

A Pragmatic Study of ‘And’ as a Narrative Procedural Encoder in Femi Osofisan’s *Kolera Kolej*

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Abstract

Femi Osofisan’s deliberate deployment of the conjunction ‘And’ in the novel *Kolera kolej* is out of the commonplace discourse use highlighted in Quirk et al (1987). This unusual use of ‘And’ in *Kolera kolej* therefore is the focus of this essay. If there is anything Osofisan’s works are known for, it is his satiric import conveyed from a humorous disposition. This essay examines Osofisan’s *Kolera kolej* from a cognitive point of view, using Blakemore’s Procedural Encoding theory which is an offshoot of Sperber and Wilson’s Relevance Theory. The claim of procedural encoding is that it is not every language element that has content; some are used to give command on the procedure to take in interpreting the lexical constituents. These elements are called procedural encoders. This essay therefore shows how one of them *and*, is used in a literary text (Osofisan’s *Kolera kolej*). The intention is to show how the author inferentially engages his reader by deploying procedural encoders which help the reader to cognitively navigate through his narrative strategies. Our first observation is that there is the ‘abnormal’ use of the coordinating conjunction ‘And’. However, rather than see this use as illogical, this essay sees it as a strategy, deliberately used to draw the reader’s attention to the manipulative contours of negotiating meanings and interpreting utterances at the cognitive level, with a view to sharpening the satiric focus of the text.

Key words: Relevance Theory, *Kolera kolej*, satire, unexpectedness, Osofisan, Procedural Encoding.

Introduction

This essay examines Femi Osofisan's *Kolera Kolej* from a cognitive point of view, and how his narration is intertwined with other techniques such as suspense, expectedness and unexpectedness, conflict, et cetera. This is what helps to sharpen the satiric focus of the novel. This study investigates the author's deliberate use of the conjunction 'And' as a discourse element to give clues on how each episode in the text is to be interpreted. In the text, the author in an attempt to interrupt the 'normal' sequel of events, introduces other issues which have expectedness/unexpectedness effects. By expectedness/unexpectedness effect, we mean the author pretends to be gravitating to a logical conclusion but suddenly the content of the elements in the conclusion is a radical deviation from the inference one draws from the premises. It is possible that the new event introduced may not be logically cohesive with the former. These discourse eccentricities, by our argument help to make the satiric effect of the novel lucid.

Osofisan's *Kolera Kolej* has been published both as a novel and as a play. What is obvious about the text is the author's intention to satirize socio-political malaise preponderant both in the society and in the academia. The views of scholars on the text range from its being humorous to displaying elements of absurdity. However, there is yet to be a cognitive study of the text from a linguistic pragmatic perspective.

Literature Review

Ufomata (1996) examines the style and language of Osofisan in *Kolera Kolej*. Her first observation is that Osofisan's spelling innovations, alliterative assonance, and syntactic markedness of the use of 'Kolera' as a qualifier in the title is an invitation to expect the unusual in the novel (p.24). This expectation of the unusual is similar to the unexpected effect discussed in novel. From the outset, she reckons that the novel is satirical, and also observes that Osofisan deploys shocking vocabularies symptomatic characters, contradictions, abrupt plot, and linguistic highlighting to achieve such effect.

Ufomata (1996 p.25) observes that shocking expressions are used in the novel to shake the readership out of its complacency and to drive home crucial and critical truths about the Nigerian society. According to her, the composition of the cabinet of the college is symptomatic of the decadence of the society. She observes that one of the techniques of Osofisan in the novel is to give symbolic names to his characters (Belejayan-busybody, Gedu-log, Prof. Agborin-antelope).

Also, Ufomata (1996) observes that contradiction is deliberately used in the novel to ridicule the whole business of government in the college, and by extension, the practice of democracy in a backward dictatorship. And like we uphold in this essay, she says that the story of *Kolera Kolej* start abruptly, and that the story moves very rapidly with short and episodic chapters. The vivid description of scenes, the chanting and chorusing, according to Ufomata (1996), give an impression of a dramatist trying out a different medium.

This essay, just like Ufomata (1996), sees *Kolera Kolej* as a satiric novel, the only difference being in our methods of exploration. Ufomata (1996) points out linguistic techniques such as shocking vocabularies, linguistic highlighting to prove her point, while this essay points out a linguistic tool (and) used at the pragmatic level to show how the author fine tunes his narration in the novel, and how it helps achieve a satiric effect. Ufomata (1996) talks about shocking expressions and contradictions. The question is: what makes the expressions shocking, and where is the contradiction in the story? Ufomata (1996) must have considered the linguistic dislocations and inappropriacies in the novel. However, we are concerned about the sense incoherence that result when the reader infer the information provided in the build up to the narration. This essay is peculiarly cognitive because it demonstrates how the author deploys functional elements to direct the reader's psychological navigation in interpreting the text.

Balogun (1984) classifies *Kolera Kolej* as a typical modern African absurdist literature where writers use normal, rational,

and realist devices combined with hyperbole, irony, and satire to convey the absurd (p.44). Characteristically, the absurdist literature reverses the norms of life in a highly lucid and realistic language which at times reaches an enviable height (Balogun 1984 p.45). Balogun chronicles these abnormalities in *Kolera Kolej*, thus:

The country 'Kolera Kolej' is ruled by a cabinet of ministers composed exclusively of professors who show an amazingly high degree of ignorance and illiteracy. A professor of Geophysical Science, for example, cannot tell whether Holland is only 'a town in Russia' or 'a fishing company in Denmark.' In this country assassins are required to book appointments with their prospective victims to arrange the date of assassination. Here it is considered mean to be faithful to one's wife, and to be patriotic is to qualify as a traitor. These are characteristics of the absurd surreal world of *Kolera Kolej*, where wanton murder is considered normal (1984 p.45).

Balogun's focus is on the unusual dimension that *Kolera Kolej* takes in the absurdist world. It is obvious that while Balogun's concern is purely literary, this essay's is pragmatic. We agree with Balogun that there are elements of unusualness in the text, but our reasons are quite different. While Balogun (1984) attributes this unusualness to the absurdist traits, this essay upholds that the incoherent and illogical relation at the discourse level is the cause of the unusualness in the text.

Morosetti (2013) discusses how African literary 'heterotopias' deal with both the positive and negative stereotypes of Africa. This leads her to describe the story as 'a miniature for Africa;' an image of postcolonial contradictions where the intention of the author is to make a mirror for the whole country. Morosetti (2013) disagrees with Balogun (1984)

on the novel's status as an absurdist literature. Her argument is that in as much as the ironic realistic language does not deceive one into accepting any aspect of the world of the novel as normal, the Swiftian attempt to portray a reversed fictitious world does in fact invite the reader to look for resemblances and analogies with the real world (Morosetti 2013 p.51). Morosetti (2013), on the language of *Kolera Kolej*, describes it as characterized by a gargantuan tendency towards exaggeration and the scatological (p.52). Just like Balogun (1984), our approach and focus are different from Morosetti's. While his literary, this essay is a linguistic pragmatic analysis of Osofisan's *Kolera Kolej*.

It is also important to note that scholars have evaluated Osofisan's other works (plays), and considered their satiric content. For instance, Akanmode (2016) observes that Osofisan deploys traditional aesthetics in *Many Colours Make the Thunder King* to satirize the Nigerian socio-political system. On the other hand, Adeleke (2016) says that the satire in Osofisan's plays is reflected in the various songs the playwright deploys (29). Aikoriogbe (2014) while looking at Osofisan's *Midnight Hotel* and *The Midnight Blackout* opines that the playwright deliberately exploits morphological principles and tendencies in the plays to achieve humour and consequently satirize socio-political misdemeanor in the African society. Aikoriogbe's work is similar to this essay because it examines humour in another of Osofisan's works. However, it is a purely linguistic analysis of different texts (plays), while in this essay our focus is on a novel, and our analysis is linguistic pragmatic. It is obvious thus far that though researches agree that *Kolera Kolej* is a satiric text, there is the need to show this from a cognitive point of view.

To reiterate our point, this essay is a study of Osofisan's *Kolera Kolej* from a cognitive perspective, using Diane Blakemore's Procedural Encoding, an offshoot of Sperber and Wilson's Relevance Theory. It is observed that *And*, outside its common contextual usage, is dynamically deployed in *Kolera*

Kolej to mark the author's narrative reportage, and to enhance the text humorous effect.

Theoretical Framework

Procedural Encoding is born out of the need to intensify the argument that language elements are made up of two categories: conceptual and procedural. This is so because in language, there are elements that have meanings and there are elements that have structural significance. However, when this distinction was conceived in relevance theory, language scholars were preoccupied with distinguishing between elements that create 'mental' thoughts, and elements that give directions on how the thoughts are to be processed.

In 1987, a scholar emerged to create a distinction between expressions that encode concepts and expressions that give information on how the concepts should be inferentially processed. Deirdre Wilson and Dan Sperber (2012, p. 158) even conceded that 'within relevance theory, the idea that an expression may encode procedural constraints on the inferential phase of comprehension was first put forward by Diane Blakemore. Blakemore's 1987 argument was that while an expression plays a role in the recovery of the utterance's conceptual representations, it does not do it by encoding anything that is a constituent of it; rather, it encodes information about the inferential process that the hearer should use (p. 90). Take for instance, the utterance:

1. Ben can open Tom's safe. He knows the combination.

These are two clauses that have two different conceptual representations. The ideal thing would be to use the information in the first segment to interpret the information in the second segment which means that the information in the second segment would be an answer to the question raised by the information in the first segment. That is, Ben can open Tom's safe because he knows the combination.

On the other hand, there are several questions which may pop up from the first information. Some of the questions are: how can Ben open Tom's safe? Why would Ben open Tom's safe? When did Ben open Tom's safe? Where? In what manner?, et cetera. Also, it is not clearly stated how the speaker wants the information in the two segments to be processed. It is just by the default rule of discourse coherence that the second segment is an answer to the question raised in the first place. Frankly speaking in real life situations, it is not clear which is the answer to the other, it is not even clear which is a premise to the other. What if it were in a situation where both speaker and hearer are already aware that Ben knows the combination of the safe? The first clause therefore would be the new information; the second clause would be used to interpret the first clause. We would have something like this:

2. Ben can open Tom's safe, (afterall) he knows the combination.

The introduction of *afterall* in the above utterance is a clear indication of how the speaker wants his utterance to be interpreted; that is, the second clause (he knows the combination) should be seen as a premise for arriving at the conclusion in the first clause. *Afterall* therefore is a procedural encoder.

In the relevance theoretical framework, there are three ways in which information conveyed by an utterance can be relevant:

1. By allowing the derivation of a contextual implication.
2. By strengthening an existing assumption.
3. By contradicting an existing assumption (Blakemore, 1992, p. 138).

In each of these cases, establishing the relevance of a new assumption involves inference, and it depends on the contextual

assumptions involved (Blakemore, 1992, p. 135). Recall also that the communicative principle states that every ostensive stimulus comes with its own optimal relevance. That is to say in coming into a communicative discourse, the hearer assumes that the speaker has done everything within her power to aid her comprehension, and whatever stimulus he produces is the best he can produce as at that time (communicative principle of optimal relevance).

What this translates into is that in guiding the hearer towards her communicative intention, the speaker could help by introducing elements that would constrain his selection of choice of contexts at a minimal processing cost (Blakemore, 1992, p. 137). This can be done through procedural encoding.

Procedural Encoding

Relevance theory is an inferential approach to utterance interpretation. According to Wilson and Sperber (1993), inferential comprehension involves the construction and manipulation of conceptual representations. By implication, an utterance is expected to encode two basic types of information: representational and computational, or conceptual and procedural, that is, information about the representations to be manipulated and information about how to manipulate them.

This essay focuses on the later, and it examines how Osofisan gives a clue to his reader on how to manipulate the concepts in the text. Recall we said earlier that this essay focuses on the author's narrative strategy from a cognitive point of view. Also, recall that this essay argues that the author demarcates what, in other fields, is recognized as sign posts to give a clue to the reader on how to interpret the following information vis-à-vis the previous one. This discourse sign posts in this essay are recognized as procedural encoders. As Blakemore points out, procedural encoders contribute to relevance by guiding the hearer towards the intended contextual effects, hence reducing the overall effort required (Wilson and Sperber, 1993). This is in synchrony with the focus of this essay

because we identify instances where the procedural encoder is deployed, reveal its manipulative strategy in the narration of the text, and suggest how it helps illuminate the satiric focus of the author, which in actual fact is the author's original communicative intention.

The procedural element predominantly used in the novel is the conjunction *and*. As a conjunction, it is used to string linguistic elements together and show their relationship, which according to Quirk et al (1985) are as follows: consequence, chronology, contrast, condition, similarity, addition, and commentary.

AND as consequence

- a) He shouted for a long period and lost his voice.
'And' shows that the second clause is a consequence of the event in the first clause.

AND as chronology/sequence

- b) I took my bath and wore my clothes.
'And' shows that the second clause took place after the first.

AND as contrast

- c) Osazuwa read for his exams and he failed.
'And' shows that the second clause is a contrast to what is expected by the action in the first clause.

AND as condition

- d) Give me some money and you are a free man.
'And' shows that the action in the second clause is predicated on whether or not the first clause takes place. That is, the action in the first clause is a precondition for the second.

AND as similarity

- e) Femi Osofisan is an author and he writes good novels.
What this use of 'and' shows is that the second clause makes a point similar to the first.

AND as addition

- f) Charles goes to school and he reads his books.

Here, the second clause is a pure addition to the first. The only requirement for this relationship is that the two clauses are congruent in meaning.

AND as commentary

- g) Mikel Obi retired early and that is not surprising to me.

This use of 'and' shows that the second clause is a personal comment/explanation by the speaker on the first clause. The above uses of 'and' show the extra-linguistic functions that it can perform in utterances. The purpose of outlining these pragmatic duties is to concede that 'and' generally can exert a manipulative effect in utterance interpretation. However, this essay draws attention to the fact that in Osofisan's *Kolera Kolej*, 'and' is used outside the 'normal' pragmatic box. To explain this, let us pay attention to a statement made by Quirk et al (1985, p. 930), thus:

'And' is the coordinator which has the most general meaning and use. The only restriction on the use of 'and' as a coordinator is the pragmatic one that the clauses should have sufficient in common to justify their combination. Thus the following is odd simply because it would be difficult to find any connection between the content of the clauses: (1) The youngsters went off to a dance and the equator is equivalent from the two poles.

Quirk et al (1985) however conceded that at the pragmatic level, the logical/illogical combinations of 'and' vary according to speakers' presupposition and knowledge of the world (1985 p.930). This is the case in Osofisan's *Kolera Kolej*; there is the 'illogical' combination of 'and.' Rather than see this use as illogical, this essay sees it as a narrative strategy, deliberately used to draw the reader's attention to the manipulative contours of negotiating meanings and interpreting utterances at the

cognitive level, with a view to sharpening the satiric focus of the text. Our research method is qualitative because the interpretations derived therein are influenced by the researchers' knowledge, though religiously guided by the tenets of the theory discussed above.

Discussion

Kolera Kolej was first published as a novel which the author later transformed into a play. Generally, Femi Osofisan is known as a dramatist and a playwright. So when he decided to lay his hands on prose, it is arguably inevitable that one would come across some paraphernalia of a theatrist. This is seen in the narrative strategy of the text: the deliberate intrusion in the turn of events that seemed to be going on smoothly, the abruptness of the plot, name-calling as dramatic signposts, precise episodes, and (what this essay discovers), the deployment of a procedural encoder '*and*' to capture a feeling of shock and unexpectedness which is similar to the concept of dramatic suspense in the theatre. In this discussion section, we look out for instances of the deployment of *and* in the text.

What is predominant about the author's narrative strategy in the text is the sudden intrusion of a new narration when one is ongoing. The author perhaps is bent on creating a sense of shock. This shock is concretized when one discovers that this new intrusive narration is over-bloated or has an over-emphasizing effect on the plot. In other instances, it is possible that this new narration is not logically related to the former, thereby literally creating a narrative 'lacuna' that can only be filled at the cognitive level of reasoning. It is at this level that the satiric intention of the author is recognized. Recall that in relevance theory, the recognition of a speaker's communicative intention is strong enough to guide the hearer in the search for optimal relevance. However, let us bear in mind that the procedural encoder in view here, plays a great role in directing the reader's attention to recognizing this communicative intention. According to Blakemore (1992), one major role

procedural encoders play is to direct the hearer's attention to an interpretation path, thereby, reducing the effort he would have spent testing every interpretation path before getting to the right one. Therefore, it is logical to say that procedural encoders contribute to relevance by reducing the processing effort it would have taken to get the right interpretation, and according to the comparative principle of relevance, the lesser the effort dispensed on an utterance the higher the effect of that utterance within the context of use.

The first chapter of the novel gives an idea that the author throws the reader into a narration that was in existence (Ufomata 1996). The idea is to make it look like the story was ongoing, and the author just chooses to start from somewhere. This is displayed in the text below:

TEXT A

Suddenly, without warning, though the epidemic had been earlier reported in neighbouring countries, and had even made several deaths in Ghana and Gabon without warning, cholera struck the College (p. 9).

The word 'suddenly' is a procedural encoder. Apart from being an adjunct adverb which gives the meaning 'in a twinkling of an eye,' the encoder gives a command that some events had taken place before the paragraph started, and this essay sees it as a narrative strategy. The effect of this use of the word *suddenly* is that it gives an impression that the author bumps in the thought of the reader. This effect is dramatic, and it creates a theatrical picture of an action packed events.

This idea of 'suddenness' in the narrative reportage of the novel is henceforth carried by the conjunction 'And'. 'And' as a procedural encoder in *Kolera Kolej* is used to give a command: that what is about to follow is unexpected, does not literally cohere with what has been discussed so far, and at the same

time, could be a form of authorial commentary. Excerpts from the text would be taken to illuminate this argument:

TEXT B

When the journalists had assembled, in the freshly pruned garden near the Women's Hall, the Acting Vice-Chancellor mounted a small rostrum and adjusted his glasses. And it was then that a curious thing happened. The VC was suddenly seen to double up, so suddenly in fact that his chin hit the lectern— and, even before the journalists could record this spectacular manner of beginning a speech, he had straightened up again and just as suddenly, his arms spread out beside him like a bird about to take off (Osofisan 2001, p. 9).

In this situation, the college is struck with an epidemic, the Acting Vice-Chancellor calls a press conference to brief the nation on the state of the cholera epidemic on campus. In order to prove the healthy status of the college, the Acting Vice Chancellor resorts to a light exercise. This act is unexpected and literally illogical. The essence of a press conference (under a normal circumstance) is to give a verbal report on the update on campus. The deliberate action in the form of physical exercise is abnormal, this abnormality is introduced by the encoder— 'And' (**And** it was then that a curious thing happened). The clause would still have been coherent if the conjunction was excluded. However the deliberate inclusion is a discourse sign-post – a pragmatic indication that what is about to follow is unexpected and does not logically follow the sequence of narration. Thus, 'And' gives a command that there is a logical contradiction between organizing a press conference and performing a physical exercise before the press cameras as a way of giving the report. Herein lies the satiric effect of the narration, and also this

provides the narrator the opportunity to quickly pass an authorial commentary.

This contradiction is further sustained with the use of 'And' in the following paragraph of the opening pages of the text.

TEXT C

And once again, he had done it, bending forward to hit the lectern and straightening up, with the same precision and the same remarkable swiftness. And for a third time. The gathering cheered, incredulous. But at this stage the VC seemed to have reckoned that the performance was getting monotonous, for this time, as he came up again, arms outspread, he added a low growling rumble of undecided decibel from somewhere low down under his academic gown. The journalists recorded fast: the VC had added a subtle variation – he had farted.

And suddenly, from his mouth and from his anus, strange hot liquids began to gush out, and the VC began to dance violently like an apostle mounted by the spirit (p. 10).

This is a continuation of the drama enacted by the Acting Vice Chancellor. To sustain this sense of unexpectedness and contradiction, the author uses the encoder 'And.' There are three instances of the use of 'And' in the above text. In the first two instances, 'And' is used to introduce itemization into the narration; thus '**And** once again...', and '**And** for a third time.' The effect of this itemization on the narration is that it helps to sustain the tempo of the sense of unexpectedness discussed in TEXT C, and its corresponding effects on the novel. This sustenance is therefore significant because it builds the satiric feel of the novel. In the third instance (**And** suddenly), there is a twist in the itemization. 'And' as used here indicates that the itemization and its requisite actions have reached climax. That is

to say, the encoder as used in the third instance gives a command that the drama enacted by the Acting Vice Chancellor has gone beyond control.

After the drama which takes place on campus, it became necessary for the Prime Minister to call for a meeting to resolve the epidemic. No sooner had a serious decision been reached than a message was sent to the official canteen to provide lunch. The narrator portrays it thus:

TEXT D

And at that point a messenger was dispatched to the official canteen outside to give the advance warning that the Cabinet would be adjourning for lunch (Osofisan 2001, p. 12).

This narration came on the heel of the altercation which occurs between the Prime Minister and the Ekiti man. After the little squabble had been resolved, one would expect the Prime Minister to move to the main issue of the meeting. Rather than, at least, discuss one important item, the Cabinet sends for lunch. The manner in which this is done is awkward, and the manner in which the narrator reports this is satirical. It is at that point that we have TEXT D. The procedural encoder — ‘And’ as used above helps to introduce the distraction into the narration. It carries the same sudden effect as does ‘suddenly’ in TEXT A. Like the other texts above, the paragraph still would have been coherent if ‘And’ was not introduced. However the presence of ‘And’ is a discourse indicator, and the pragmatic effect is the command it gives the reader — that there is a logical narrative ‘unrelatedness’ between the two events which have just taken place in the meeting. The effect of this command on the narrative strategy is that it helps to portray the satiric effect of the novel — it is officially out of place to start a meeting with squabble, and then what follows is an advanced warning to the state canteen to get lunch ready because the cabinet would be going on recess. What the author satirizes here is the chronic

misplacement of priorities among some African leaders — they value the entertainment attached to meetings more than the meetings itself.

As the actions in the novel builds up, the narrator records that the college is granted independence, and hell is unleashed. There are cases of hunger, poverty, violence, and death. The substantive Vice Chancellor contends against protesters, and some are killed. Thereafter, a reconciliatory committee is hurriedly set up and ‘peace’ returns to the college. The narrator portrays it below:

TEXT E

And yet it was in that same peaceful week that several more tongues were unloosened, and disgruntled men talked in growing groups (p.54).

The use of ‘And’ in TEXT E has a similarity with its use as contrast outlined by Quirk et al (1985). The only addition here is that this contrast brings an element of shock/surprise to the reader. Another unique feature about the use of ‘And’ above is that it affords the author the opportunity to infuse pretense into his reportage. What this means is that Osofisan pretends as if he was adding to the list of information given, meanwhile the addition has a shocking effect on the reader. Before the paragraph (TEXT E), the narrator chronicles the steps taken by the university authority to restore peace. In his chronicle he appears sincere. Then comes the concluding paragraph (TEXT E) which the reader expects to be the reward of the step taken by the university authority. The information that comes after ‘And’ is counter-productive; one that the reader would not expect. This reiterates our argument that Osofisan interrupts his narration by introducing information that has a shocking, unexpected, and surprising effect on his reportage. The introduction of such information is enhanced by the use of the procedural encoder — ‘And.’ This pretentious use of ‘And’ sharpens the satiric nature of the play. That is, it becomes

obvious that those steps narrated to have taken place to restore peace did not actually take place. That the narrator earlier pretended and narrated them as if they took place is illustrative. What is implicitly satirized is press mirage: a political situation where African governments use the press to paint images that are not real.

The narrator goes further to paint a picture of the effects of suffering in the College. He talks about academics whose earning is not commensurate with their string of degrees, he talks about the illiterates whose only problem is that they cannot feed their families. Then he narrates how the university officials have meetings in 'relaxed' freedom of darkened blinds and drawn shutters, and then the narrator releases the shocking paragraph (TEXT F), introduced by 'And':

And almost by common consent, the responsibility for the worsening situation was attributed to violence. Or, rather, the lack of it (Osofisan 2001, p.55).

It is shocking that the university officials attribute the pathetic situation on campus to violence. In fact, that they even attribute it to either violence or the lack of it is more shocking. This is so because that observation is neither here nor there. Our focus here is on the use of 'And'. The information that 'And' introduces does not have a contrasting or emphasizing effect, but it is one that is incongruent with the previous information. Yet it has a shocking effect on the novel's narrative reportage. It is expected that after a serious deliberation, the campus officials would come up with a sensible communique, but what they come up with is both concrete and abstract. In other words, they came up with nothing – but they had to say something out of compulsion. How could a country's cabinet attribute the wrong in the country to violence which is unknown? What is even more humorous is that the author pretends as if TEXT F was a reasonable conclusion from the meeting.

There is an instance where the author deploys ‘And’ to pass a personal commentary not on the proceedings in the novel, but on his narrative style. On the occasion that the Committee of Elders for the Renaming of the College (CERC) is to list out the four recommended names, Osofisan chronicles how the committee had a marathon session after which the Vice Chancellor convenes a meeting. All attention now turns to the committee to read out the names to the campus audience. Our focus here is on how Osofisan narrates the shift of focus in the meeting, thus:

TEXT G

Thus they resolved to recommend to the College Caucus a list of four outstanding names for the College, chosen among all the entries as being the most imaginative.

And so, to use a figure of speech, the dance passed to the court of the caucus (Osofisan 2001, p.89).

‘And’ as used here links the sequence of events which take place in the meeting. However, between ‘and’ and the sequence proposition, there is a clause which does not rationally synchronize with the actions in the text, but has an effect on the author’s reportage. Of course it is the narrator who uses the figure of speech, and the begging question is: does Osofisan need to make it explicit that he is using a figurative expression. This is the apex of humour in the novel – the narrator seems so engrossed in the events in the text that he does not only satirize the characters and their actions, but he also satirizes his narrative style. And our concern is that the procedural encoder – ‘And’ is of huge narrative style tells a huge message of the humorous inclination of the author.

Conclusion

This study has examined how the cognitive deployment of 'And' has a significant effect on *Kolera Kolej*. It investigates Osofisan's narrative reportage in the text from a cognitive perspective using, specifically, Blakemore's Procedural Encoding, an offshoot of Sperber and Wilson's Relevance Theory. The researchers agree with scholars who have established the fact *Kolera Kolej* is a satiric text. Such scholars include Titi Ufomata, Odun Balogun, Babatunde Adeleke. However, it was observed that there was a gap that needed to be filled. It was that there is the need to test Osofisan's satire from a cognitive point of view. In doing that, we observed that the author deploys the procedural encoder – 'And' to infuse a feel of unexpectedness into his narrative reportage. The effect of this intrusion of unexpectedness is that it obstructs the smooth flow of the plot of story. This obstruction thereby has a shocking effect on the reader and also gives the story a dramatic outlook.

This linguistic cum cognitive ingenuity affords the narrator some important advantages, some of which are that the introduction of sudden effects sharpen the novel's satiric outlook, and also it affords Osofisan the opportunity to air his commentary on the novel's narrative discourse. In conclusion this essay discovers that Osofisan deploys the procedural encoder – and to manipulate his narration, draw the reader's attention to the manipulative contours of negotiating meanings and interpreting utterances at the cognitive level, with a view to sharpening the satiric focus of the text. Thus, we agree with Ufomata that Osofisan in *Kolera Kolej* deploys skills (both literary and linguistic) to invite the reader to expect the unusual.

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