



A CRITICAL NARRATIVE ANALYSIS OF ELICITED ACTS FROM A HOMODIEGETIC RAPE NARRATIVE

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Abstract

Social media is dependent on Language and language is subjective to societal volatility. Undoubtedly, the advent of social media has not only resulted in the creation of a new variety of linguistic texts but also influenced the nature and components of research data of various disciplines. Thus this paper explored the relationship between the tools of critical narrative analysis in linguistics and the homodiegetic rape narrative. The mixed method design of research where the data was analysed both qualitatively and quantitatively was utilized. The quantitative analysis focused on the mode of the cohesive devices and linguistic features of spoken discourse used and they are 8, 3, and 11 respectively. While the qualitative made a conclusion that indeed the individual's ideology was embedded in her narrative, this ideology was influenced by religion and culture and the effects of rape on the victim was also elicited.

Keywords: *Social media, Language, Homodiegetic, Rape, and Critical Narrative analysis*

Introduction

Language is germane to human reality and subjective to social volatility. Thus, different scholars (Bloch & Trager, 1942; Chomsky, 1956; Hall, 1968 & Osisanwo, 2003) have attempted to delineate language, however, the working

definition of this study is the definition posited by Okata (2016) that language is a carrier that conveys our ideas, feelings, emotions, from one organism to another. It can be in the written, spoken, or other paralinguistic forms and must be accepted by the constituents of a speech community for the purpose of communication. This definition attempts to embody the various aspects of human existence that language functions. However, since this study aims at exploring the various linguistic foundations that influences an individual's social reality, it is pertinent to note that Sapir (1929) posits that the structure of a language affects a speaker's world and determines a native speaker's perception and categorization of experience.

Wodak & Meyer, (2001) posited that Critical Discourse analysis is a fundamental problem-oriented, interdisciplinary approach which is absorbed in scrutinizing social phenomena which are naturally complex and therefore depend upon a multidisciplinary and multi-methodical approach on the other hand, Brunner (1990) postulated the framework of narrative analysis which is a scrutiny of how people decode the reality of their world through their life stories. He adopts a functional approach which focuses on the roles that narratives play on different individuals as a means of creating, and sharing meaning especially in shaping chaotic and random events into a coherent narrative.

This study adopts the framework of critical narrative analysis; the interplay and combination of the frameworks of Critical Discourse Analysis and Narrative analysis which was proposed by Souto-Manning (2014) and (Ogamba, 2020), it is a framework that explores the relationship that exists between the Micro and Macro world. The framework of narrative analysis explores narratives to elicit themes, the narratives' referential and evaluative functions, ideology of the narrator because ideology is related to social relations of power, the social reality of the narrator, and ultimately the experiences of the narrator. In this study, by employing the framework of critical discourse analysis to explore the narratives, the researcher intends to go beyond eliciting the aforementioned concepts and explore the social relations in institutional practices that are represented linguistically in the narratives.

Therefore, this paper will carry out a narrative analysis on select acts using the Labovian framework for the thematic organization of events in a narrative by Labov (1972), combined with the First step of critical discourse analysis

posited by Fairclough (1995:98) and cited in (Romanus & Uduk, 2017) which is the description of the text where the formal properties of the text will be analysed using linguistic tools. Therefore, the analysis will attempt to describe the different linguistic properties that are inherent in the selected acts from Mrs. Busola Dakolo's interview with Chude Jideonwo published in June, 2019 to explore the relationship between the tools of critical narrative analysis in linguistics and the homodiegetic rape narrative.

Social Media Phenomena

The advent of social media and its dominating relevance as a vital tool of the mass media in the contemporary Nigerian society has resulted in a complete modification of the Nigerian society in the sense that each individual in the society possesses a singular voice. Social media may be referred to a land where people from different societies, spheres of life, and continents come to integrate and in so doing, ideologies, cultures and social practices are shared and emulated. Several other societies especially the USA have a socio-cultural practice of speaking up against sexual violence through various social media platforms, an example includes a campaign against sexual violence termed #metoo campaign, which commenced and went viral in 2017 when individuals took to the various platforms to recount their stories using the aforementioned tag to either show solidarity, or inclusiveness. Academic studies (Källvik, 2017) explored this topic one of such is a thesis by Emma Källvik who is a Gender studies master's student of Linköping University in Sweden, the scholar explored the #metoo campaign reported in the Swedish print media. However, this study explores how the narrator employed the vital phenomenon that is language as a tool through social media, to resist the power relations that are inherent within the Nigerian society.

In this decade, Social Media has become a vital and powerful tool, used for disseminating information and bringing issues to the spotlight. It performs the function of mass media thoroughly by bringing information to the doorstep of members of the society. One does not need to go to extreme means to get a story out or express themselves. This is the case of the narratives which will be analysed in the study; the narrators did not go through official news channels like channels T.V, NTA news, AIT, or other news channels but granted their interviews with YAW NAIJA TV, whose official platform is YOUTUBE which is a social media outlet. Within 24hrs of the interviews'

release, members of the society who use social media platforms and don't use had received the information, some started hash tags; #metoo #istandwithbusola #iambusola while some were against her coming out with the story and other hash tags #istandwithpastorbiodun #istandwithcoza were created, a social media user's response to the people protesting against the pastor was "the Bible said: touch not my anointed and do my prophet no harm".

Thus, social media has become a great tool that connects the world. It is a platform where people use language to express their thoughts, ideas, and stand in solidarity with different people round the world by narrating their experiences. Hence, the narratives are Homodiegetic (first-person) which enables hearers or listeners to receive the raw and authentic story rather than heterodiegetic (third-person) which stems from reporting or journalism. According to Turkewitz (2010), when a narrative is reported, the reporter tends to inflect their own linguistic acumen or ideological bias in the narratives/ story.

Features of Spoken / Verbal Discourse / Narrative

Spoken discourse is accompanied with varying features. Features like facial expressions, body language, non-phonetic sounds, cohesive devices, and so on. However, Romanus and Uduk, (2017) posited a number of features of spoken discourses they are:

- a. Discourse markers: this is used to include the listener to share a knowledge or understanding of a common fact, and also to acknowledge an audience. E.g., 'You know', 'perhaps', 'ofcourse',
- b. Fillers: fillers are used when continuing an utterance or point after being interrupted, also when trying to organize thoughts or remember something, e.g., 'erm', 'er', 'well', 'ah',
- c. Repetitions,
- d. Incomplete sentences,
- e. The expressions of attitude and opinion through the use of expressions like 'good', 'wonderful', 'that's it', etc.

These features were elicited and presented in a Bar chart to show their frequency of occurrence.

Labov's Framework for the Thematic Organization of Events in a Narrative Analysis

The evaluation model which will be used on the narrative will organize the data into six parts;

- 1) An abstract; this simply means what the event is about which in this case, is about how the victim was raped at a young age by her pastor who she considered a father.
- 2) An orientation; this simply connotes who experienced the event, where, and when. The people who experienced the event were both the victim and the pastor whereby Mrs. Busola was the victim, and Pastor Fatoyinbo was her alleged attacker. The event took place in two different places some 20 years ago.
- 3) Complication; as the events unfolds, what happened,
- 4) Evaluation; next occurrence
- 5) Consequence; result of the event
- 6) Coda; the finished analysis of the event. (Labov, 1972)

Therefore, these aforementioned parts were used for analysis of the data.

Methodology

This study used the mixed method research design in order to present the qualitative and the quantitative analyses. The data for this study is the narrative of Mrs. Busola Dakolo which was uploaded to YOUTUBE on the YAW Naija TV channel in June 2019. The data was selected and sampled using the purposive sampling technique. The study adopted the critical narrative analysis framework and the samples were analysed using tools from the Labovian framework for the thematic organization of events in a narrative by Labov (1972), the different features of spoken discourse posited by (Romanus & Uduk, 2017), cohesive devices, tenses, acts, and semantic imports of the acts.

Narrative analysis

Abstract: The story narrated by Busola portrays how she was raped "twice in one week" by Pastor Biodun Fatoyinbo whom she saw as a father figure when she was 17. On the first occasion, he charged into her house in the early hours of the morning and raped her thereby robbing her of her virginity which is synonymous to her glory and the second time in public after a night of helping

his wife take care of their baby. These events made her feel like she was his sex slave and she had lost everything.

The orientation of the narrative goes thus:

- 1) **Antagonist:** Pastor Biodun Fatoyinbo a married man and a father, also the founder and senior Pastor of a church called Commonwealth of Zion Assembly, a Father figure to the victim as at the time of the event.
- 2) **Protagonist/Victim:** The narrator Mrs. Busola Dakolo a married woman and a mother to three children who was a 17 years old girl and fresh out of secondary school as at the time of the event.
- 3) **Location:** Ilorin, Kwara State, Northern Nigeria. The victim's Father's house and in his car on the road
- 4) **Period (when):** By 6:30 or 7 am, on a Monday morning, and midday that same week 17 years ago.
- 5) **Other people mentioned:** The victim's sisters and the victim's parents, The attacker's wife: Pastor Omodele and child: Shindara, and Pastor Biodun's Ministers.

Complication: Biodun came to her house on an early Monday morning raped her for the first time robbing her of her virginity, and two days later raped her again in his car on the road.

Evaluation: she felt like his sex slave and could not take it any more thus she told her family members who later reported to the church and they made the Pastor Apologize to her. While he kept on being a Pastor in the church despite what he had done.

Consequence: she felt like she had lost her glory, she felt like a sex slave, her belief in God wavered and she left the church.

Coda: The narrative is a Homodiegetic narrative; therefore, it was told in the first person point of view, it is a narrative therefore the narrator made use of past tense in the course of the narration. And several cohesive devices were employed to unify the utterances and embellish it in a state of continuity. The themes discovered are the themes of Rape, Family, and Religion. The Antagonist (Pastor Biodun) justified his action and the narrator carried the story with her telling only her family members, Biodun's church ministers, and her husband for 20years before telling her story. The story was told to inspire other young girls who have been through or will experience such violence to speak up and stand up to their Rapists.

Description; Text analysis and Discussion

Act 1

"I just wanted to serve God because erm my background is erm... I'm from a polygamous family and erm seeing some things play out in the family, I didn't want my life to be like that... I was beginning to get scared of this world, so I was having that mind that I want the kind of world that will make me happy and my... since I was already a Christian, it was just like... Hold on to Christ, that's all. So I wanted to serve him in church, you know, just be zealous for God the way I was already zealous in school".

The Act above falls within the representative act. It is a recount of an event that happened in real life. The tense used is the past tense which indicates a narration of a past event, making its genre a spoken narrative discourse.

The use of the personal pronoun 'I' which is the subject of the utterance, 'me', and 'my' indicates that the utterance falls within a first person narrative.

The spoken discourse feature inherent within are fillers 'erm' used to fill in pauses, remember something, and as an add on to the utterance and the discourse marker 'you know' which acts as a pragmatic signal that indicates and acknowledges an audience.

The cohesive devices are

1. 'Because' serves as a subordinate conjunction. It connects both sentences and helps her explain the reason the narrator wanted to serve God.
2. 'And' serves as a coordinate conjunction. It helps unify the clauses and keep the utterance in a continuous state
3. 'So' serves as a continuative to avoid breaks or interruptions, and keep the utterance in a continuous state.

Due to the Narrator's sense of religion, she believed that if she served God, her life will be better than that of her family.

The socio-cultural context of this utterance depicts that polygamy although is a norm in the Nigerian society, it is not an aspect of Christianity.

Act 2

"I told my mum that my pastor said that he is going to buy some things from Taiwo road, that I should just

accompany him, you know, so I remember that particular day my mum was like ah, Busola which one is this one now ... I was now like ah mummy... it's my pastor now I'm like, there is nothing... So he was talking "I want to be a spiritual father to you". So, at that point even though in my world I'm always very mindful of people around me... I was about to just put up a guard, but then, he was able to like just break it "I just want to be like a father, somebody you can always interact with". And then really, I didn't have a good relationship with my dad like..."

The reported speech is preponderant in this representative act; this is because the narrator was reporting a conversation within her narrative.

The above utterance also incorporates other examples of fillers e.g. 'ah' which is a unique linguistic feature of the way Nigerians use language. Another feature is code mixing "*she said it in Yoruba*" which is a common linguistic feature among bilabials and multilingual users of language like in the Nigerian society which is the socio-cultural context of the utterance.

The use of the lexeme 'like' for comparison, to further explain the previous utterance and also as a cohesive device is also a feature of the manner Nigerian interlocutors speak English.

The cohesive devices are

1. 'He' functions as an anaphoric reference to 'my pastor'
2. 'So' serves as a continuative to avoid breaks or interruptions, and keep the utterance in a continuous state.
3. 'But' serves as a coordinate conjunction
4. 'And' serves as a coordinate conjunction. It helps unify the clauses and keep the utterance in a continuous state

Due to the Narrator's sense of religion, she felt safe with her 'pastor' and debunked her mother's suspicions and let her guard down.

The socio-cultural context of this utterance also portrays the socio-semantic import of the title 'pastor' and the Kinship term 'father' that connotes safety. Also the patriarchal nature of the society conditioned her to want a male authority and father figure in her life despite the unavailability of hers, hence the acceptance for the pastor to be her spiritual father.

Act 3

“Because it was more like someone that I had put “up here” that I felt was really really concerned about me... I had already filled him in the place of like a father that could speak to me, you know... guide me. He was about to do something I could not believe and then when I was just about to react, he just covered my mouth and erm...I just felt... there was a scripture I used to have in my head then... “Marriage honorable, bed undefiled”. And erm... imagine how my mum and dad... how they were, I didn’t ever want to lose my virginity before marriage. That was like one of the things that I felt, according to my faith then, that if I’m able to keep my virginity, I’m going to have a fantastic marriage...”

Similar to the previous acts, this act is part of a homodiegetic narrative that is why it is in the first person point of view, uses past tense, other features of spoken discourse embedded within are; fillers: ‘erm’, discourse makers: ‘you know’.

The cohesive devices inherent in the act are:

1. ‘Because’ is a subordinate conjunction and the fact that it begins this utterance makes it have a marked theme therefore making the entire act a subordinate or an explanation to a previous act.
2. ‘Really, really’ this is repetition; it was used by the narrator to lay emphasis.
3. ‘He’ in this act acts as an exophoric reference to the antagonist. However, if combined with previous acts, it acts as an anaphoric reference to ‘my pastor’.
4. ‘And’ acts as a coordinate conjunction.

Due to her sense of religion and the Nigerian society’s language habits, the semantic import of the kinship term ‘father’ to her connotes:

- a. Someone who is “up there” this denotes someone you place above others.
- b. Someone who is really concerned about you.
- c. Someone that can speak to you, and guide you.
- d. Someone who should not rape you.

This representative act used by the narrator to recount her story projects the narrator's ideology which was constructed by her religion and society (because Nigeria is a highly moralistic and religious country even her constitution is based on both the Bible and the Quran). This can be delineated as

- a. Virginitv equals honorable marriage.
- b. Virginitv equals a happy and fantastic marriage.
- c. Virginitv equals virtue.
- d. Losing your virginitv before marriage equals, having a marriage like her parents' and not having the aforementioned.

Act 4

"I don't know... so he poured it in my mouth and I had to just be swallowing it as he was pouring, swallowing it and it finished and erm he was now tapping me like "You should be happy that I'm the one that did this to you" yes... so... And then he left, said I will see you, he left... But that I should be happy that it's a man of God that did this to me...I was like ah pastor go and drop me at the junction can I come down can I come down, he was just smiling and then he was just saying different things like "I am yours, you would do what I tell you to do' and he just parked the car when he got there at that moment"

This is also a representative act. In this act, the narrator recounts the words spoken to her by the antagonist after he raped her the first time and before he raped her the second time. This act similar to the previous acts is also in the first person point of view and uses the past tense.

The cohesive devices used are:

1. 'So' is a continuative and used to keep the act in a continuous state.
2. 'And' is a coordinate conjunction used to link two clauses or utterances in the act.
3. 'He' in this act acts as a cataphoric reference to pastor. However, if combined with previous acts, it acts as an anaphoric reference to 'my pastor'.
4. 'Did this' Verbal substitution used to substitute the act of rape.

5. 'But' is a coordinate conjunction used by the narrator to link two thoughts together.
6. 'Can I come down, can I come down' this repetition is used to lay emphasis.

However, unlike act 2, the narrator employed the use of direct speech in the course of reporting. This may be to lay emphasis on the gravity of the words that were said by the antagonist or she did not want a misinterpretation of the utterance. The direct speeches are;

- a. *"You should be happy that I'm the one that did this to you"*
- b. *"I will see you"*
- c. *"I am yours, you would do what I tell you to do"*

These utterances by the pastor may denote 'Right' that he was well within his rights to rape her and did not see anything wrong with what he did.

It may also denote 'Justification' he used the utterance to justify his action.

And utterance C may denote 'Possession', and 'Ownership' which is how majority of men view women or their wives in the Nigerian society.

Note that the utterance says only *"I am yours"* however, there is an inflected or an embedded meaning which is *"I am yours and you are mine"* this better explains the second part of the sentence *"You would do what I tell you to do"* This act through the pastor's actions and utterances portrays the pastor's ideology

Act 5

"I was more or less like a slave you know... so erm he did it there, he ejaculated and he put me in the car and started saying sweet things like oh Busola I think I love you, saying things, I didn't even say anything, I didn't say anything we got home, he dropped me off, said you'd be fine that this thing is not a new thing,...It's actually difficult to say who have gone through because it's more like it lives with you. it's just like the level I'm at now, that's not where I was years ago, but it's all a struggle, you know, that poor self perception, you just look at yourself like you are worthless, you know, when you visualize the image, you visualize the Everything that happened, it affects you mentally"

This act is also a representative act. However, embedded within is an expressive act whose illocutionary force is to garner sympathy from the hearer or listener.

This act like the previously analysed acts is in the first person point of view because the narrative is a homodiegetic narrative, it is also in the past tense because it is a narrative and a narrative is simply a recount of past events.

There different linguistic features of spoken discourse inherent in the act are: fillers; 'erm', 'oh', and the discourse marker; 'you know', the incomplete sentence "*you visualize the*" is also inherent because the narrator was trying to string different thoughts together

The cohesive devices used are:

1. 'So' is a continuative that was used to keep the act in a continuous state and avoid interruptions and breaks.
2. 'He' in this act acts as an exophoric reference to the antagonist. However, if combined with previous acts, it acts as an anaphoric reference to 'my pastor'.
3. 'And' is a coordinate conjunction used to link two clauses or utterances in the act.
4. 'I didn't even say anything, I didn't say anything' this repetition is used by the narrator to lay emphasis and keep her emotions at bay.
5. 'Because' in this act serves as a subordinate conjunction.
6. 'But' is a coordinate conjunction used by the narrator to link two thoughts together.

The narrator also presented the effects of being raped through her narrative and they are:

- a. It makes you a slave.
- b. It lives with you.
- c. It is a struggle.
- d. Poor self perception.
- e. Feeling of worthlessness.
- f. Image visualization.
- g. It affects you mentally.

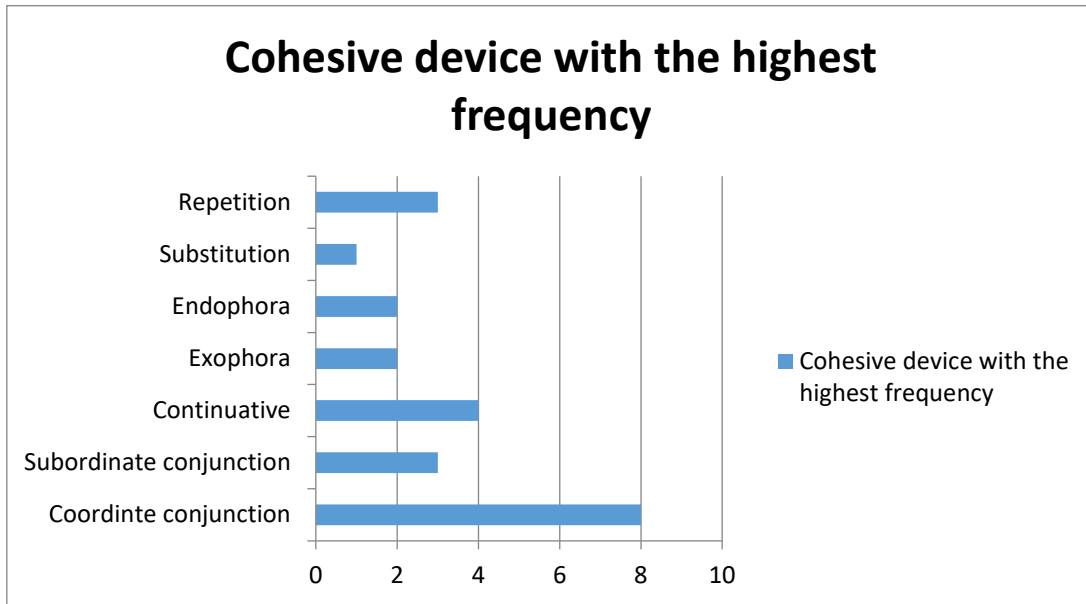
Quantitative analysis

Three bar charts will be displayed to show

- a. Cohesive device with the highest frequency

- b. Cohesive devices frequency distribution in the Acts
- c. Spoken discourse feature with the highest frequency

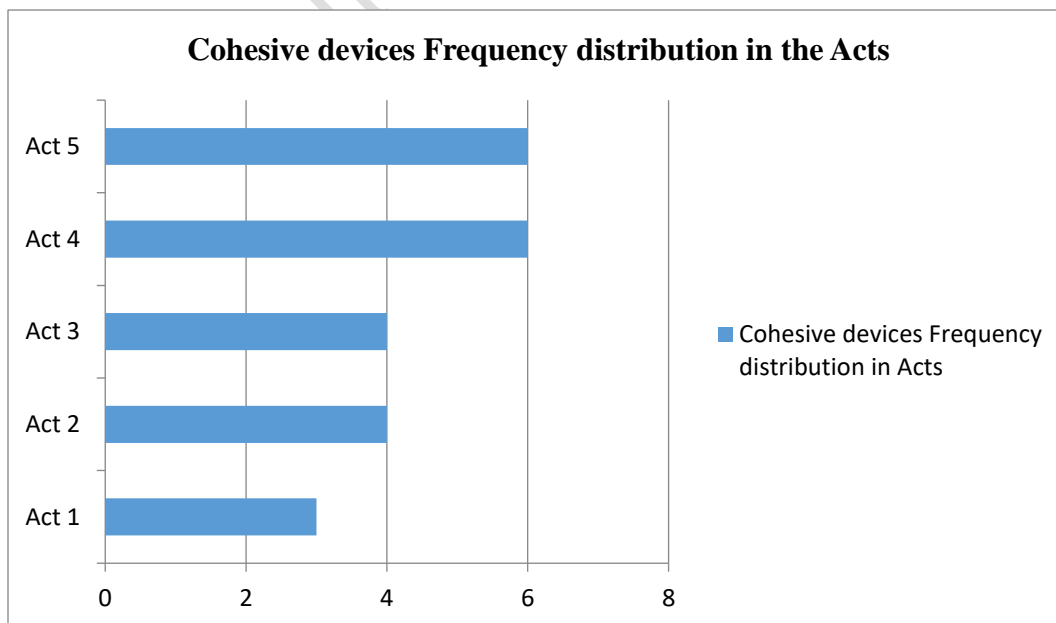
a. Chart 1



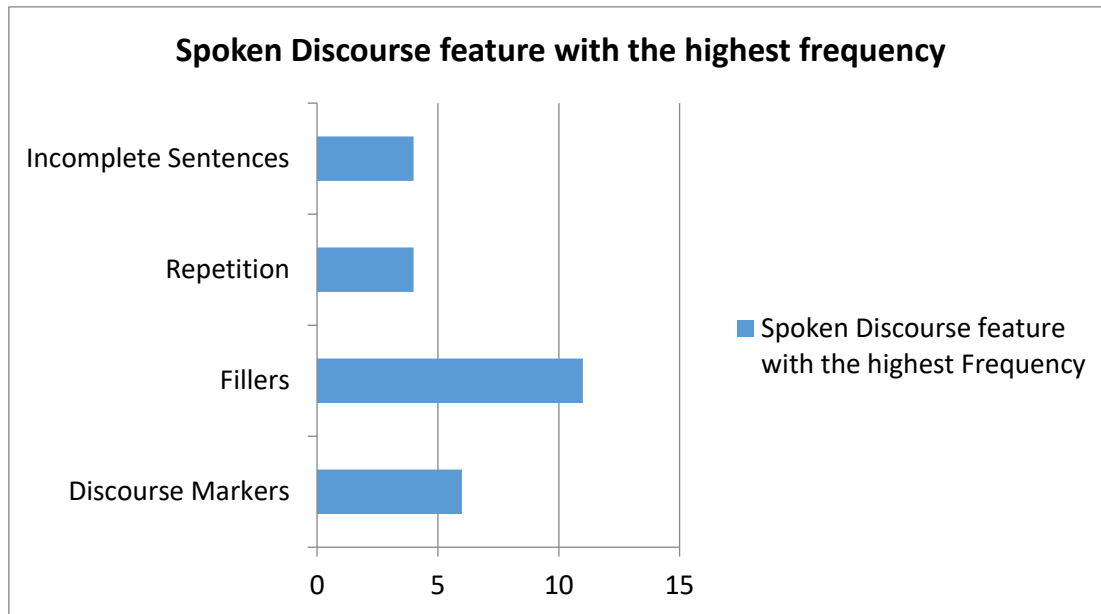
The cohesive device with the highest frequency is the coordinate conjunction with a Frequency of 8.

b. Chart 2

The acts with the most cohesive devices are Act 4 and 5 with frequencies of 6 respectively. Therefore, the mode of the data is 3.



c. Chart 3



The spoken discourse feature with the highest frequency is the 'fillers' with the frequency of 11, this shows that fillers were used the most by the narrator.

Conclusion

The findings revealed that there is interconnectedness between family life, religion and inherent linguistic features as evident in the use of kinship terms and titles used for pastors by the rape victims. It also foregrounded that the aforementioned social practices and linguistic foundations enabled the rape and victim-silence in the narratives and also elicited possible effects of rape on the victims, it also revealed that unlike the heterodiegetic rape narratives, the homodiegetic rape narratives used in this study utilizes personal pronouns, and are abound with words, lexical items and body language that creates an imagery of emotion and sympathy in the mind of the hearer. Having analysed the acts from the select homodiegetic rape narrative both qualitatively and quantitatively, the mode of the cohesive devices used and the features of spoken discourse are 8, 3 and 11 respectively. The narrative which was given in an interview was shaped into a coherent narrative, the different linguistic features of the acts were explored, and in doing so, the qualitative analysis that asserts the fact that the narrator's ideology was embedded in her narrative and was influenced by her religion and culture, and the first hand ills and effects of rape on the victim can be derived due to the homodiegetic nature of the narrative.

Recommendations

This study concluded that Narrative analysis and Critical discourse analysis are complementary tools for connecting and relating different aspect of language use to a variety of social practices and linguistic foundation specifically in rape narratives of rape victims. Consequently, this study has led to the emergence of a genre of English language in Nigeria. Therefore, further studies that utilize Critical narrative analysis in linguistics are therefore encouraged to explore rape narratives. Culture influences language and language culture this in turn form the foundation on which a society is built and run; therefore, this study recommends that: Semantic imports of words and linguistic lexical items should be adjusted to accommodate their socio semantic import specific to each society and culture.

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