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RESEARCH ARTICLE

STYLISTIC AND IDEOLOGICAL DIFFERENCES IN THE PORTRAYAL OF TWO MOTHERS IN AMMA DARKO'S *FACELESS*

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Abstract

This paper examines the portrayal of two mothers, Maa Tsuru and Kabria, in Amma Darko's *Faceless* (2003). Grounded in stylistics (Fowler, 1967, 1977, 1986; Freeborn, 1996; Leech & Short, 2007; Simpson, 2004; Leech, 2013; Toolan, 2013; Short, 2013) and informed by an eclectic grammatical framework, the study adopts both quantitative and qualitative methods to investigate how the narrator's or the implied author's language constructs each mother within her social world. Two purposively selected passages in which Maa Tsuru and Kabria are represented for the first time are subjected to quantitative stylistic analysis based on the eclectic grammatical approach, and the resulting patterns are subsequently interpreted qualitatively. By comparing the linguistic features that characterize the depiction of the two mother figures, the study reveals the stylistic choices through which the narrator or the implied authorencodes contrasting ideological perspectives on motherhood, gender, and social reality in the novel. The findings demonstrate how grammatical and stylistic patterns contribute to the representation of the female characters and illuminate the broader social concerns embedded in Darko's fiction.

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1. Introduction

This paper aims to examine how two mothers (Maa Tsuru and Kabria) are portrayed in AmmaDarko's*Faceless* (2003). In other words, it seeks to investigate how the narrator's or the implied author's language depicts each mother in her social world. Given the fact that the two mothers do not live in the same social world, and as a result, do not share in common the same life experiences and living conditions, this study postulates then that their portrayal will vary or the language that portrays them will vary with regard to how it represents social reality. The foregoing postulate denotes the use of language in different contexts to encode stylistic or/and ideological differences. Stylistic scholars cogently argue that we can attribute or ascribe the use of language in a novel in general to an 'implied author'. In this perspective, Fowler (1977, p. 10) submits that "In the case of a work of prose fiction, we become conscious of an 'implied author' in command of the language, taking up stances in relation to the literary and ideological traditions within which the book is written, in relation to the content of the book (ideas, characters, narrator if any) and in relation to the implied readership." Following Fowler, in this paper, we view Darko as the 'implied author' of *Faceless*. There are two fundamental reasons why we hold this view. First, she is

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the one who has crafted the two mothers (Maa Tsuru and Kabria) by means of language, even if we are not unaware of the fact that she has allegorically done this via her anonymous heterodiegetic narrator (to borrow literary critics' terms). Second, she is the one who has deliberately made the two mothers live in two different or/and antagonistic social worlds wherein they experience and perceive social reality and respond to it in different ways. For these reasons, we contend that Darko alone or her literary ingenuity alone is responsible for every/any pattern of stylistic or/and ideological variation noticeable in the fiction in general and in the portrayal of the two mothers under study in particular.

Okyeso (2013, p. 121) clearly captures our contention when she avers that:
In *Faceless*, […], Darko sets herself a double task. She portrays with very little compassion the manner in which some mothers allow themselves to be burdened by discriminatory cultural, social, and even religious structures. The end result of such behavior is mothers' failure in the eyes of their daughters in whose judgment such mothers stand forever condemned. Darko's second task is to portray victorious mothers who apply foresight, courage, and reasoning in their determination to confront and overthrow those socially constructed norms and practices which undermine mothers' sense of self.

Brookman-Andoh *et al.* (2021) obviously seem to concur with Okyeso when they observe in (the reading of) the same fictional text the representation of women with regenerative potentials and those with destructive ones. In fact, they indicate that Maa Tsuru embodies the over-burdening of womanhood in the patriarchal society depicted in Darko's *Faceless* and, as a result, she is presented with anger, pity and as a disappointment to womanhood. They further note that Darko represents female characters like Naa Yomo and Kabria who, irrespective of their challenges, are able to carve out admirable identities for themselves and their children. In the same token, Nnyagu and Ozoh (2022) posit that it can be decoded from Darko's *Faceless* that motherhood is different from womanhood. In effect, these scholars reveal from their analysis that Maa Tsuru is a woman, not a mother, whereas Kabria is a mother, not a woman, suggesting thus that womanhood is determined by Nature but motherhood by role-performance or social action.

While it is obvious in the foregoing that Darko's literary language does represent two opposing categories of mothers: failed mothers and victorious mothers, women with regenerative potentials and women with destructive potentials or mothers and women, it should be noted that her polarized, binary or opposing representation of her characters (male and female alike) is not limited to or does not begin with *Faceless*, which, in actual fact, is her third novel. Scholars like Marfo *etal.* (2015), Koussouhon*et al.* (2015), Koussouhon*et al.*(2015a & b), Allagbé (2016), for example, have already unveiled this linguistic feature in her three other prose works entitled *Beyond the Horizon* (1995), *The Housemaid* (1998) and *Not Without Flowers* (2007). Marfo*etal.* (2015)critically examine *Beyond the Horizon* and *The Housemaid* and observe that Darko challenges the prevailing traditional views of motherhood. They report that she polarizes her characters (male and female alike) as both exploiters and exploited, suggesting the unfixed nature of gender. Likewise, Koussouhon*et al.* (2015) decode the context of ideology in *The Housemaid*. The analysis unveils the transitivity features ascribed to both male and female characters, indicating an ideology which underpins a symmetrical gender representation. This is to say, the writer depicts both male and female personae in a fairly realistic way; she upgrades and downgrades, empowers and disempowers them at will.Again, Koussouhon*et al.* (2015a) analyze how language (mood choices, to be precise) is used in the aforementioned novel to enact gender relations. The findings reveal that the gender relations in the fiction are not represented one-sidedly. They also exude that both male and female experiences are symmetrically portrayed.

Unlike the foregoing, Koussouhon*et al.* (2015b)explore how male characters are portrayed in all Darko's four novels:*Beyond the Horizon*, *The Housemaid*, *Faceless* and *NotWithoutFlowers*. The findings unveilthat men are depicted in *Beyond the Horizon* and *Faceless* as brutish, exploitative, eccentric, materialistic, lustful, greedy, deceitful, reckless and heartless whereas in *The Housemaid* and *Not Without Flowers*, they are represented as exploiters/exploited, predators/preys, independent/dependent individuals, responsible/irresponsible fathers, husbands or men, etc. In the same token, Allagbé (2016) investigates how Darko names or labels her male characters in theaforementioned four fictional texts, highlighting her attitudes, perceptions and biases vis-à-vis the characters. The analysis shows that Darko ascribes names or labels as well as roles that both upgrade and degrade the male image. As it appears from these studies, while these scholars evince how the linguistic feature of character opposition shapes our understanding of gender, they have largely failed to address its specific impact on the representation of motherhood in these novels.

In addition, extant literary-critical studies on *Faceless* have mainly investigated how gender issues are represented in the novel (Ofosu, 2013;Okyeso, 2013; Anate, 2014; Awitor, 2014; Ogbeide, 2015; Brookman-Andoh, *et al.*, 2021, Nnyagu & Ozoh, 2022, etc.). While these studies provide valuable insights into how gender shapes and is in turn shaped by social realities, they have paid little (not to say no) attention to the role language plays in the fictional text. In other words, none of these works has linguistically demonstrated how language is deployed to depict the female characters inthe fictionin general and the two mothers (Maa Tsuru and Kabria) in particular. The present study intends to fill in this gap. That is, it seeks to rigorously describe the language of the fiction to bring forth the linguistic features which actually evidence how these mothers are depicted in their social worlds. To achieve this goal, this paper intends to answer the following questions:

1. What linguistic features has Darko deployed to portray the two mothers (Maa Tsuru and Kabria) in *Faceless*?
2. To what extent are these mothers similar to or different from each other with regard to their social realities?

2. Theoretical Framework

As said earlier, this study draws its theoretical insights from stylistics. Stylistics is perceived as the interface between linguistics and literary criticism (Halliday, 1970; Fowler, 1967; 1977; 1986, Freeborn, 1996; Leech & Short, 2007; Simpson, 2004; Leech, 2013; Toolan, 2013; Mick, 2013, etc.). By definition, stylistics is the study of language in literature (Toolan, 2013, p. viii). For Wales (2011, p. 399), "Simply [put], **stylistics** is the study of style […]." Leech and Short (2007) define it as the linguistic study of style. It is also considered as the linguistic study of a literary text; concerning the writer's/speaker's/narrator's choice of words, verbal techniques (devices), motifs, tone, mode, etc. Concurring with the foregoing, Leech (2013, p. 54) states that "stylistics is the study of style; of how language use varies according to varying circumstances: e.g. circumstances of period, discourse situation or authorship." According to Simpson (2004, p. 2), "Stylistics is a method of textual interpretation in which primacy of place is assigned to *language*." Drawing on the foregoing, Short (2013, p. 5) posits that "Stylistics is […] concerned with relating linguistic facts (linguistic description) to meaning (interpretation) in as explicit a way as possible."

Freeborn (1996, p. 2) further elaborates on the foregoing and highlights the importance of an evidence-backed-up reading of a text. He then argues that this consists in evaluating the text's style by means of some objective criteria. Fowler (1967; 1977; 1986), in this way, submits that linguistics can provide a handful of objective techniques which can be used to study literature or language in literature or study style simply. For Fowler (1967, p. 15), "style [is] the property of all texts- not just literary- [and] may be said to reside in the variables of a language, or in the selection of optional or 'latent' features." This is to say, the structure of language offers its potential users with a certain number of choices in terms of sounds, vocabulary items and grammatical structures. In general linguistics, all these are considered as linguistic features. Moreover, Fowler (ibid.) argues that for/in any stylistic study, the analyst must have a theoretical prerequisite. S/he must assume, for instance, that there are both constant and variable features within a language as a whole. The constants are the rules of the language which make styles and dialects within one language possible. In this sense, a linguistic study of style should look out for how a writer/speaker/narrator manipulates linguistic resources (both constant and variable features) for aesthetic or stylistic effects.

In consonance with the foregoing, Leech posits that "The study of style is essentially the study of variation in the use of language." The term 'style' can be defined in several ways (Leech, 2013, p. 55). For Wales (2011, p. 397), "**style** refers to the perceived distinctive manner of expression." Leech and Short (2007, p. 9) define it as "the way in which language is used in a given context, by a given person, for a given purpose, and so on." It is obvious in what precedes that style is an end product which stems from the interaction between language and context. In this perspective, style can be argued to be a sociological variable and stylistics an integral part of sociolinguistics. To study the style of a given literary text, one needs a grammatical tool-kit or theoretical approach. The tool-kit or approach, as stylistic scholars strongly hold, is what provides the stylistic analyst with some objective criteria against the backdrop of which s/he evaluates or can evaluate style or language in literature. Following Fowler (1977), this paper seeks to use an eclectic approach which draws insights from Text Grammar (henceforth, TG), Transformational Generative Grammar (henceforth, TGG) and Systemic Functional Grammar (henceforth, SFG).

TG is a form of grammatical description informed by Text-linguistics mainly developed in Netherlands and Germany (Fowler, 1977, p. x). TG, by definition, is the study of texts above the level of the sentence. It shows how texts are put together so as to covey ideas, facts, messages and fiction (Wikimedia Foundation, n.d.). Underlying TG is the assumption that a text has an overall structure analogous to that of a single sentence. TGG is a form of grammatical description originated by Avram Noam Chomsky. It is a grammar which describes a language in terms of transformations applied to an underlying logical deep structure in order to generate the surface structure of sentences which can actually occur (Dictionary.com, n.d.). SFG is a form of grammatical description devised by

Michael A. K. Halliday. It ultimately seeks to identify the language-specific structures that contribute to the meaning of a text (Halliday & Webster, 2009, p. 7). SFG is a form of grammatical description informed by Systemic Functional Linguistics (henceforth, SFL) (Halliday, 1970; 1971; Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989; Halliday & Webster, 2009; Eggins, 2004; Fontaine, 2013, etc.). It is also a theory that considers language use as context-dependent (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989; Eggins, 2004). In addition, it is a theory that views and treats language as a social semiotic (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989; Eggins, 2004; Fontaine, 2013). That is, it views and treats language as a system of signs from which people make or can make choices (Halliday & Webster, 2009).

These three grammatical models are actually reconciled in this study under the unified umbrella of literary stylistics, serving as a rigorous toolkit for decoding meaning in literary texts. Within stylistic framework, grammatical description is not merely an end in itself, but a systematic method to uncover a narrator's or an implied author's ideological choices and thematic structures. TG establishes the macrostylistic framework, allowing the researchers to evaluate the literary text as a cohesive communicative unit beyond individual clause or/and sentence boundaries. Within this global architecture, TGG provides the microstylistic tools required to decode the formal, internal syntax. It exposes how alterations from deep to surface structure—such as syntactic displacements or passive transformations—reflect psychological states, power imbalances or thematic distortions. Concurrently, SFG bridges grammar and literary interpretation by evaluating *why* the narrator or the implied author chooses specific syntactic forms from the language's meaning potential. The subsequent stylistic analysis focuses on the description of transitivity and thematic features deployed in two purposively selected texts from *Faceless* to encode ideational and textual meanings. By examining the ideational and textual metafunctions, SFG isolates the specific textual choices that construct character motivations and socio-political positions. Ultimately, stylistics synthesizes these models: TGG maps the internal mechanics, SFG explains the functional contextual selections, and TG manages the macro-cohesion of the literary narrative.Having sketched the theoretical framework, let us now outline the methodology this study applies.

3. Methodology

This paper purposively selected two texts from Darko's*Faceless* that mark the initial narrative representation of the two central maternal figures: MaaTsuru and Kabria. By focusing on these specific passages, the study captures the precise moments these mothers are first introduced within their respective social worlds. The rationale for isolating these entry points rests on the principles of linguistic priming and comparative baseline integrity. In qualitative stylistic characterization, a narrator's or an implied author's initial description of a character generally acts as a foundational semiotic anchor that shapes the reader's cognitive representation of that figure. Establishing this controlled structural baseline ensured that the comparative application of TG and SFG captures the unadulterated, primary ideological profiles and transitivity patterns assigned to each mother.Specifically, it isolated how the text-producer linguistically marks the stark dichotomy between MaaTsuru's marginalized, fatalistic mother-figure and Kabria's agency-driven, middle-class motherhood profile at the exact moment of narrative inception, before these identities are modified or corrupted by subsequent plot developments.

Building upon the foregoing premises, the whole text serves as the primary unit of stylistic analysis.This approach aligns with Fowler (1967, p. 20), who maintains that "the primary unit for stylistic description is a whole text seen as a unit, not as a string of sentences." Similarly, Halliday (1970, p. 58) emphasizes that "[...] the only ultimate valid unit for textual analysis is the [...] text." Accordingly, the initial analytical step involved describing and quantifying the linguistic features within the selected extracts using the eclectic framework outlined above. Operationally, each text was segmented into clause complexes and clauses, which were sequentially numbered to systematically identify transitivity and thematic patterns. Following this quantitative mapping, the identified features were analyzed qualitatively to evaluate how the narrator or the implied author constructs the two maternal figures. These findings were discussed comparatively to highlight the stylistic and ideological divergences intrinsically encoded within the fiction, adhering strictly to the coding scheme detailed below.

Key:

Transitivity: P=Process (in bold), Pm=material, Pme=mental, Pb=behavioral, Pv=verbal, Pe=existential, Pi=intensive, Pcc=circumstantial, Pp=possessive, Pc=causative. A=Actor, G=Goal, B=Beneficiary, R=Range S=Senser, Ph=Phenomenon. Sy=Sayer, Rv=Receiver, Vb=Verbiage. Be=Behaver, Bh=Behavior. X=Existent. T=Token, V=Value, Cr=Carrier, At=Attribute. Pr=Possessor, Pd=Possessed. C=Circumstance, Cl=location, Cx=extent, Cm=manner, Cc=cause, Ca=accompaniment, Ct=matter, Co=role. Ag=Agent.

Theme: Marked/Thematized/Foregrounded circumstance is underlined. Conjunctive Theme is italicized. Dependent clause as Theme: whole clause in bold. Mn = Minor clause.

4. Analysis of Stylistic Features in the Selected Texts

The subsequent stylistic analysis begins with Text 1.

Text 1 (Darko, 2003, p. 18)

1. In the midst of angry mothers and screaming children and bleating goats and sheep(Cl), Maa Tsuru (T)**looked like** (**Pi**) a soul drowned in torpidity **(**V**).** 2i. The baby in her arm (Cr) **didn't seem** (**Pi**) 2ii. **to even impact** (**Pm**) her oblivion (G). 3i. *And* but for the sounds (which (A) **were coming out** (**Pm**)) (**A**) from the child's throat (Cl), 3ii. her world (Cr)**was** (**Pi**) dead (At). 4i. Her life (T)**was** (**Pi**) one (V) 4ii. (that (G)**was**) **dissolved** (**Pm**) in absolute lethargy (Cl). 5i. Odarley (Be) **smiled** (**Pb**) sadly (Cm); 5ii. *then* even that sad smile (A) **waned** (**Pm**) 5iii. *when* she (S)**noticed** (**Pme**) the desperate scramble of one tiny hand to ferret for something almost non-existent in Maa Tsuru's bosom (Ph). 6. The weak grab of the loose and hanging breast (Mn). 7i. The searching mouth in the tiny lean face, the voracious draw on the tired wrinkled nipple, the spurt of energy from the enervated body that (T) **was** (**Pi**) clearly the anger of a little hungry child (V), 7ii. *and* Odarley (S) **knew** (**Pme**) 7iii. *that* the gurgling of Fofo's half brother (T) **was** (**Pi**) one of anguish (**V**). 8i. In process (Cl), **was** (**Pi**) the nurturing of another prospective soul into the devouring jaws of the street (Cr), 8ii. a life (**G**) (that **was**) **brought forth** (**Pm**) for the sake of bringing forth (Cm), 8iii. a hungry mouth (G) (that **was**) **created** (**Pm**) not out of want (Cm).

The linguistic or stylistic features identified in Text 1 are tabulated below.

Text 1: Distribution of linguistic features in Text 1.

Type	**Frequency**
Major clause	16
Minor clause	1
Marked Theme	2
Dependent clause as Theme	-
Conjunctive Themes	5
Clause complex	4
Clause simplex	3
Minor clause	1
Material	6
Relational	7
Mental	2
Behavioral	1
Verbal	-
Existential	-

As Table 1shows, Text 1 comprises a total number of seventeen ranking clauses. Sixteen of these clauses (1; 2i; 2ii; 3i; 3ii; 4i; 4ii; 5i; 5ii; 5iii; 7i; 7ii; 7iii; 8i; 8ii and 8iii) are major clauses (i.e., 94.11%). This indicates a written mode. The remainder (6) is a minor clause (i.e., 05.88%). This exudes a spoken mode. The narrator has structurally packaged these clauses to form eight clause complexes or sentences. She has used some conjunctive themes for this purpose. The conjunctive themes in this extract are five in total: *And*(3); *then*(5ii); *when*(5iii); *and*(7ii) and *that* (7iii). As the analysis displays, four of these conjunctive items establish a paratactic relation (3i; 5ii; 7i and 7iii) and the remainder (5ii) a hypotactic relation. What this makes clear is that the narrator has planned the rhetorical organization of the text. She has also employed pronouns or referring items, repetitions, tense consistency and grammatical constructions for the same purpose. All these will be unfolded in the subsequent paragraphs. Another striking feature in this text is that three (1; 2 and 4) of the identified sentences therein areclause simplexes(i.e., 37.5%). This shows once again a written mode. Four (3; 5; 7 and 8) of the identified sentences are clause complexes (i.e., 50%) and one (i.e., 12.5%) (6) a minor clause. This indicates once more the suspected spoken mode in the text.

Quite surprisingly, all the clauses in Text 1 but one (6) have a process or a verb. The processes in the clauses are 'looked like' (1); 'didn't seem' (2i); 'to even impact' (2ii); '(were coming out)' (3i); 'was' (3ii); 'was' (4i); 'was dissolved' (4ii); 'smiled' (5i); 'waned' (5ii); 'noticed' (5iii); 'was' (7i); 'knew' (7ii); 'was' (7iii); 'was' (8i); '(was)

brought' (8ii) and '(was) created' (8iii). Seven of these processes (1; 2i; 3ii; 4i; 7i; 7iii and 8i) are relational (i.e., 43.75%), six (2ii; 3i; 4ii; 5ii; 8ii and 8iii) material (i.e., 37.5%), two (5iii and 7ii) mental (i.e., 12.5%) and one (5i) behavioral (i.e., 06.25%). As the analysis exudes, verbal and existential process-types are absent from the text.This suggests that the extract is not focused on the act of saying and stating that something exists. Relational processes (43.75%) are the most predominant process-type the narrator has used to craft this passage. This implies thus that Text 1 is more concerned with defining and describing participants than their actions. The next striking feature is that none of the identified material processes is realized by Maa Tsuru. This is to say, she is portrayed as someone who does not act or does not act on someone or something in the text.

Again, three of the material processes ('was dissolved' (4ii); '(was) brought forth' (8ii) and '(was) created' (8iii) are passivized. In the first passivized clause (4ii.) '(that (Maa Tsuru's life) (G)**was**) **dissolved** (**Pm**) in absolute lethargy (Cl)', the narrator has deliberately deleted or de-emphasized the agent responsible for the action or she has emphasized the goal simply. In other words, she has deliberately transformed the structure of the clause to conceal from the reader the sociological forces responsible for Maa Tsuru's miserable life or/and situation. This construction, in critical discourse analysts' terminology, is called *agentless passive* (Fairclough, 1989, p. 125) or *passive agent deletion* (van Leeuwen in Caldas-Coulthard & Coulthard, 1996, p. 39). Likewise, in the two other passivized clauses (8ii) and (8iii), she has intentionally backgrounded the agents responsible for the actions '(was) brought forth' and '(was) created' in that order. From the narrator's recursive use of this pattern, one can simply infer that she consciously intends to keep the reader inquisitive all through the reading process. She expects the reader to cognitively get involved with the text in order to work out the un-given or de-emphasized/backgrounded elements therein.

In addition, Text 1 comprises clauses/sentences which are patterned following the Subject-Verb-Object (SVO) word order mainly. But two clauses/sentences (1) and (8i) strikingly stand out here in that they follow the Adjunct-Subject-Verb(-Object) (ASV[O]) word order. Simply put, in these clauses, the narrator has placed circumstances in Thematic position: 'In the midst of angry mothers and screaming children and bleating goats and sheep' (1) and 'In process' (8i). According to Thompson (2004, p. 109 cited in Fontaine, 2013, p. 79), circumstances "encode the background against which the process takes place." And when circumstances are placed in Thematic position, they become marked/foregrounded (Eggins, 2004). As Eggins (2004, p. 339) notes, the use of marked/foregrounded Themes shows "one realization of a careful written mode, in which the writer [or speaker/narrator] has planned the rhetorical development of the text to allow the foregrounding of Circumstantial information." The two identified marked themes in this extract surprisingly encode an experiential meaning related to an ongoing process therein.

This analysis further figures out the field of Text 1. This text narrates or describes Maa Tsuru's severe and heart-rending miserable life or/and situation. In point of fact, the syntax of the passage heavily foregrounds Maa Tsuru's inaction or passivity in her social world. For instance, metaphorical expressions like 'a soul drowned in torpidity' (1) and 'one dissolved in absolute lethargy' (4ii) exude Maa Tsuru's powerlessness or lack of ability to act on her miserable life or/and situation and statis or lack of volition to move or change position. One other striking linguistic feature about the syntax of Text 1 is that it ponderously foregrounds the consequences of Maa Tsuru's inaction or passivity. As said earlier, this text comprises eight clause complexes or sentences in total. Apart from the first sentence which thematically sets the scene into Maa Tsuru's social world, the rest are used to highlight the impact of her inaction on herself and her children. Noun phrases like 'the desperate scramble of one tiny hand to ferret for something almost non-existent in Maa Tsuru's bosom' (5iii), 'The weak grab of the loose and hanging breast' (6), 'The searching mouth in the tiny lean face, the voracious draw on the tired wrinkled nipple . . .' (7i) prove this claim. It must be noted that the length of the aforementioned foregrounded phrases denotes a relatively high grammatical intricacy characteristic of written language. These phrases taken out of context will surely mean nothing to the reader. In other words, these phrases are indexical of a given context (and their meaning strongly depends on that context), and thus they are culture-specific in nature. The above-mentioned phrases are actually transformed versions of full-length clauses. This clearly denotes the narrator's intentional ''shift from the clausal to the nominal construal of experience'' (Webster in Halliday & Webster, 2009, p. 4). Consider clause (6): 'The weak grab of the loose and hanging breast', for instance. It is process-less, isn't it? Of course, it is! This process-less clause has been intentionally transformed by the narrator into a noun phrase for an emphatic purpose. This emphatic transformed version contrasts with the less emphatic untransformed version: 'Maa Tsuru's baby weakly grabbed her loose and hanging breast'. Consider (5iii): 'the desperate scramble of one tiny hand to ferret for something almost non-existent in Maa Tsuru's bosom' and (7i): 'The searching mouth in the tiny lean face, the voracious draw on the tired wrinkled nipple . . .' too. As it appears, these phrases have undergone the same transformational process as (6). In (5iii) and (7i), the emphatic transformed noun phrases 'the desperate scramble of one tiny hand to ferret for

something almost non-existent in Maa Tsuru's bosom' and 'The searching mouth in the tiny lean face, the voracious draw on the tired wrinkled nipple . . .' differ strikingly from the less emphatic untransformed versions: 'one tiny hand was desperately scrambling to ferret for something almost non-existent in Maa Tsuru's bosom' and 'The mouth in the tiny lean face was searching for and drawing voraciously on the tired wrinkled nipple. . .' Having presented and discussed the linguistic/stylistic features in Text 1, let us now move on to Text 2 wherein the second mother, Kabria is represented.

Text 2 (Darko, 2003, pp. 30-31)

1. Kabria's household (Cr) **was** (**Pi**) up to the neck (At) in its routine Monday morning chaos (Cl). 2i. She (A) **was up** (**Pm**) with the crows (Cm) 2ii. *and still***running around** (**Pm**). 3i. Obea (A), (when she (A) **got up** (**Pm**)), **came** (**Pm**) first into the living room (Cl) 3ii. **to switch on** (**Pm**) the radio (G). 4i. She (A) **put** (**Pm**) the dial (**G**) on Harvest FM (Cl), 4ii. **went back** (**Pm**) into the room (Cl) 4iii. **to make** (**Pm**) her bed (G), 4iv. **swept** (**Pm**) the veranda (G), 4v. **brushed** (**Pm**) her teeth (G), 4vi. *and* for whatever odd reason (Cc), **chose to keep** (**Pm**) the toothbrush (G) in her mouth (Cl) 4vii. *throughout***laying** (**Pm**) the breakfast table (G). 5i. Kabria (S) **decided** (**Pme**) 5ii. **to let** (**Pc**) that (T) **remain** (**Pi**) Obea's problem (V). 6i. ***If* she (S) wanted (Pme) 6ii. to have (Pi) her toothbrush for breakfast (Pd)**, 6iii. (it (Cr) **would be** (**Pi**)) fine (**At**). 7i. Adade (T) **was** (**Pi**) in the bedroom (**Cl**) 7ii. **listening to** (**Pb**) something (**Ph**) on another FM station on the bedside radio (**Cl**). 8. *And* Abena (A), the househelp, **was tidying up** (**Pm**) the kitchen (G). 9. She (A) **had to hurry up to go** (**Pm**) to her apprentice dressmaking job (Cl). 10. Kabria (A) **prepared** (**Pm**) Essie and Ottu's lunchboxes (G). 11. Harvest FM (S) **was reviewing** (**Pme**) the morning newspapers (Ph). 12. Kofi Annan's name (Cr) **kept** (**Pi**) cropping up (At). 13i. Kabria (S) **wondered** (**Pme**) 13ii. how many people in other parts of the world (S) **had heard of** (**Pme**) Ghana (Ph) 13iii. *before* Annan's appointment as the first black African (Cm) 13iv. **to head** (**Pm**) the United Nations (G). 14i. Ottu (T), (who (A) **should have been up** (**Pm**) // and **brushing** (**Pm**) his teeth (G)), **was** (**Pi**) still in his room (Cl), 14ii. which (Cr) **adjoined** (**Pi**) Kabria's and Adade's (Cl). 15. ''Ottu!''(Rv) Kabria (Sy) **called** (**Pv**). 16. (There **was** (**Pe**) No response (X). 17i. *But* Kabria (A) **could bet** (**Pm**) her teeth (G) 17ii. *that* Ottu (S) **had heard** (**Pme**) her (Ph) all right (Cm). 18. Essie (A) **was polishing** (**Pm**) shoes (G) on the porch (Cl). 19. Kabria (Sy) **called** (**Pv**) her (Rv). 20. *But* Kabria calling her right after calling Ottu (Ag), (who (Sy) **did not respond** (**Pv**)), **made** (**Pc**) Essie (S) **suspect** (**Pme**) (what (A) **was coming** (**Pm**): that she (G) **was going to be sent** (**Pm**) // **to call** (**Pv**) Ottu (Rv)) (Ph). 21i. *And* Essie (S) **did not want** (**Pme**) 21ii. **to perform** (**Pm**) a task (G) like that (Cm) on a Monday morning (Cl), 21iii. **knowing** (**Pme**) (what (A) **would ensue** (**Pm**); a squabble, and many times, a battle of nerves) (Ph). 22i. *So* why **go** (**Pm**) 22ii. *and***call** (**Pv**) Ottu (Rv) in the room (Cl) 22iii. *when* she (A) **could just as effectively deal with** (**Pm**) the matter (G) 22iv. *without***moving an inch** (**Pm**)? 23i. She (A) **took matters into her hands** (**Pm**), 23ii. **grumbled** (**Pv**), 23iii. **inhaled** (**Pb**) air (Bh) like an albatross (Cm), 23iv. *and***howled** (**Pv**), ''Ottuuuu . . .!'' (Rv) (at a pitch (Cm) that (A) **could have woken up** (**Pm**) the dead (G) in the Arctic (Cl)) (Cm). 24i. It (T) **was** (**Pi**) Adade (V) 24ii. who (A) **reacted to** (**Pm**) the madness (G). 25i. *And* in the typical Ghanaian father's fashion (Cl), the culprit's mother (Rv) **is queried** (**Pv**) 25ii. *instead of* (**querying** (**Pv**)) the culprit (G). 26i. ''Kabria,'' (Rv) he (Sy) **yelled** (**Pv**) 26ii. *as* he (A) **poked** (**Pm**) his head (G) through the bathroom door (Cm), 26iii. ''**can** you (Sy) **tell** (**Pv**) your daughter (Rv) 26iv. *that* the sun (Cr) **is** (**Pi**) still not fully up (At)? 27. Why **do** you (**A**) **let** (**Pc**) her (G) **scream** (**Pv**) like that (Cm)?'' 28. *And then* he (A) **retreated** (**Pm**) into the room (Cl).

The linguistic or stylistic features identified in Text 2 are displayed in the table below.

Text 2: Distribution of linguistic features in Text 2.

Type	Frequency
Major clause	61
Minor clause	-
Marked Theme	1
Dependent clause as Theme	1
Conjunctive Themes	19
Clause complex	28
Clause simplex	61
Minor clause	-
Material	29
Relational	10
Mental	9

Behavioral	2
Verbal	10
Existential	1

Table 2 unveils that the second textinvolves all in all sixty-one ranking clauses (embedded clauses are not included in the count). The narrator has structurally clustered these clauses together to form twenty-eight clause complexes or sentences. She has used conjunctive themes to do this. The identified conjunctive themes in this text are nineteen all in all: *and still* (2ii); *and* (4vi); *throughout* (4vii); *If* (6i); *And* (8); *before* (13iii); *But* (17i); *that* (17ii); *But* (20); *And* (21i); *So* (22i); *when* (22iii); *without* (22iv); *and* (23iv); *And* (25i); *instead of* (25ii); *as* (26ii); *that* (26iv) and *And then* (28). While twelve of these themes (2ii; 4vi; 8; 17i; 17ii; 20; 21i; 22i; 23iv; 25i; 26iv and 28) are deployed to encode a paratactic relation, the remainder; we mean seven themes (4vii; 6i; 13iii; 22iii; 22iv; 25ii and 26ii) are employed to realize a hypotactic relation. This denotes that the narrator has planned the rhetorical organization of the text. She has also drawn on pronouns or referring items, repetitions, tense consistency and grammatical constructions to package the clauses into sentences.

As the study also reveals, this text surprisingly comprises the six process-types propounded by systemic linguists (Halliday, 1971; Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989; Halliday & Webster, 2009; Eggins, 2004; Fontaine, 2013, etc.). However, these process-types exist in varying proportions in the text. There are twenty-nine (i.e., 47.54%) material processes: 'was up' (2i); 'running around' (2ii); 'came' (3i); 'to switch on' (3ii); 'put' (4i); 'went back' (4ii); 'to make' (4iii); 'swept' (4iv); 'brushed' (4v); 'chose to keep' (4vi); 'laying' (4vii); 'to let' (5ii); 'was tidying up' (8); 'had to hurry to go' (9); 'prepared' (10); '(was appointed)' (13iii); 'to head' (13iv); 'could bet' (17i); 'was polishing' (18); 'made' (20); 'to perform' (21ii); 'go' (22i); 'could just as effectively deal with' (22iii); 'movingan inch' (22iv); 'took matters in her hands' (23i); 'reacted to' (24ii); 'poked' (26ii); 'do . . . let' (27) and 'retreated' (28), nine (i.e., 14.75%) mental processes: 'decided' (5i); 'wanted' (6i); 'was reviewing' (11); 'wondered' (13i); 'had heard of' (13ii); 'had heard' (17ii); 'suspect' (20ii); 'did not want' (21i) and 'knowing' (21iii), ten (i.e., 16.39%) verbal processes: 'called' (15); 'called' (19); 'call' (22ii); 'grumbled' (23ii); 'howled' (23iv); 'is queried' (25i); '(querying)' (25ii); 'yelled' (26i); 'can . . . tell' (26iii) and 'scream' (27ii), two (i.e., 03.27%) behavioral processes: 'listening to' (7ii) and 'inhaled' (23iii), one (i.e., 01.63%) existential process: '(was)' (16) and ten (i.e., 16.39%) relational processes: 'was' (1); 'remain' (5iii); 'to have' (6ii); '(would be)' (6iii); 'was' (7i); 'kept' (12); 'was' (14i); 'adjoined' (14ii); 'was' (24i) and 'is' (26iv) in this text. As it appears in the foregoing, the predominant process-type is material process (47.54%). This indicates thus that this extract is more concerned with describing the actions that participants perform than any other thing else. This contrasts with Text 1 wherein the foregrounded process-type is relational process (43.75%).

Unlike Text 1 wherein none of the identified material processes is realized by Maa Tsuru; i.e., wherein she is portrayed as someone who does not act or does not act on someone or something in her social world, Kabria uses verbs (see 'was up' (2i); 'running around' (2ii); 'prepared' (10), etc.) which encode action, movement, etc. This evinces that Kabria is depicted as someone who acts or acts on someone or something in her social world. In Text 1, three of the material clauses (4ii; 8ii and 8iii) have been passivized. This is to say, the agents therein have been de-emphasized or backgrounded. Surprisingly, these passivized clauses are directly or indirectly related to Maa Tsuru. In contrast, all the material processes but two (13iii and 25i) identified in Text 2 are passivized. However, only one of them (25i) has something to do with Kabria. In (13iii), for example, the narrator describes Koffi Annan. It is important to note that she has deliberately transformed this clause into a noun phrase for an emphatic purpose. The transformed version ''before Annan's appointment as the first black African'' actually contrasts with the less untransformed version ''before Annan was appointed as the first black African''. Also, in (25i), the narrator has used the passive construction for an emphatic purpose. The transformed version 'And in the Ghanaian father's fashion, the culprit's mother is queried instead of the culprit.' differs strikingly from the less untransformed version 'And in the Ghanaian father's fashion, he (Adade) queries the culprit's mother instead of the culprit.'

Again, the narrator has intentionally placed a circumstance in Thematic position in (25i): 'And in the Ghanaian father's fashion, the culprit's mother is queried instead of the culprit.' The use of this linguistic feature indicates "one realization of a careful written mode, in which the writer [or speaker/narrator] has planned the rhetorical development of the text to allow the foregrounding of Circumstantial information" (Eggins, 2004, p. 339). Furthermore, the narrator has used phonological schemes (alliteration and assonance) in (25i). In this clause, she has used the voiceless labio-dental fricative phoneme /f/ twice to form an alliterative pattern. As Fowler (1967, p. 16)notes, in a text, the phoneme /f/ can be distributed rarely and haphazardly. This clearly points out the narrator's painstaking choice of this pattern. She has deliberately chosen to use this pattern to scorn the very patriarchal

practice it evokes. Again in this clause, she has employed the low front spread phoneme /æ/ to form an assonantal pattern. In a nutshell, the use of the aforementioned phonological schemes produces musical or sound effects in the text. Allagbé and Allagbé's analysis (2017) of alliterative or/and assonantal patterns in *Purple Hibiscus* reveals that they are rhythmical, melodious and appealing to the ears. Moreover, they note that these patterns form what they term 'a rhythmical parallelism', which further enhances the parallelism of grammar in the novel. In the same token, Yeibo and Akerele's (2014) study of such phonic elements as alliteration, assonance and onomatopoeia in the same fiction exudes that phonic elements are a veritable part of the text's textual (or structural) organization.

Apart from the linguistic features mentioned above, one dependent clause as Theme (6) and one predicated theme (24) are identified in Text 2. The dependent clause as Theme in Text 2 is: '**If she wanted to have her toothbrush for breakfast**, (it would be) fine.' (Note that the subject and verb in the main clause are ellipsed, and that's why they are bracketed here). This dependent clause as Theme typographically contrasts with the unmarked version: '(It would be) fine if she wanted to have her toothbrush for breakfast.' The narrator's use of this linguistic device contributes to, as Eggins (2004, p. 339) rightly puts it, the neutralizing of the distinction between spoken and written language in the text. The predicated theme in this text is: 'It (**Theme**) was Adade (**Rheme**) who (**Theme**) reacted to the madness (**Rheme**).' This predicated version differs strikingly from the original one: 'Adade (**Theme**) reacted to the madness (**Rheme**)'. Theme predication, according to Eggins (ibid., p. 294) is a process whereby the Subject of the original clause is made Rheme in the predicated version. This process is used when the writer/speaker/narrator wishes to give emphasis to a constituent that would otherwise be unemphasized, while maintaining the "real" news, which is in the Rheme of the original clause.

As the analysis further indicates, the action verbs identified in Text 2 are distributed across the participants (animate and inanimate alike): (Kabria's household; Kabria; Adade; Obea; Abena; Harvest FM; Koffi Annan's name; how many people in other parts of the world; the first black African; Ottu's room; '(There)'; Ottu; Essie; Kabria's calling Ottu; what (that Kabria was going to send Essie to call Ottu); what (a squabble); It; the culprit's mother and the sun) that populate Kabria's social world. The animate participants, as the analysis reveals, outnumber the inanimate ones. What the foregoing suggests once again is that Kabria's social world is a place where people effectively interact with one another, acting or/and acting on one another or on objects around them. It is simply a social world marked by *active human presence* and *high affective involvement*. This representation differs strikingly from that of Text 1 in which Maa Tsuru is literally or/and metaphorically portrayed as 'a soul drowned in torpidity' (1) or as a '(life) dissolved in absolute lethargy' (4), for instance.

The above-mentioned portrayal also contrasts with that of Text 1 in the sense that it depicts some individuals (father (Adade); mother (Kabria); children (Obea; Essie and Ottu) and a househelp (Abena)) who form an ideal nuclear family and live together in a family house or household. Both parents obviously look like relatively successful workers and thus have the minimum wherewithal to cater for themselves and their children. Kabria actually stands out here in the way she runs her home, caring for and getting her children ready for school. Unfortunately, this is not the case with Maa Tsuru's social world. Maa Tsuru is, as a matter of fact, portrayed as an ostracized woman, who lives in a slum, without a regular or constant man/husband in her life, without four out of her six children (Baby T; Fofo and their two elder brothers, all born to and abandoned by Kwei, her first husband. The other two children/boys born to and abandoned by Nii Kpakpo, her second husband, live with her) who live on the streets, lacks the financial means to satisfy her basic needs and those of her children and is always (being) buried or capsized in/by her worries exacerbated by the tragic death of Baby T.

Conclusion

This article has analyzed how two mothers (Maa Tsuru and Kabria) are portrayed in Darko's *Faceless*. It has drawn its theoretical insights from stylistics informed by an eclectic grammatical approach and coupled with quantitative and qualitative methods to examine how the narrator's or the implied author's language depicts each mother in her social world. To reach this goal, it has purposively selected from the novel two texts wherein these mothers are represented for the first time in their social worlds and described them in consonance with the eclectic grammatical approach. This stylistic analysis has yielded some salient findings with regard to the portrayal of the two mothers. It has also unveiled the narrator's or implied author's verbal techniques.

In Text 1, for instance, the narrator has used such verbal techniques as foregrounding and backgrounding to portray Maa Tsuru in her social world. In fact, she has used these techniques alternately to portray her. First, she has foregrounded Maa Tsuru's inaction or passivity and its consequences on her and her children by means of linguistic choices (the predominant use of relational processes (43.75%), e.g. (1), etc.) and structural transformations

(nominalizations or what Halliday technically terms grammatical metaphors, e.g. (5), etc.) (Halliday & Webster, 2009). Again, she has used some metaphorical expressions (e.g. 'a soul drowned in torpidity' in (1), etc.) to further enhance and exaggerate Maa Tsuru's lack of power, volition, enthusiasm, etc., in the text. Second, she has backgrounded the sociological forces or social actors responsible for Maa Tsuru's miserable life or/and situation by means of transformation (deletion or de-emphasization, e.g. (3), etc.). Above it all, she has ponderously foregrounded a view that Maa Tsuru is as an ostracized woman. The cause of her ostracization is her (superstitious) belief in the supposed curse her dying mother has placed on her father and his entire offspring when she is giving birth to her. Another plausible and perhaps the key reason for this is male abuse and her lack of volition to rise up and effect change in her social world (Koussouhon*et al.*, 2015b).

In the same token, in Text 2, the narrator has employed both foregrounding and backgrounding to depict Kabria's household. Unlike in Text 1, in Text 2, the narrator has foregrounded *active human presence* and *high affective involvement* in Kabria's social world. In other words, she has represented Kabria's social world as a world rife with action, movement, volition, enthusiasm, etc. She has also foregrounded the character name 'Kabria' while backgrounding others including her husband's name. The pre-eminence of material processes (47.54%) and animate participants in the text actually proves all this observation. Again, she has foregrounded a view that Kabria has a relatively good home (a sort of an ideal family) with a relatively good or responsible husband, is a good and hard-working mother who takes good care of her children and copes with life far better than Maa Tsuru. The lexico-grammatical patterns inferred from the analysis corroborate this apprehension.

It follows from this stylistic analysis to note that the narrator has deliberately portrayed Maa Tsuru as a relatively 'weak/helpless/voiceless/unintelligent mother' and Kabria as a relatively 'strong/powerful/progressive/clever mother'. She has purposively depicted Maa Tsuru in this light to foreground the plight of women/mothers in traditional African (Ghanaian) patriarchal settings. Her portrayal of Kabria as a relatively 'strong/powerful/progressive/clever mother' ontologically or dialectically and teleologically suggests an alternative for the women/mothers in traditional African (Ghanaian) patriarchal settings. The narrator cogently expects these women/mothers to imitate the suggested alternative in order to free themselves from the shackles of ''male-dominance and its underlying traditional social structure called patriarchy or institutionalized sexism'' (Koussouhon *et al.*, 2015b, p. 314). Given this fact, one can establish here that the narrator, in her portrayal of the two mothers, shuttles between two ideological traditions or orientations. While her portrayal of Maa Tsuru denotes rabid "*sexism*" (Simpson, 1993, p. 147) or/and "*androcentrism"* (Coates 1986:15 cited in Simpson, 1993, p. 148), that of Kabria points to "*feminism*" (Lakoff, 1975) or/and "*womanism*" (Phillips, 2006).

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