts and share their ideas by communicating with the use of language that is mutually understood and interpreted by them in the society. According to Abochol (2011, sociolinguistics "considers issues related to language planning and standardization." This means that Sociolinguistics reveals a language which could be universally used. However, before a language becomes a standard one, it ought to have undergone the four stages of language planning (selection, codification, elaboration and acceptance).

According to Fromkin and Rodman cited in Ugot and Ogundipe (2011), Nigerian Pidgin English is used by people who do not share a language in common. Within and outside the isogloss of Nigeria, countries like Ghana, Equatorial Guinea and Cameroon usually use Nigerian Pidgin to engage in interpersonal communications; especially in informal discourse. Some of the Nigerian Pidgin lexical items spoken across the aforementioned countries include: *bodi(body)*, *wetin? (what)*, *sabi (understand)*, *wahala (trouble)* and *how far? (Hi)*. Additionally, previous studies have proven that despite the fact that Pidgin cannot be used as a first language, it is still considered "the widest spoken indigenous language in Nigeria today (Osoba 2015, 1)." Osoba (2015) goes further to submit that the neutrality of pidgin (contact language) creates an avenue for it to be used by the educated and uneducated people in the society. Till date, in spite of the high level of literacy in Nigerian tertiary institutions, pidgin such as basilectal, mesolectal and acrolectal are used

by lecturers and students in the learning institution. However, the pidgin is used based on context and different levels of adulteration. Similarly, Osoba (2015, 3) opines that "Warri based and Sapele-based NPs are currently being used in both primary and secondary schools in the Niger Delta areas where the language has already creolized." This posits the usage of Pidgin inn Niger Delta areas. In fact, most schools in Niger Delta use pidgin to teach their learners various subjects. More so, the multilingual nature of the Nigerian society and the freedom of speech conferred on the citizens encourages the use of Pidgin even if it is considered an inferior language.

The use of pidgin cuts across all sectors of the society. It is used by literary writers to reflect societal issues. Over the years, some notable African literary writers have used Nigerian Pidgin to showcase things that happen in the society. Some of them include: Amos Tutuola's *Palm Wine Drinkard*, Wole Soyinka's *The Man Died* and Chimamanda Adichie's *Half of a Yellow Sun*. Prior to now, previous studies have examined the use of Pidgin in different areas but a little attention has been given to the use of Pidgin in both texts. It is with this understanding that the researcher intends to examine the use of Pidgin in Chinua Achebe's *A Man of the People* and *Ayi kwei Armah's The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born*.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Prior to now, existing works had been written on the use of Pidgin in texts. Some of commonly known works amongst others include: Jane Ifechelobi and Chiagozie Eburuaja's (2016) "An Analysis of the Use of Pidgin in Achebe's a Man of the People" and Kola Eke and Edafe Mukoro's (2020) "A Critical Analysis of the Pidgin Poems of Akachi Adimora-Ezeigbo." The former examines the instances of Pidgin language accommodation and code-switching phenomena portrayed in the text while the latter analysed the Pidgin figurative expressions and literary devices captured in the text. The stylistic analysis of Pidgin in both texts is completely different. Therefore, this study seeks to use a different approach to analyse the Pidgin used in Achebe's *A Man of the People and Armah's The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born.* Hence, the gap this study seeks to fill.

1.3.1 Aim and Objectives of the Study

This study seeks to evaluate the use of pidgin in Achebe's A Man of the People and Armah's The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born. The objectives of the study include:

- 1. To examine the morphological processes used in creating new words in both texts.
- 2. To find out the differences in the morphological processes used in creating new words In both texts.
- 3. To identify the similarities in the morphological processes used in creating new words in both texts.

4. To analyse the Pidgin tenses used in both texts.

1.3.2 Research Questions

The researcher intends to provide a rational answer to the following research questions. These are:

- 1. What are the morphological processes used in creating new words in both texts?
- 2. What are the differences in the morphological processes used in creating new words in both texts?
- 3. What are the similarities in the morphological processes used in creating new words in both texts?
- 4. How do the writers use Pidgin tenses in both texts?

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Preamble

This section of the study reveals the conceptual review of the relevant literature of the study. It also discusses the theory this study is built on.

2.2 Conceptual Review

There are four (4) items reviewed in this section of the study. These are: morphology, Nigerian Pidgin word formation processes, etymology of Nigerian Pidgin and Nigerian Pidgin tenses.

2.2.2 Morphology

Morphology is the study of morphemes and the way they are arranged in word formation. Morphology studies how words are put together from their smallest parts based on the rules that govern their processes. According to Oz (2014), "morphology is the study of the internal structure of words and the rules governing the formation of words in a language. Cao (682) defines morphology as the study of morphemes. A morpheme refers to the smallest grammatical meaningful unit of a word. A morpheme can be seen as the subset of a word. This means that words are formed with the combination of morphemes. Linguistically, morphemes are of two types. These are free and bound morphemes. The former has the potentiality to stand on its own and make sense while the latter cannot stand on its own and make sense. Bound morphemes become meaningful when they are added or attached to a root word. Some of the examples of free morphemes include: boy, chair and girl. Some examples of bound morphemes (affixes) are: im, un, ous and ment. Basically, bound morphemes can be partitioned into two viz: inflectional and derivational bound morphemes. Inflectional morphemes do not change their word classes, but can be used in generating tenses, number and gender. On the other hand, derivational bound morphemes allow words to change their word class through the use of infixes, prefixes and suffixes(Oz 2014). Raith & Gusdian (2018) submit the following to be other morphological processes of creating new words. These include: back formation, clipping, acronym, blending, compounding, reduplication and abbreviation. The aforementioned morphological processes in creating new words are expressed in Pidgin lexically and syntactically just the way they are used in Standard British English (SBE) and Standard American English (SAME).

2.2.3 Nigerian Pidgin Word Formation Processes

The morphological processes (word formation processes) that are embedded in the Standard British English are also visible in the Pidgin. Nigerian Pidgin English has morphological processes such as borrowing, affixation, compounding, clipping, abbreviations, coinage and reduplication.

Through the progression of time, the Nigerian Pidgin English tends to borrow words (Spanish, Yoruba, Igbo and Hausa) from old and modern English. Based on this, some English words are extinct, changed and retained. The word ''palava'' was borrowed from Portuguese, ''kampe'' was borrowed from French and ''biko'' was borrowed from Igbo (Okon cited in Ugot and Afolabi, 2011). Furthermore, Ugot and Afolabi (229) are of the opinion that Pidgin is used in different spheres such as education, religion, media, sports and health.

Mensah (2012) considers affixation (prefixation and suffixation) to be one of the morphological processes used in creating new words in the Nigerian Pidgin English. Prefixes such as "mis" can be added to the root word "yarn" in order to generate "misyarn". Also, the suffix "ly" can be added to base words such as "left' and "short" in order to generate "lefty" and "shorty" respectively.

Okporigette and Okon (2003) opine that "compounds may be written together, hyphenated or separated." Compounding occurs in Pidgin by adding a noun, verb and an adjective to an existing word. This implies that the Nigerian Pidgin English (NPE) possesses compound words like Standard British English. Some of the compound words used in Pidgin include: "big man" (wealthy man), "bad belle" (a jealous person) and "busy body" (prying person). (Mensah 2012).

Bauer (1993) cited in Jamet (2009, 4) sees clipping as "the process of shortening a word without changing its meaning or part of speech." Clipping enables words to be written in their short forms. When Pidgin words are written in short forms, language users still have a profound knowledge of the meaning of such words when used contextually. Ekpeyong (2020) opines that Pidgin uses clipping as a way of shortening words without changing their meanings. For instance, Pidgin uses "driva" in place of "driver", "penta" instead of painter and "bros" in place of "brother" (Ekpeyong 2020).

Taiwo & Dantele (2020, 2) view abbreviations as 'short forms which could represent a lexical item." The Nigerian Pidgin English has abbreviations such as WYW (Wetin You Want?) and WTU (Who Tell You?). In different contexts, these abbreviations are used to convey meaning to the readers in a graspable manner.

2.2.4 Etymology of Nigerian Pidgin

The history of the Nigerian Pidgin could be traced to the trade that took place between the Niger Delta people and the Europeans. At that time, the traders never had a common language they could use to carry out their business transactions. Hence, they deployed Pidgin as a means of ensuring mutual intelligibility in conversations. With this, Pidgin emerged as a contact language or language of trade. Esizimetor (2010) corroborates that pidgin emerged as a result of the commercial activity that was carried out by the Portuguese and the people of Niger-Delta. Onwubiko (1966) cited in Esizimetor (2010, 5) says that "the Portuguese started making successful trips to the West Coasts of West Africa from as early as 1434 AD in search of gold, spices and slaves." The pursuit and desire for material possessions and man-power by the Portuguese contributed to the wide spread of Pidgin. Again, because the Portuguese and the Niger Delta people (Benin people) were not mutually intelligible at that tine, they deployed a dumb barter system. Back then, the Oba of Benin gave the Portuguese slaves in exchange for fire arms, cloths and bracelets in return (Onwubiko 1966 cited in Esizimetor, 6). Nowadays, Portuguese words such as "das(dash)", "palabras (kpalava)" and "saber (sabi)" are infused into the Pidgin English and these words are sheltered till date (Esizimetor 2010).

In recent time, the widespread of Nigerian Pidgin English cuts across different sectors of the globe. According to Ibrahim (2016, 2), "the reality is that NPE which was considered to be a debased, bastardized, jargonized and intellectually inferior language in Nigeria, is gradually growing to the status of language of wider communication." The prominence of Nigerian Pidgin English is evident since it is spoken in Ghana, Cameroon and Equatorial Guinea. Osoba (2015, 2) believes that Nigerian Pidgin English is spoken by "politicians, advertisers and public mobilisers." These people use NPE to communicate and execute their daily activities. For instance, numerous speakers of the Nigerian Pidgin English use "una" to refer to younger persons, "oga" is used to refer to "Boss", "sisi" is used for a young giel, "abegi" replaces "please" and "korokoro" is used in the stead of "openly" (Osoba, 2015)

2.2.5 Nigerian Pidgin Tenses

The tenses used in Nigerian Pidgin show time (tense), aspect (perfective/progressive) and mood (declarative, exclamatory, interrogative and imperative) of an action (Ekpeyong 2020.). Nigerian Pidgin English expresses types of tenses (traditional

grammar) such as *present, past, present continuous, present perfect tense and future tenses*. This can be exemplified below:

- i. Dele de kom here (Dele comes here/simple present tense)
- ii. Dele bin kom here (Dele came here/simple past tense)
- iii. Dele go kom here (Dele will come here/future tense)
- iv. Dele don dey kom(Dele is coming/present continuous tense)
- v. Dele bin don kom here (Dele has come here/present perfect tense)

Source: Ekpeyong, 2020

3 Theoretical Review

This study is anchored on Jaseer Al-Jaseer's view of Pidgnization Theory and the approach to the study is drawn from Vliyeva's Comparative Analysis (CA). According to Al-jaseer (2012), the Pidgnization Theory evaluates "sociolinguistic phenomenon that is essentially based on acculturation or contact with the target culture." This implies that this theory provides more information on the differences and similarities that occur across two or more languages. This theory is relevant to this study because it exposes language learners to the proper way of learning and using Pidgin lexically, semantically and syntactically. The knowledge of this theory provides a ground for language users to gain language use and language use when it pertains to Pidgin. The Pidgnization Theory adopted for this study would make learners gain prowess in the use of Pidgin morphological processes and tenses used by writers to communicate their ideas, feelings and emotions in thoughts. With this theory, language learners of the Pidgin English would be enlightened and able to infer meaning to the Pidgin morphological word formation processes alongside the Pidgin tenses portrayed by writers in their texts. Specifically, this theory intends to show the differences in the style of Pidgin adopted by Chinua Achebe and Ayi Armah Kwei in their works.

Veliyeva's Comparative Analysis is the approach adopted for this research work. According to Veliyeva (22021,1), a comparative analysis is "a method used to detect genetic relationships between languages and to establish a consistent relationship by reconstructing the common ancestor of the languages." This entails that a Comparative Analysis shows the structural differences and similarities that exist in a particular language. This approach is related to this study because it shows the differences and similarities that exist in the Pidgin used in Chinua Achebe's *A Man of the People* and *Ayi Kwei Armah's The Beautyful Ones are Not Yet Born*. The crux of this approach is to compare the differences and similarities in the Pidgin morphological word formation processes and tenses used in the works of both writers.

3.1 Materials and Methods

This study uses a comparative analysis to compare the differences and similarities in the Pidgin word formation processes and tenses portrayed in the texts of both writers. The

study uses a qualitative research design to carefully collect and analyse the relevant data needed for the study. A random sampling method is used to sample the instances of the Pidgin morphological word formation processes and tenses captured in Chinua Achebe's *A Man of the People* and *Ayi Kwei Armah's The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born*. Both texts serve as the secondary data used for this research work.

4.0 Discussions/Results

4.1 Preamble

This section of the study analyses and shows the results of the Pidgin morphological processes and tenses used in Achebe's *A Man of the People and Armah's The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born*. It showcases the differences and similarities of both texts as revealed below.

4.2. Distribution of Pidgin Morphological Word Formation Processes Used in Chinua Achebe's A Man of the People and Ayi Kwei Armah's The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born.

4.2.1. Clipping

 People wey dey jealous the money gorment de pay Minister no sabi say no be him de chop am.

(Achebe, 1966, p.16)

ii) Give me tori.

(Achebe, 1966, p. 23)

iii) He was known to most students by his nick name "Irre." (Achebe, 1966, p.26)

As revealed above, the extracts show the instances of clipping in Pidgin portrayed in the text. As shown in (i), Chief Nanga uses "gorment" to shorten the word "government" without changing its meaning or part of speech. In Standard British English, the word, *government* has two morphemes. The word, *govern* stands as a free morpheme while *ment* stands as a bound morpheme. In Pidgin, the word is reduced to gorment without changing its meaning. Chief Nanga uses the clipping in order to showcase humour with respect to how people envy the Ministers who get paid directly from the government. Chief Nanga expresses that the money given to Ministers are not mostly spent or enjoyed by them but the responsibilities around them.

In (ii), Andrew uses "tori" as a clipping for "story." Linguistically, the word, story is a free morpheme. Hence, it has the potentiality of standing on its own without an affix attached to it. As portrayed in the text, Andrew uses the Pidgin clipping, tori when conversing with his friend, Peter in order to gain more information about the things that occur in the society.

As exhibited above, the Pidgin clipping, Irre is used to shorten the word "Irresponsible." In the text, the writer refers to Ralph (a Medical student in Idinburgh) as Irre because he perceives him to be a daft fellow. Ralph is seen as someone who refuses to think smartly and also face the challenges of life.

On the other hand, the instances of Pidgin clipping portrayed in *Ayi Kwei Armah's The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born* are expressed as thus:

- iv) **Sah**, our leader would say 'mah contrey people no happy sah." (Armah, 1968, p.83)
- v) If you make me head, mah contrey people go happy again. (Armah, 1968, p.83)

As shown in (iv) Massa uses "sah" to shorten "sir" and he also uses "contrey" to reduce the word "country". The word, *sir* is a free morpheme while the word, *country* has two morphemes (free and bound). The free morpheme is *count* while the bound morpheme is *ry*. The speaker uses the Pidgin lexical items *sah and contrey* to show respect to the Minister and also to express patriotism for his country.

In (v), the leader of CPC uses "mah" as a form of clipping to shorten "my" when making a request to Massa. The use of the phrase (NP) "ma contrey" shows a deep sense of affection and commitment the speaker has for his country.

4.2.2 Borrowing

The following are the instances of the borrowed words used in Pidgin in both texts:

vi) Everybody here sabi say mi na good Christian, no be so James

(Achebe, 1966, p.19)

vii) Look at this small pickin.

(Achebe, 1966, p. 23)

In (vi), the word "sabi" is a Portuguese word (saber) and it is infused in Pidgin. In the expression above, *sabi* means "knows" as used in the text. Chief Koko uses the aforementioned Pidgin (sabi) to show how famous he is in the society. He uses the Pidgin lexical item to justify himself as a good who is loved and celebrated by everyone in the society.

As demonstrated in (vii), the Pidgin word, pickin is borrowed from Portuguese and it has been integrated into Pidgin. In the text, Andrew humorously uses the word, pickin to demean Peter. Andrew uses the word in order to give Peter the impression that he does not portray maturity in his composure; especially in the way he reacts to critical matters/issues.

The instance below reveals the instance of a borrowed word used in Pidgin in Ayi Kwei Armah's The Beautyful Ones are Not Yet Born:

viii) You think say I no **sabe**, he said at last. "Ah sabe say you be Nkrumah party man. You no fit pass."

(Armah, 1968, p.175)

In (viii), the watchman uses the Portuguese word "sabe" which means 'to know." In the above context, the watchman uses the borrowed word to notify Koomson that he knows who he is. The watchman uses the Pidgin word to disclose to Koomson that he also benefit from the money Koomson has got from politics because he could render assistance to him at that time.

4.2.3 Abbreviations

The instances of Pidgin abbreviations captured in both texts are expressed as thus:

ix) PIV: Poor Innocent Victim (Achebe, 1968, p.104)

In Chinua Achebe's *A Man of the People*, the speaker humorously changes the abbreviation "VIP" to "PIV" in order to express how melancholic he feels about the things that occur in the society. The speaker believes corruption has eaten deeply in the society. Therefore, he uses the abbreviation revealed in (ix) to express his feelings.

On the other hand, the following are the Pidgin abbreviations posited in Ayi Kwei Armah's The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born:

- x) WBF: Who Born Fool (Armah, 1968, p. 106)
- xi) CB: Contrey Broke (Armah, 1968, p. 106)
- xii) VS: Vagina Sweet (Armah, 1968, p. 106)

The above instances justify some of the abbreviations used in the text. In (x), the speaker uses the abbreviation to express anger on those who hold political positions. The masses see them as fools who embessle government funds.

In (xi), the abbreviation is used to showcase the poor financial state of the society. It reveals the economic hardship the masses experience as a result of a failed government.

In (xii), the speaker uses the abbreviation to reveal the satisfaction he derives from the female genital. He sees it as something that gives him immense pleasure and satisfaction.

4.3 Distribution of Pidgin Tenses Used in Chinua Achebe's A Man of the People and Ayi Kwei Armah's The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born.

The following are the instances of the tenses used in both texts:

4.3.1 Simple Present Tense

xiii) People wey dey jealous the money government dey pay Minister no sabi say no be him one de chop am.'

(Achebe, 1966, p. 16)

xiv) 'Everybody here sabi say me na good Christian, no be so, James?' (Achebe, 1966, p.19)

If the expression in (xiii) is translated to the Standard British English, it would mean: "People who envy politicians because of the money government pays them, do not know that they are not the ones who spend it." This is actually a simple present tense because the expression shows that the action occurs limitlessly. In other words, the government Ministers are still being envied because of the money government pays them. This is deciphered from the present verbs used such as "envy", "pays", "do" and "spend" as portrayed above.

In (xiv), the verb 'sabi" which means "knows" indicates the use of present tense by the speaker. The above utterance, when translated to English, becomes 'Everyone knows that I am a good Christian, am I not?". The verbs "knows", "am" and "do" are markers or indicators of present tense which shows that the action still takes place at that time.

On the other hand, the following are instances of simple present tenses portrayed in *Ayi Kwei Armah's The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born:*

xv) Contrey Broke.

(Armah, 1968, p.106)

xvi) 'Money Sweet Pass All. (Armah, 1968, 106)

The statement above (xv), when translated to English becomes: "The country is financially bankrupt/ The country lacks money." This is a simple present tense because it still shows what the country experiences. The man says this so as to reveal the financial hardship the country faces.

In (xvi), the man's statement when translated from Pidgin to English means: "Money is better than everything." His statement depicts the use of a simple present tense. The utterance of the man clearly shows that he truly considers money to be more valuable than everything life has to offer.

4.3.2 **Simple Past Tense**

xvii) Na this boy **halla** so far master im face." (Achebe, 1966, p.79)

In Chinua Achebe's *A Man of the People*, Dogo makes the above statement when he witnesses the way Odili shouts at his master. In the above expression, "halla" posits "shouted" which shows an actions that occurred in the past.

In contrast to Ayi Kwei Armah's The Beautyful Ones are Not Yet Born, does not show the use of Pidgin past tenses.

4.3.3 Future Tense

The following are the instances of Pidgin future tenses represented in both texts:

xviii) I no follow you.

(Achebe, 1966, p.35)

In Standard British English, "I no follow you" means "I will not follow you" which expresses a future action. In the above expression, "no" stands as the modal auxiliary verb for "will" and the negator "not as well.

The instance of Pidgin future tense portrayed in Ayi Kwei Armah's The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born is revealed below:

xix) You no go fit pass.

(Armah, 1968, p. 175)

In (xix), the watchman uses a future tense when he demands for Pesewa from Koomson. To the watchman, the politician can only pass if he gives him money. The statement of the watchman can be translated as "You won't be able to pass." So, the modal auxiliary verb "will" stands as an indicator of a future action or something that is yet to take place.

4.4 Conclusion

With respect to the above analysis, we can deduce that both texts reveal the use of Pidgin morphological word formation processes like clipping, borrowing and abbreviations. Also, both writers use Pidgin present tenses to communicate their feeling, thoughts and emotions to the readers. This is explicitly revealed in the analysis of this research work.

A Man of the People reflects the use of Pidgin simple past tense but The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born does not portray the use of Pidgin simple past tenses.

Finally, both authors communicate their ideas through the use of Pidgin future tenses.

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