

Pragma-phonological Analysis of Yoruba Proverbs in Agboola's Film – **O TO GEE**

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Abstract

African proverbs remain one of the cultural heritages of Africans; a product of human communication experiences through which philosophy and culture can be expressed, transmitted, and unraveled via the instrumentality of language. Most of the previous studies on proverbs examine written proverbs in literary texts which they analyse from linguistic and literary perspectives. The specific objectives of the study are to identify proverbs used in Agboola's film O To Gee, examine the phonological features in O To Gee with a view to discussing the conversational implications of the phonological features identified in the proverbs. The study employed qualitative research design, 20 out of 86 proverbs used in the films were purposively selected and analysed. The study drew its theoretical insights from Brazil's discourse intonation and Grice's Conversational Maxims. The study found that spoken proverbs are different from written ones in form, structure and features; certain features such as assimilation, elision, epenthesis, prominence, vowel lengthening and speaker's personal idiosyncrasies are noticeable in spoken proverbs which contribute to meaning making. The implication of this difference results in clarity, precision, emotionality, communication effect, assertiveness, context and cultural expressions and speaker versus listener statuses. The study concludes that the beauty and effectiveness of proverb usage are more expressed in their spoken forms and intended meaning appreciated by the interlocutor. It therefore recommends that attention should be given to the study of spoken of proverbs and that proverbs should be written the way they are said in order to retain their original messages.

Keywords: Pragma-phonology, Yoruba proverbs, O to Gee, Spoken Proverbs, discourse Intonation

Introduction

Pragmaphonology is an emerging interdisciplinary field of linguistic study which investigates the pragmatic meaning of a word or an intonational phrase through the instrumentality of suprasegmentals. It focuses on the role that phonological choices can play in conveying meaning. While establishing the pragmatic function of intonation, Wells (2006), rightly observes that English makes more elaborate use of intonation to signal meaning than do most other languages. Pragmaphonology as a field of study examines the interface between phonology

(especially prosodic features and discourse intonation features) and pragmatics in meaning making process. Following an overview of the prosodic–pragmatic interface and the cross-linguistic use of pitch as a cue for prominence, there emerged an interdisciplinary field of study that leads to a developed conceptual framework for the pragmatic–prosodic/intonation.

Literature Review

There is a general assumption that the prime function of prosody is expressive, i.e. to convey mainly emotions and attitudes rather than any referential meaning. In other words, prosody/intonation is a kind of paralinguistic overlay on an utterance whose referential meaning has already been identified by other means. However, Anne Wichmann and Diane Blakemore (2006) submit that prosody/intonation can also contribute to the identification of utterance meaning. This is in line with Brazil's approach called discourse intonation that allows a speaker to choose from available alternatives to express their semantic intentions (Brazil 1994) other words, the phonological choices play important roles in conveying meaning. The choice of a rise or fall, or the placement of a pitch accent, may be as important a cue to speaker meaning as its phonetic realization.

Zhao, Dehé, and Murphy (2018), in their study -pragmatic–prosodic mappings, observe that prosodic/intonation variations serve as a cue to pragmatic interpretations and instrumental to generating pragmatic implicatures. They explore further how prosodic variation via focus-marking acts as a pragmatic tool to create conversational implicatures. Inferential communication or meaning making process focuses not just on what is said but also on how it is said; they are both employed by the listener to interpret given information. Through prosodic variations, relevant distinctions are made and ambiguities that cannot be disambiguated by pragmatic are done by prosody.

Discourse intonation is employed by this study to interrogate how discourse intonation features serve as cue to bringing out embedded and implied meaning in Yoruba proverbs as used in Agboola's *O To Gee*. Discourse intonation is the study of intonation from the point of view of the user, its function in context and its communicative value. Discourse intonation approached English intonation as a well-defined set of prosodic features that the speaker can choose from for melody and meaning making (Gbadegesin, 2018; Raúl, 2015). Discourse intonation is concerned with how intonation enables the speakers to express what they wish and make their meanings and intentions clear to the listener(s) as well as to communicate the implied meanings (Brazil, 1994).

Gbadegesin (2018), rightly observes that to explore discourse intonation and for better understanding, there is need to include features such as voice quality, duration, fundamental frequency (F0), vowel lengthening, rhythm, paralinguistic, hesitation, prominence, conversational context and amplitude. Discourse intonation reflects the social and situational contexts of an utterance; in this way, it is so crucial to how a listener understands what is said as well as appreciates the proficiency of a speaker. It is employed to present major information in a way that is different from minor information. Discourse intonation also makes distinction between proposed or new information and referred or information both the speaker and the listener already know about.

Interface between Phonology and Pragmatics

Discourse intonation and pragmatics are closely interconnected and influence each other in the realm of language and communication. Discourse intonation refers to the melody, pitch patterns, and prosodic features employed in speech to convey meaning beyond the individual words or phrases. Pragmatics, on the other hand, deals with the study of language use in context, including how meaning is conveyed through social and situational factors. Discourse intonation is used to create conversational implicatures and direct speaker interpretation (Calhoun, 2007).

Discourse intonation plays a crucial role in conveying pragmatic meaning. By modulating pitch, stress, and rhythm, speakers can signal emphasis, sarcasm, irony, politeness, correction, encouragement, advice or other pragmatic intentions. Better communication can be achieved through the philosophical and convincing nature of proverbs in any discourse (Ayeni, 2012). Intonation patterns can influence how utterances are interpreted and the pragmatic implications they carry (Brazil, 1994; Jiang, 2011; Raúl, 2015; Gbadegesin, 2021).

Another area of convergence between pragmatics and discourse intonation is contextual adaptation. Discourse intonation is influenced by the communicative context and the pragmatic goals of the speaker. Speakers adjust their intonation patterns to accommodate the conversational context, the relationship between participants, and the desired pragmatic effect. This allows them to convey social cues, negotiate meaning, or express their intentions effectively. Turn-taking is very important in interaction; intonation patterns help regulate turn-taking and interaction in conversations. A speaker deploys vowel lengthening and rising tune when he has not finished what he is saying but desire the speaker echo the next word with him. Falling tune is deployed to signal the right time for the other person in a conversation to take the floor. Pragmatic cues conveyed through intonation can signal the end of a speaker's turn, facilitate smooth transitions between speakers, and indicate listener engagement or response. The pragmatic function of discourse intonation supports the cooperative nature of communication.

Implicature and inference are integral parts of pragmatics; discourse intonation contributes to the process of implicature and inference. The subtle variations in intonation patterns can indicate implied meanings or convey information beyond the literal interpretation of the words (Chapman, 2007). Listeners rely on intonation cues to make inferences about the speaker's intentions, attitudes, or implied messages. Discourse intonation is closely related to speech acts -declarative, assertive, expressive, directive (James-Idowus, 2022) and politeness. Rising or falling intonation, can signal different speech acts, such as questions, requests, or assertions (Gbadegesin, 2018; James-Idowu, 2022). Moreover, intonation choices can contribute to the realization of politeness strategies, conveying respect, deference, or mitigation. Grice sets four conversational maxims that describe how implicatures are derived. The four conversational maxims formulated: Maxim of Quantity, Maxim of Quality, Maxim of Relation: Relevance and Maxim of Manner (Grice, 1975).

Discourse intonation and pragmatics are intertwined in the way they contribute to meaning-making and effective communication. The use of intonation patterns enables speakers to express pragmatic intentions, adapt to contextual factors, facilitate interaction, convey implicatures, and perform speech acts. Intonational manipulation results in meaning change (Chun 2002). Understanding the relationship between discourse intonation and pragmatics

enhances our comprehension of the nuanced aspects of language use in social and communicative contexts. Discourse intonation and pragmatics have a strong relationship as they both play essential roles in conveying meaning and facilitating effective communication. According to Ibrahim and Faleke (2013), language is described as a development of purposeful behaviour, hence each statement is a product of action (speech acts) that are performed in order to have an effect on the listener.

This is the pragmatic aspect of discourse intonation.

Brazil (1994) discourse intonation system has prominence, tone, key and termination as phonological features or elements that allow a speaker to make suitable choice(s) to express his semantic intention. Gbadegesin, (2018) expanded the scope of the phonological features or elements present in an intonation phrase as follows:

Prominence: This is a process of achieving focus in speech by producing certain syllables or words more prominently than others.

Loudness: Loudness is the perceptual strength of sound pressure as perceived by the listener. It is the difference in pressure between high and low peaks of wave. Loudness is determined by the size of the oscillations of the vocal folds or what is otherwise known as amplitude of the vibrations.

Vowel Lengthening: Length is the perceived duration of a syllable or a phoneme in a rapidly connected speech by the listener. Vowel lengthening phonological phenomenon that refers to the process of making vowel sounds longer than they actually are.

Voice quality: These are the qualities that make one's voice different from another. Voice quality is defined by Trask (1996:381) as the characteristic auditory colouring of an individual's voice, derived from a variety of laryngeal and supralaryngeal features and running continuously through the individual's speech.

Tone Unit: It is also known as the stretch of language that carries the systematically-opposed features of intonation (Brazil, 1997).

Pause: Pause is used to indicate the end of a tone unit and the beginning of another. While minor pause occurs within the utterance of a speaker, major pause can occur within the utterance of a speaker or mark the end of the utterance. Its symbols are single slash (/) for minor pause and double slash (//) for major pause (//).

Hesitation: It can be voluntary or involuntary stoppage perceived in the utterance of a speaker. It can occur at any position –at the beginning of an utterance (false start), at the middle of an utterance (sound, silent or action filled) or at the end of the utterance (turn taking cue). There are five types of hesitation that can be identified in conversation –lexical, quasi-lexical, repetitive, silent and action-filled hesitation.

Paralinguistics: Paralinguistics can be a facial expressions, gestures or body language. It can be described in three ways: (a) it can be used along side with action complimented hesitation, (b) it can be facial disposition that is used to errald mood and (c) it can be body language that goes with emotionality, assertiveness, aggression and prominence in discoures intonation.

Assimilation: Assimilation in phonology refers to a process where a sound becomes similar or identical to a neighboring sound due to the influence of its phonetic environment. This process can occur at various levels, such as segmental assimilation, regressive assimilation, progressive assimilation, and vowel harmony. Assimilation plays a crucial role in shaping the pronunciation of words and contributes to the natural flow and ease of speech (Goldsmith, 1990).

Emotionality: Emotionality in speech refers to the expression of emotions through vocal cues, prosodic features, and speech patterns. It involves the use of intonation, rhythm, stress, and other acoustic elements to convey and communicate emotions. Emotionality in speech plays a crucial role in conveying the speaker's feelings, attitudes, and intentions to the listener, enhancing the richness and depth of interpersonal communication.

James-Idowu, (2022) observes that proverbs constitute a significant part of any language and culture. James-Idowu (2021) explains that proverbs comprised everyday experiences as well as common observations in a concise and formulaic language; hence they are easily remembered and used. Hoshan, (2021) describes proverbs as sentences of the folk whose constituents are wisdom, truth, morals, and traditional views and are often memorable as they are handed down from one generation to another. Proverbs are defined as expressions that have their source from the people and they are fundamentally true; often short with literary meanings and a sign of antiquity. Proverbs are considered as oral compositions that have their origin in tradition and point to the individuality, domesticity, and collectivity of the patterns of life from which they have been derived (Akinmade, 2012). Proverbs express the philosophical and socio-cultural value system of the people and society where they are derived from.

In the Yoruba society, the use of proverbs is reserved for the elders as they are considered the custodians of wisdom James-Idowu, (2021). Proverbs are coined by individuals based on their level of experience. This explains why it is believed that a proverb is the will of one and the wisdom of many (Hoshan, 2021). Didacticism, figurative and political elements are emphasized as important components to be included in the definition of proverbs, while truthfulness; time, structure, and figurativeness are also recommended by Hoshan, 2021. In general, three elements constitute the definition of a proverb - truthfulness, specific observation of everyday experience, and traditionality.

One of the key functions of proverbs is that they are impersonal means for personal communication, thus when a proverb is cited and the message passed across, the speaker shifts the responsibility to the anonymous originator of the proverbs. The addressee is aware that the proverb has originated from an elder in the past, rather than the adult speaker who just utters it. The proverb passes across a message which only comes through an instrument - the adult speaker (Akinyemi, 2020). Proverbs are used in conversations or social discourse to smooth out difficulties and add pith to the discourse. Proverbs are brought into conversations at the point of taking decisions to influence the final decision. Thompson elaborates on the power that proverbs can bring into speech when he notes that proverbs are very important to preliterate people because when words cannot be read, they can be heard. Moreover, the stream of words that proceed out the mouth comes with pleasure, aside from the specific message of the words. That which is suggested here is the joy that the audiences experience when they hear or listen to a verbalised poem (Mutalabi, 2019). Proverbs are used for commenting and persuading. Proverbs can be said to constitute a persuasive technique, because of their indirect

and expressive nature. In other words, users of proverbs may deliberately use them to drive home their messages and convince the hearers to agree with their ideas. In addition, a speaker may make use of a proverb if they want to pass across a message in a way that its implication can be denied later. They may also desire to use proverbs to exclude some members of their audience from understanding their point.

Proverbs serve as a means of stereotyped sarcasm, ridicule, and mockery. This explains why Finnegan notes that a satirical comment can be made in a form of a proverb and used to warn or advise or bring people to their senses (Bells, 2020). Proverbs constitute a part of games and entertainment. (Ukaegbu, 2021). Proverbs may contain features of humour. Proverbs can be used to iron out social frictions and discontent (Akinmade, 2012; Zajac, 2019). African proverbs contain philosophical insight. Proverbs perform an educational function. Other functions of proverbs include mocking, and jubilating/celebrating. Proverbs are used to warn people against engaging in any form of social vices. They may also be used as a means to advise people. Proverbs could be deployed to query, dare, or mock. During celebrations, proverbs play a key role as a tool for jubilating. The Yoruba language is rich in proverbs that are funny, and profoundly philosophical; they are efficient in placing contemporary incidents within the continuum of tribal tradition to ultimately unravel the pragmatic content of their proverb within their socio-cultural landscape.

The study employed qualitative research design for content analysis of selected proverbs in Agboola's "*O To Gee*". 20 out of 86 proverbs used in the films were purposively selected and analysed. The study drew its theoretical insights from Brazil's discourse intonation and Grice's Conversational Maxims. Since the interface between pragmatics and phonology is more prominent in the area of suprasegments (especially discourse intonation) the study adopts phonological features of discourse intonation to analyse meaning making processes.

The study is set out to answer the following research questions:

- i. What are the proverbs used in *O TO GEE*?
- ii. How do the discourse phonological features deployed in the proverbs in *O TO GEE* contribute to meaning making?
- iii. What are the implications of the phonological features used in the proverbs?

Proverbs in *O TO GEE*

There are about 86 proverbs used in the Agboola's Film – *O To Gee*, the following 20 are analysed in this study.

1. Nígbatí onílù ti pa lù, kí lonjó re ndúró se lójú agbo?
2. Je ká pe were lökö 'yàwó kó le je ká rona lö.
3. Ko si bati sefo ebolo ti o run gbe.
4. O d'igbeyìn k'ó tó d' olóku àdá.
5. Ki lanfani orogbo tapa ti o lawe, (ehn) a tun je o tun koro?
6. Kàkà kó sànn fún yá je, ó fi gbogbo ömö bí obìnrin.
7. K'a see laja ti o so nu uu ti o ni gbooo fere olode
8. Sebi won ní'ku tio p'ode, inu apo lowaiku tio pa'gbe nko, (o wa lo'run ebe) orun ebe lo waaa

9. Ojo sese bere sii ro won ni ko to t'ana, sebi won o ba je o da n
10. Nígba t'alára l'ara ò ro un, èwo l'ò kú àìsùn, o kú àìwo tì'e?
11. Nigba onlu ti palu, ki l'oyo re ndu'ò se loju agbo?
12. K'adupe lowo enit'ò wo to moni loju opo eeyan ni o ti'e wo 'bi t'a wa.
13. Eni taa se lore to dupe/, /bi olosa koni l'eru lo ni//
14. Gbogbo b'isu se ku bobbe se bee l'awon oloye ti je ko ye mi.
15. Kaka keku ma je sese, yo yafi sawadanu ni.
16. Omo to bani iya oun o ni sun, oun na o ni fo ju borun.
17. Ewu nbe lok longe, longe funrare ewu ni
18. Kádúpe lowo eni t'ò wo ni tó m̀ni lójú, èniyàn ni ò tie, wo ibi t'awà.
19. Tó bá koju sio ta, toba koyin sio ta, to ba ku iwö nikan kó o tún èrò ara pa.
20. Eni tí wön wo lá wò sòkún tó n wo ara re lówò rerín.

Analysis of Phonological Features in Spoken Proverbs in Agboola's *O To Gee*

Prominence

Prominence is deployed in many of the proverbs to show emphasis and to foreground some given information. Fig. 1 below shows that there is prominence of the last word. It was pronounced louder than the rest words. It is observed also in the spectrograph that the statement ends with rising tune instead of falling tune. Pragmatically, it is meant to hold the conversation floor still and to draw attention to the importance of what is coming next. This is because the king has not finished what he was saying, he intends to continue talk. The rising tune does not allow any of the chiefs to cut in. This feature is also observed in the proverb made by Eniade when he visited the king's palace – eni taa se lore to dupe, bi olosa koni l'eru lo ni. This major pause supposed to end with falling tune but it ended with rising tune because Eniade intends to continue speaking after the pause.

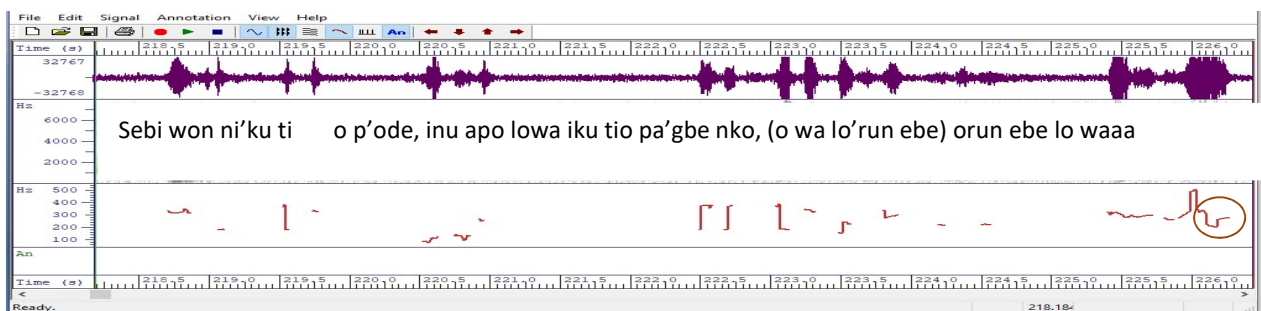


Fig 1

Another example of prominence is seen in Fig. 2 where *ki*, *tun* and *koro* were made more prominent than other words.

Hesitation

It also shows the presence of hesitation which is common in spoken discourse.

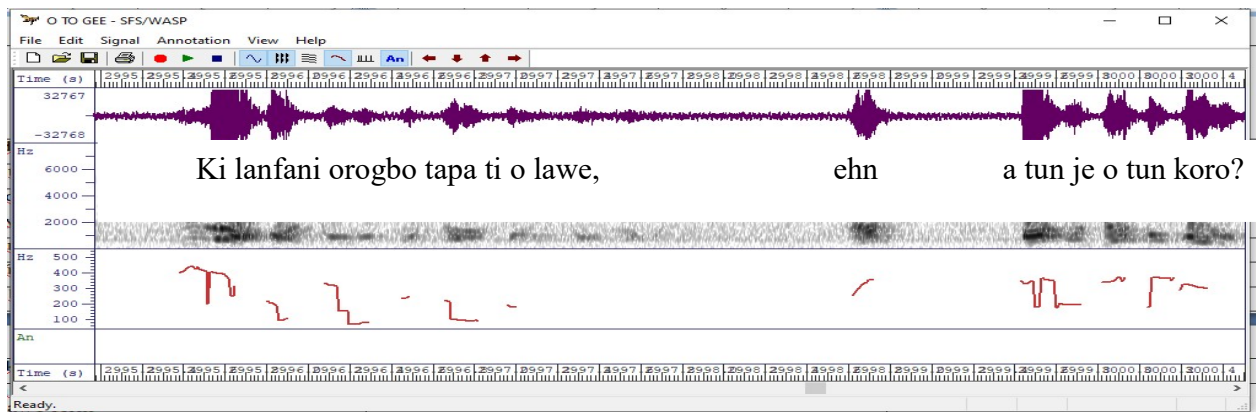


Fig2

Conversation

Proverbs always have two parts; the speaker reserves the right in spoken form to determine how to end it. The speaker can initiate the proverb while the listener completes it. There are three types of this phenomenon found in the proverbs used in the movie *-O To Gee*

- The speaker initiates and completes the proverb while others only listen. This is the category many of the proverbs fall into.
- The speaker initiates the proverb, the listener completes it. Example of this is:

Eniagba: K'adupe lowo enit'o wo to moni loju.

Olutunu: opo eeyan ni o ti'e wo 'bi t'a wa.

- The Speaker initiates and both the speaker and the listener(s) complete the second part. Example Àjà tí yòò sònù, kò ní gbo fèrè olòde.

Aladeaye: Aja ti o sonu

The Chiefs: kò ní gbo fèrè òde.

- The speaker initiates the proverb, the listener(s) complete(s) it and the speaker still goes ahead to complete the proverb in his own peculiar way. Example:

Aladeaye: Sebi won ni'ku tio p'ode, inu apo lowa iku tio pa'gbe nko.

The Chiefs: o wa lo'run ebe.

Aladeaye: orun ebe lo waaa

The speaker did this intentionally, not because the chiefs were wrong but because he wanted to make the end more prominent in order to link the proverb to his next line Iku ti o p'enide, owo emi kiniyi lowa. (What will kill Enide is in my own hand). There are three peculiarities in the way Aladeaye ended the proverb (i) prominence (ii) vowel lengthening and (iii) end the proverb that should end with fall tune in a rising tune,

Assimilation

Another very frequently used phonological process in Yoruba spoken proverbs is assimilation. There are different types of assimilation as observed in *O To Gee*:

Consonantal Assimilation: Consonantal assimilation occurs when a consonant assimilates a similar consonant in a connected speech.

The similarity may be the same sound, the same place of articulation or the same manner of articulation. For example

Spoken: K'adupe l'owo enit'o wo to moni loju

Written: Ki a dupe ni owo eniti o wo eni ti o mo ni ni oju

The phonological process that produced assimilation takes place in the place of articulation. Both /n/ and /l/ are alveolar sounds, ...*ni owo* becomes *lowo* while *ni oju* becomes *loju*

Vocalic Assimilation: Vocalic assimilation occurs when a vowel assimilates a similar vowel in a connected speech. There are different types of vocalic assimilations observed in the movie - *O To Gee*

Vocalic Progressive Assimilation: This kind of vocalic assimilation occurs when a sound is assimilated by the sound after it.

Spoken: T' a ba ni b'ejo ti gun to l'afi da'na e, nkan o yan oo

Written: Ti a ba ni bi ejo ti gun to ni a fid a ina re, nkan o yan

The /i/ sound was assimilated by the /a/ sound after to it so *ti a ba* becomes *t'a ba*

Vocalic Progressive Assimilation of same sound

Spoken: O d'igbeyin k'ó tó d' olókuàdá.

Written: O di igbeyin ki ó tó dun **oni oku** àdá.

/i/ at the end of *di* was assimilated by /i/ at the beginning of *igbeyin*.

Vocalic Progressive assimilation of different sounds

1. **Spoken:** O d'igbeyin k'ó tó d' olókuàdá.

Written: O di igbeyin ki ó tó dun **oni oku** àdá.

1. /i/ at the end of *ki* was assimilated by /o/ which is the next word.

2. Je ká pe were lökö 'yàwó kó le je ká rona lö.

2, Ri ona becomes rona

Complex Assimilation

O d'igbeyin k'ó tó d' olókuàdá.

Yoruba nasal vowel /un/ at the end of *dun* was assimilated by /o/ at the beginning of *oni*, then, the assimilation process changed /n/ to /l/ and /i/ in *oni* was assimilated by /o/ at initial position of *oku* to become *oloku*.

Nígbàtí onílù ti pa lù, kí lonjó re ndúró se lójú agbo? Another example of complex assimilation – alveolar nasal /n/ changed to alveolar lateral /l/ and there is regressive assimilation of /i/ at the end of *oni* and /i/ at the beginning of *ijo* changed to /n/, the third process is the final change of alveolar nasal/n/ to alveolar velar /ŋ/

Vocalic Regressive Assimilation

1. **Spoken:** *T' a ba ni b'ejo ti gun to l'afi da'na e, nkan o yan oo*

Written: *Ti a ba ni bi ejo ti gun to ni a fida ina re, nkan o yan*

The /i/ sound was assimilated by the /a/ sound before it hence, *da ina* becomes *d'ana*

2. **Spoken:** *Oju lalakan fii sori*

Written: *Oju ni alakan fii so ori*

The /o/ sound assimilated the /p/ sound before it.

3. *Je ká pe were lökö 'yàwó kó le je ká rona lö.*

The /i/sound at the beginning of *iyawo* was assimilated by the /o/ at the end of *oko*, turning the short sound to long /ɔ:/

Insertion: An element that is not part of the original text is added to it. There is insertion of item(s) that is/are not in the proverb by different speakers, the nature of the insertion is not systematic but personal or individualist in nature, this reveals the idiosyncratic feature of the speakers.

1a. **Spoken:** *K'adupe lowo enit'o wo ni ti o mo ni loju opo eeyan ni o ti'e wo 'bi t'a wa*

b. **Written:** *Ki adupe ni owo eniti o wo ebi to mo ni ni oju opo eniyan ni ko wo ibi ti a wa*

2a. **Spoken:** *A la fe nlu, oni won je o darin, to wa darin ohun tan tani o gbee?*

b. **Written:** *A ni a o fe o ni ilu, o ni ki won jeki o da orin, ti o bad a orin naa tan tani yo gbe e?*

In example 1a, ... *ti'e*... is not in the original text as seen in the 1b. Also, in 2a ...*wa*... was inserted.

Rhythm

There is rhythm as a phonological feature found in Yoruba proverbs used in *O To Gee*. This is achieved with the used of assonance, alliteration, repetition and duplication for example:

Ojo sese bere sii ro won ni ko to t'ana, sebi won o ba je o da na. there is repetition of /e/ in *sese* and *bere* which is assonance.

Rhetorical questions

Rhetorical questions, as a rhetorical device, are used to make a point or emphasize a statement rather than seek a genuine answer. They are often characterized by specific phonological effects that contribute to their rhetorical impact. These phonological effects work in conjunction with the rhetorical strategies employed in the language and content of the question. By utilizing specific intonation, stress, timing, repetition, and phrasing, speakers can enhance the persuasive and emotive qualities of rhetorical questions, engaging the audience and effectively conveying their intended message.

- a. Nigba onlu ti palu, ki l'ojo re ndu'o se loju agbo?
- b. Ki lanfani orogbo tapa ti o lawe, (ehn) a tun je o tun koro?
- c. A la fe nlu, oni won je o darin, to wa darin ohun tan tani o gbe?
- d. Òkété ti bórù mo ö lowo, kí ló tún kù?
- e. Ki lode ti omo eniyan nfina sori orule sun?
- f. Nigbat' alara ni ara ro un, ewo loku aisun o ku aiwo tie?
- g. Ba ba leran oniwo ni o kan pa, se bi ti igbin wa ni?
- h.

Elision

Nígbàt'onílù ti pa lù, kí lonjó re ndúró se lójú agbo?

1. There is elision of /i/ in palu

Ko si bati sefo ebolo ti o run gbe

2. There is elision of /i/ at the beginning of *igbe*
3. There is elision of /k/ at the beginning of *ko*

Nigbat' alara ni ara ro un, ewo loku aisun o ku aiwo tie

Emotionality

Gbogbo b'isu se ku bobbe se bee l'awon oloye ti je ko ye mi

The proverb was used by *Enide* when *Eniagba* visited after he was attacked by the demons sent to him. The chief lied to him that *Eniagba* was behind the attack. He was in pain and therefore he was emotional when he made the proverb with creaky voice.

Ere ti igbin sa ninu omi gbona boba ti sa rue ninu odan ki ma dero inu oni gbona –*Olutunu* used the proverb when *Enide* called upon Him to come and help him against *Alumutu*. His voice was soft and persuasive.

O di igbehin koto dun oloku ada

Ena ta se lore ti o dupe bi olasa koni leru lo ni –*Enide* used the proverb to show his appreciation to *Aladeaye*. He was excited with the kind gesture *Aladeaye* extended to him

Ajebodo ni ti weni kuraaa – It was made by chief *Balogun* when the chief visited *Enide* having been informed that *Eniagba* was preaching to him and he was about to be convinced. Chief *Balogun* used the proverb with soft voice, vowel lengthening on /a/ and it ended with a rising tune instead of falling tune

Ewu nbe lok longe, longe funrare ewu ni – A chief was talking to the king, he was soft, this reveals the status of the chief as a subordinate to a boss.

Assertiveness

Eniti nreti ati sun akan, yo pe leti omi

Kaka keku ma je sese, yo yafi sawadanu ni

Omo to bani iya oun o ni sun, oun na o ni fo ju borun –

Aladeaye made these proverb in anger when he heard that Enide was listening to the message of Eniagba the second time. The voice was rough and high with emphasis on almost every word. He spoke to express anger and to intimidate Enide.

Ewu nbe lok longe, longe funrare ewu ni

Gbogbo b'isu se ku bobo se bee l'awon oloye ti je ko ye mi –Enide while talking to Eniagbe said this assertively trying to confront Eniagba with allegation of sending demons to attack him. He raise his voice and spoke with hash tempo

Kini wu ri elewo re tinsago mowo

Ologini re ti feyin lele, ipa ti pin

Okere ti gori rook, oju oda da

These proverbs were used by enraged Enide having realized the game Aladeaye and his chiefs were playing with life. He went to the palace to claim his freedom hence he spoke with hash tone, assurance and authority as he was demanding his freedom and telling Aladeaye that it is enough.

Implications of the Features used in the Proverbs

One of the implications of the phonological features observed in the spoken proverbs in *O To Gee* is foregrounding. Through the use of prominence, listener's attention is called to certain part of the proverbs that are deliberately emphasized. Speakers draw attention to some elements in the proverbs and signal their importance. This helps to foreground the main topic or emphasize particular aspects of the discourse by the proverbs.

Another implication of the phonological features observed in the spoken proverbs in *O To Gee* is clarity. Intonation patterns, including rises and falls in pitch, help convey meaning, emotions, and attitudes. Using appropriate intonation can indicate the intended statement type (declarative, interrogative, exclamatory), express nuances of meaning (e.g., sarcasm, surprise), and highlight important information. It adds clarity by signaling the structure and purpose of the utterance. Phonological features enhance clarity in speech and ensures disambiguate a seemingly ambiguous expression. It makes the intention of the speaker clearly known through stress placement, intonation deployment, prominence, emotionality and assertiveness as well as some paralinguistic that accompanied the proverbs. By employing the phonological features effectively, speakers of the proverbs were able to communicate their messages with clarity, precision, and effectiveness. Errors were reduced, discriminations among intentions were aided and comprehension was facilitated.

Discussion of the Findings

Intonation plays a crucial role in expressing the mood or emotional tone of the speaker. It adds a layer of emotional and attitudinal information to speech, allowing the speaker to convey their feelings, intentions, and mood. Intonation involves variations in pitch, and the pitch range used by the speaker can contribute to expressing different moods. A wider pitch range, with higher and lower pitches, can indicate excitement, enthusiasm, or a positive mood. Conversely, a narrower pitch range or consistently low pitches may convey a more subdued, serious, or negative mood. Rising and falling patterns: The rise and fall of pitch patterns in intonation can express different emotions and moods. A rising intonation pattern at the end of a sentence can convey surprise, curiosity, or uncertainty. Conversely, a falling intonation pattern can indicate certainty, authority, or seriousness. These rising and falling patterns, when used appropriately, help to convey the intended mood of the speaker.

Emotional contagion is one of the implications of the phonological features in the spoken proverbs in *O To Gee*. Intonation has the power to evoke emotional responses in listeners through a phenomenon known as emotional contagion. When a speaker expresses their mood through intonation, listeners may mirror or resonate with that mood, experiencing a similar emotional response. Intonation, therefore, serves as a means of influencing and eliciting emotional reactions from listeners. Example: *Àjá tí yóò sònù, kò ní gbo fèrè olòde*

Aladeaye: *Aja ti o sonu*

The Chiefs: *kò ní gbo fèrè òde*

There is emotional contagion here; the excitedness of *Aladeaye* motivated the chiefs to join him in finishing the proverb with the same excitement.

As the speakers manipulate intonation patterns, pitch range, stress, prominence, and rhythm in the process of making proverbs, they were able to effectively convey their mood, whether it be happiness, excitement, sadness, anger, or any other emotional state. Intonation adds depth, nuance, and emotional context to speech, enabling the speaker to communicate their mood and connect with listeners on an emotional level as they make those proverbs.

Intonation provides valuable clues about the speakers' status or social position in Agboola's film *O To Gee*. Through the deployment of intonation the speaker's level of confidence and assertiveness were conveyed which is linked to their perceived status. Before Enide knew the truth, he was afraid of *Aladeaye*, he used to speak with a hesitant or wavering intonation pattern which suggests his lower confidence and potentially lower status. But when he knew the truth and went back to confront *Aladeaye*, he spoke with a strong and assertive intonation pattern, characterized by clear and firm voice projection, which suggest his perceived higher status. It's important to note that intonation alone is just one aspect contributing to the perception of a speaker's status. Factors such as body language, vocabulary, content, appearance, and cultural context also play significant roles in determining how a speaker's status is perceived.

The study found communicative effects as parts of the implications of phonological features in the film *O To Gee*. Intonation plays a crucial role in achieving various communicative effects. It adds meaning, nuance, and emotion to speech, allowing various speakers to convey

their intended message with greater impact while using proverbs. Intonation plays a vital role in achieving communicative effects by adding emphasis, expressing attitudes and emotions, conveying intention and meaning, creating rhetorical impact, clarifying discourse structure, serving pragmatic functions, and enhancing listener engagement. By skillfully employing intonation, speakers can effectively convey their message, engage their audience, and achieve their communicative goals. Intonation performs pragmatic functions by conveying additional information beyond the literal meaning of words. Through intonation deployment, Eniagba, sarcastically used this proverbs as he was responding to the chiefs who confronted him to leave Enide alone and allow him to be destroyed rather than interceding for him. *Se ayederu oba to ran yin se tanwiji t' on se bi eja?* The speakers were able to indicate politeness, irony, turn-taking in conversation as they deployed features in their proverb usage. Intonation was used to enhance engagement and involve listeners in the communication process. By employing expressive and engaging intonation patterns, speakers captured the attention of their audience, maintained interest, and created a more interactive and dynamic communication environment. This is seen in the various form dialogues in proverbs identified under dialogue.

Conclusion

From the foregoing, it is observed that the beauty and effectiveness of proverb usage are more expressed in their spoken forms; they create communicative effects and contribute to meaning making process thereby making intended meaning to be appreciated by the interlocutor. It is therefore recommended that attention should be given to the study of spoken proverbs and that proverbs should be written the way they are said in order to retain their original messages.

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