

Implicit Communication in Niyi Osundare's *The Word is an Egg*

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Abstract

Osundare, in a very dexterous and creative manner, metaphorically demonstrates and illustrates the concept of 'words' in his collection *The Word is an Egg*. Like most poet, Osundare says so much in few words using devised figures of speech such as metaphors, similes, personifications, irony, proverbs, idioms, and many more. This paper, however, focuses only on how Osundare manipulates and weaves the concept of 'the word' using various metaphorical forms which enable his audience to comprehend and visualize 'the word' in different concepts and ideas, and in new perspectives. Five poems from the collection are analyzed using insights from pragmatic analysis as well as Lakoff and Johnson's notion of metaphors. The study concludes that Osundare's language in *The Word is an Egg* is covertly characterized by both verbal and non-verbal metaphors, and that the messages encoded therein are made real and concrete.

Key words: Pragmatics, metaphorical expressions, implicit meaning, image.

Introduction

The basic function of language is to transmit information or message. This communicative role could be performed either explicitly or implicitly. In other words, a language user can decide, on one hand, to pass messages across directly – saying exactly what they mean; on the other hand, (s) he can decide to pass the message indirectly – saying one thing and meaning something else. However, Agbara (2015) opines that 'language is a tool used by speakers to signal not just information/message

but also to denote bonding or distance simultaneously; and this act of messaging in the long run, leads to development' (225). By implication, the essence of interactions, written, spoken, literary or non-literary, in the long run is the development of human society. This development will become a reality only when the word is spoken. Similarly, Senft (2014) opines that 'languages are used... in social interactions ... [and] they are first and foremost instruments for creating social bonds and accountability relations' (3). Osundare demonstrates this importance function of 'the word' (language) in *The Word is an Egg*.

Poetic writing is not just the collocation of words but the ability to create a unique voice that transcends through cultures and ages; according to Arakelian (1991) 'whenever poets sit down to write, they do more than produce an artifact, a poem; they create a voice that resounds through time' (239). Poetic language is so concise that it is often difficult to decode the information being passed across by this voice which is meant to transcend cultures and time. The difficulty to make sense of poetic language is as a result of the use of series of figures of speech employed by the poets not only to garnish the discourse, but also to create imageries which will appeal to the senses of the audience as well as to create strata of meanings.

For Niyi Osundare, art should be characterized by pleasure and usefulness; it should not be a case of 'art-for-art's-sake'. Every art work should be done for humanity sake. This ideology which always reflects in his writings is again emphasized in this collection *The World is an Egg*. Like most poet, Osundare says so much in *The Word is an Egg* using devised figures of speech such as metaphors, similes, personifications, irony, proverbs, parallelisms, and many more. As a poet he manipulates and weaves, in a very crafty and creative manner his thought and belief. And through his language usage and metaphorical expressions he demonstrates, emphasizes, illustrates and reveals the importance of the concept of 'words' as well as stresses the qualities of 'word'. He

metaphorically dignifies the concept of 'the word' to a higher level.

This paper identifies, explains and analyses Osundare's verbal and non-verbal metaphorical expressions with the purpose of disentangling the hidden messages and the layers of meanings in the poems.

Metaphor

Metaphor has been defined as '... a way of conceiving of one thing in terms of another, and its primary function is understanding' (Lakoff & Johnson 2003, p. 36) It helps to highlight shared features between two distinct ideas, objects or concepts that are dissimilar in all respect but share certain features in common. Metaphorical utterances help to stimulate hearers' senses such that they produce truly novel meanings beyond what is said. According to Agbara (2016, p. 97) '... the pragmatic strength of metaphors lies in assisting the addressee to understanding and to experience an idea or a thing in a new but indirect [implicit] manner as intended by the speaker' (96). In such metaphorical expressions, 'the two dissimilar ideas or things placed side by side as if they were similar, are used pragmatically, to structure the thinking and knowledge of the listeners, and to concretize and conceptualize abstract ideas....' (97) Hence, metaphors are often employed by language users as devices for passing information (message) in an implicit style.

Metaphors features in most communicative situations – spoken and written discourse; it can be verbal or non-verbal. In speech, gesticulations, motions and other nonverbal symbols are used to complement verbal metaphors. In written discourse, on the other hand, graphological features as well as pictorial presentation of a text are means of non-verbal metaphor. Thus, the absence or excessive and infrequent usage of punctuation symbols speaks volumes.

Most language users often regard and view metaphorical expressions as simply ornamental devices within discourse especially poetic writings. Hayakawa (1978), however, feels

that they are more than ‘ornaments of discourse’; rather metaphors are ‘direct expressions of evaluation and are bound to occur whenever we have strong feelings to express’ (109). Put differently, metaphorical utterances are so close to human thoughts, reasoning and activities such that language users almost always adorn their utterances with them. Hence, it is ‘... a legitimate device not only in literature but in science, philosophy, and law: it is effective in praise and abuse, prayer and promotion, description and prescription’ (Davidson 1978, p. 31). In like manner, Lakoff & Johnson (2003) observe that human conceptual system is structured metaphorically because ‘we act according to the way we perceive things’ (4-5). So we say: “Time is money”, “Don’t waste my time”; argument is seen as war, hence the saying: “Attack a position”; and the mind is seen as a machine, so we say: ‘someone broke down’. Earlier on, they state that ‘our conceptual system ... plays a central role in defining our everyday realities’ (4) although we are not aware of it; its nature or structure is reflected in the way we use language and ‘since communication is based on the same conceptual system that we use in thinking and acting, language is an important source of evidence for what the system is like’ (p.4). Consequently, metaphors are used freely in every human endeavour because

...so many of the concepts that are important to us are either abstract or not clearly delineated in our experience (the emotions, ideas, time, etc), we need to get a grasp on them by means of other concepts that we understand in clearer terms (spatial, orientation, object, etc). This need leads to metaphorical definition in our conceptual system. (Lakoff & Johnson 2003, p. 115)

The use of metaphors in any communication does not only beautify the discourse but also helps to concretize the

message in such a way that the message becomes indelible in the memory of the receiver. Appraising the unique role of metaphor in discourse, Lederach (2005) affirms that it 'is a creative act. The spontaneous way it is formulated brings something new into the world and has a life. It creates an image of what the experience of living is like The metaphor – like a movie, a painting, or a poem – invites interaction, probing, and echoes.' (54) This singular feature of metaphor makes it possible not just to concretize information but, sometimes, makes what is being communicated become a reality. Lakoff & Johnson (2003) opine that metaphors

...can have the power to define reality. They do this through a coherent network of entailments that highlight some features of reality and hide others. The acceptance of the metaphor which forces us to focus only on those aspect of our experience that it highlights, leads us to view the entailments of the metaphor as being true. Such "truths" may be true, of course, only relative to reality defined by the metaphor (157-158).

Thus, metaphors are not simply tools for indirect comparison rather; they are also means of stimulating similarity between the two concepts, ideas or objects placed side by side in the speech based on the context of communication, as well as the background experience of the participants in the discourse. Consequently, metaphor perform significant role in the process of decoding linguistic codes in that 'metaphors [help] to provide a partial understanding of one kind of experience in terms of another kind of experience. This may involve preexisting isolated similarities, the creation of new similarities, and more.' (Lakoff & Johnson, 154)

Metaphors can be grouped based on the nature of the similarity between the two concepts, ideas or objects, and more importantly on the purpose of the metaphor. Consequently,

Lakoff & Johnson identify three major classes of metaphors namely; structural, orientation and ontological metaphors. Structural metaphor is that sets of metaphors that 'metaphorically structure [one concept] in terms of another'; hence the utterance "don't waste my time" is a product of structuring the concept "time" as "money". However, orientational metaphor '... does not structure one concept in terms of another but instead organizes a whole system of concepts with respect to one another.' (15 -16) Most orientational metaphors 'have to do with spatial orientation ... [arising] from the fact that we have bodies of the sort we have and they function as they do in our physical environment'. (15) Orientational metaphors are not arbitrary in that 'they have a basis in our physical and cultural experiences... the polar positions up-down, in-out, etc, are physical in nature, orientational metaphor based on them can vary from culture to culture. For examples, in some culture, the future is in front of us whereas in others it is in back' (15). In explaining how orientational metaphors might have developed from our cultural experiences, they cited examples from William Nagy (1974):

HAPPY IS UP; SAD IS DOWN

I am feeling up. That boosted my spirits. You're in high spirit. I'm feeling down. I'm depressed. He is really low these days. My spirit sank.

CONSCIOUS IS UP; UNCONSCIOUS IS DOWN.

Get up. Wake up. I'm up already. He fell asleep.

HEALTH AND LIFE ARE UP; SICKNESS AND DEATH ARE DOWN

He's in top shape. Lazarus rose from the death. He fell ill. He came down with the flu. He dropped dead.

HIGH STATUS IS UP; LOW STATUS IS DOWN.

She'll rise to the top. She fell in status. (15-17)

On the basis of these illustrations, they concluded that orientational metaphors are mostly formulated along spatial notions derived from our human experiences and culture (p.18). Ontological metaphor, on the other hands, helps language users to understand experiences in terms of physical entity and substance. Ontological metaphors elaborate experiences such that 'events and actions are conceptualized metaphorically as objects, activities as sub-stances, states as containers' (31) for better understanding of our experiences; and enable us to plan for course of actions for the future. Lakoff and Johnson cited the idea of the rising cost of living – inflation which is assigned physical character in statements; inflation is treated as an entity hence the following statements:

Inflation is lowering our standard of living.
We need to combat inflation.
Inflation makes me sick. (26)

Ontological metaphors are used for varied purposes such as

Referring: My fear of insect is driving my wife crazy.
Quantifying: It will take a lot of patience to finish this book.
There's so much hatred in the world.
Identifying aspect: I can't keep up with the pace of modern time. (27)

The practice of assigning non human entity some aspect of human qualities and also some physical objects are elaborated as persons (personification) belong to the class of ontological metaphor. According to Lakoff & Johnson 'personification is a general category that covers a very wide range of metaphors, each picking out different aspect of a person or way of looking at a person. ...they are extension of ontological metaphor.' (34) Thus, such non-human entities or physical objects are comprehended 'on the basis of our [human] own motivations,

goals, actions and characteristics' (34). They concluded that both orientational and ontological metaphorical expressions are so natural and common in our thoughts and utterances that they are not noticed as metaphors. Moreover, they 'serve very limited range of purposes – referring, quantifying, [identifying, setting goals and motivating actions]' (27 & 28).

For a proper understanding of metaphoric expressions two aspects of meaning – semantic and pragmatics – come into play. The semantic knowledge of the two ideas, objects or concepts placed side by side is required in order to decode the relationship between the two and thus arrive at the intended meaning. However, pragmatic meaning seems to be more appropriate in the analysis of metaphoric expressions in that the meaning of a particular metaphoric expression is connected to the meaning intended by the originator (speaker) of the expression aided by the context of the metaphorical expressions.

Pragmatics

Language is systematic and is made up of three essential components, namely syntax, semantics and pragmatics. These three components constitute semiotic theory of language. Expatiating on these components, Dijk states '... syntax is the study of what and how (it) is said or expressed, semantics the study of what is (thereby) meant, and pragmatics the study of what (thereby) is done. In other words, pragmatics is the part of 'language which focuses on actions' (3). Its interest lies solely in what speakers of language do with the language. Pragmatic study deals with the analysis of what is not said but is implied in what is said. According to Verschueren implied meaning is 'what can be meant or communicated beyond what is explicitly or literally said, by means of presuppositions, implications and implicatures' (p.50). Presupposition refers to the unambiguous postulations about real world in which the meaning of an utterance depends. Implicature, on the other hands, is the bridge between what is said and what is not said but implied; implication refers to the inference or insinuation of what is said.

These are indispensable tools in arriving at the intended speaker meaning. In chapter four of his book, *Pragmatics* (1983), Levinson observes

conversational implicature as a special kind of pragmatic inference [which] cannot be thought of as semantic because they are based squarely on certain contextual assumptions concerning the co-operativeness of participants in a conversation, rather than being built into the linguistic structure of the sentence that gave rise to them. (167)

He identifies two types of presuppositions – semantic and pragmatic. Whereas semantic presupposition depends on truth conditions; pragmatic presupposition does not depend on truth condition but on inferences based on the context of the discourse, background knowledge the social status of the participants.

The fact that both semantics and pragmatics deal with meaning has brought about the similarity between the two branches of linguistic studies. Semantics deals with that aspect of meaning accounted for by truth-condition while pragmatics handles meaning from a different angle. According to Gazdar

Pragmatics has as its topic those aspects of meaning of utterances which cannot be accounted for by straightforward reference to the truth conditions of the sentences uttered. Put crudely: PRAGMATICS = MEANING – TRUTH CONDITIONS. (Quoted in Levinson 1983, 12)

The concept of meaning is crucial to both semantics and pragmatics. Subsequently, some linguists regard pragmatics as a 'waste basket' which handles the residue of semantics (Levinson 1983, 18). It is pertinent to note that pragmatics, in all ramifications, is neither a 'waste basket' nor a residue of

semantics. Rather, it is a 'shift from the paradigm of theoretical grammar (in particular, syntax) to the paradigm of language users' (Mey 2001, 4). Put differently, pragmatics deals with language performance. Agbara (2016) contends that

Pragmatics focuses on what speakers use language (words or utterances) to do in particular situations (context); as well as the intentions and purposes which the speakers want to achieve with the 'implied' meaning of the utterance and the conditions for the choice of linguistic expression influenced by the social principles of discourse... (21)

Although, both semantics and pragmatics are related; they are distinct and their interests in linguistic studies differ. While semantics is a linguistic theory concerned with the study of visible meaning as encoded in linguistic codes - utterances and sentences, pragmatics as a theory, on the other hand, is interested in seeking to convey and identify the 'invisible meaning or how we recognize what is meant even when it isn't actually said (written)' (Yule 127). Senft, in his book *Understand Pragmatics*, regards pragmatics as a 'transdiscipline' (4) study because of how pragmatics has build bridges of interconnectivity between different branches of linguistic study. His definition 'the transdiscipline that studies [the] language - and culture-specific forms of language use' (4) underscores the fact that pragmatic is not a 'waste basket' but an interconnecting bridge. The nature of pragmatics is such that it incorporates some aspects of other linguistic studies in its attempt to create complete understanding of an utterance and the consequence of such utterances on the audience. This is the view of Leech (1983) when he opines that 'pragmatics studies a language as distinct from, but complementary to the system of language... whose essence is the use of language to bring out such and such results in the hearer's consciousness.' (209) Similarly, Crystal (1987) regards

pragmatics not as a 'wastage basket' but as 'the study of those factors that govern our choices of language in social interactions and the effect of our choices on others' (106). Thus, one of the central interests of pragmatics theory is mostly on the outcome or consequences of the language usage.

One major issue that helps to differentiate pragmatics from semantics is the notion of context. Semantics theory does not place much importance on the role of context in the process of identifying the meaning of an utterance or sentence. The point is that the explicit meaning of a sentence (utterance) often remains constant even when the context changes. However, it is not so with implicit (pragmatic) meaning. Context is a vital aspect in identifying implied meaning in pragmatic theory. Nonetheless, context plays a role not only in pragmatic study but also in language studies in general. However, pragmatic interpretation like discourse analysis, is highly context dependent. Context, in pragmatics, would include those features that are culturally (socially and psychologically) and linguistically relevant to the production and interpretation of utterance (Levinson 1983, 22). Mey (2001) observes that in order to understand any utterance correctly, a person must make reference to the world of the speaker. He identifies the speaker's world to include "...the speaker's linguistic, social cultural and general life context" (30). The importance of context in relationship to language studies was first introduced by Malinowski (1923) when he posits that utterance can only "become intelligible when placed within its context of situation..." (306). He further observes that "the study of any form of speech used in connection with vital work would reveal...the dependence of the meaning of each word upon practical experience, and of the structure of each utterance upon the momentary situation in which it is spoken...." (312). In as much as context is a necessary aspect in every linguistic study, pragmatics, however, takes the importance to a higher level. Raj (2011) notes this elevated position accorded to context in pragmatic analysis when he states "pragmatics which is the study

of purposes for which sentences are used, also tries to account for *the real world conditions* under which such sentence may be appropriately used as an utterance. (54)

The Word is an Egg: A Synopsis

The clause 'The Word is an Egg' which is the title of the collection is a literal translation of a Yoruba adage "Eyin l'oro". Osundare sees the Word as 'Abuubutan' (inexhaustible). For him, the 'Word' is larger than life. It is

omnipotent and omnipresent: it is creative and creativity. It is the beginning and the end: "The Word is life/The Word is death" The Word incorporate the two great markers of human experience but also transcend them because it is "abuubutan" (inexhaustible). And in truth, who can ever exhaust words? (Ogundele, 2001, 29).

This apt description underscores what the entire poem is all about. The poet persona seems to disagree with the Biblical saying: 'In the beginning was the Word'. So he begins with

In the Beginning was not the Word
In the Word was the beginning.' (10)

As far as the poem persona is concerned, 'the word' occupies a preeminent position more than the beginning (creation). The anthology is a collection of poems divided into three major parts: introduction, content and the conclusion. The introduction is

Section 1: *Abuubutan* – it contains one lengthy poem titled 'Invocation of the word'.

The content is made up of three sections:

Section II: The Word is an Egg – it contains seventeen poems.

Section III: Silence – this section is made up of sixteen poems.

Section IV: Thunderword – this part contains thirteen poems;

The conclusion is section V: Omoleti – like section I it contains one very lengthy poem. A total of forty-eight poems are in the anthology. The author, Osundare treats the ‘word’ as an entity which is sacred, delicate, important, destructive and constructive. Although, word is illusive, the poet gives it embodiment, and through the use of series of metaphorical expressions concertizes it, and presents it as an entity that is so powerful that it can be used positively and negatively, hence

He who falls from the tree in the open forest
May still walk on mended legs
But there is no doctor
For him who falls off the tree of words (21)

Osundare takes the notion ‘speaking is acting’ to an elevated level and hence even when the ‘word’ is not spoken, whether it is ‘trapped’ or ‘imprisoned’, it still performs; it is still creative,

Committing voice
To Truth
And Dream (40)

Osundare endorses the ‘word’ to a dignified height and demonstrates how the word is a “demi-god” can transform and deform; it is mysteriously powerful, hence

... rain-clouds gather
At the instance of a word

... rivers walk up-hill
On the order of a proverb

... a well-appointed Alamo
Turn needles in the guilty ear

... well-aimed songs
Uncrown the emperor(16)

The 'word' is also presented as an entity which can control and manipulate hence it can usher in peace, settlement and calmness in times of misunderstanding even if the words are not sincere there is gesture of reconciliation as the poet imply in

Plastic handshakes
Deciduous smiles (68)

The Word is indeed in-exhaustive; and has far-reaching influence not only on man but also on nature.

Methodology

The Word is an Egg, in the tradition of Niyi Osundare's poems, is made up of series of poems subdivided into sections. Consequently, out of the forty-eight poems contained in the collection, five poems were selected for effective and efficient analysis. We chose poems that, to the best of our knowledge, reflect some of the major subject matters which are the use of words should be balanced, language users should avoid two extremes in the use of the word – excessive wrong usage which can lead to destruction; and the act of refusing to speaker as well as the wrong choice / usage of words which can lead to lack of development and progress in the community. The data for the analysis are taken from sections I and II. In section I we chose:

- i) 'The word is an egg',
- ii) 'Divining words' and

iii) 'Falling off the tree of words'.

In section II we chose:

iv) 'Trapped words' and

v) 'Pregnant word'.

Where necessary, incursions are made into other poems to portray the relationship between the entire poems in the anthology. Although, these poems are characterized by series of figures of speech, the focus of this paper is on metaphoric expressions as used by the poet. In this study, personifications and similes are regarded as devices for metaphors. Using insights from pragmatics study we identified and analyzed the metaphorical expressions in the selected poem.

Theoretical Framework

The data analysis is based on pragmatic theory which deals with the exposition of the unsaid from what is said. Thus, the meaning of linguistic codes is arrived at through presuppositions and implicatures of the utterances. The study views metaphors from the perspectives of Lakoff and Johnson in *Metaphor we lived by* (2003). Metaphor is not merely as an indirect comparison but a tool which has '... the power to define reality... through a coherent networks of entailments that highlight some features of reality ...' (157)

Discussion and Analysis

The collection, *The Word is an Egg*, features several figures of speech among which are metaphors. However, our discussion and analysis are only on the selected five poems; and our interest is solely on verbal and non-verbal metaphorical expressions in the poems.

Verbal Metaphors

Verbal metaphor is a situation in which words are used in an implicit manner to communicate information in a novel and aesthetic forms.

“The Word is an Egg” (the title of the anthology and the first poem in section II) is a metaphorical expression. The poet uses this expression to show the similarity between ‘word’ and ‘egg’. Like an egg, when a word is spoken, it cannot be retrieved; it can bring about new thing (development) just as when egg is used to bake. However, when spoilt egg is broken and added to ingredients for baking or cooking, it destroys the mixture; similarly a ‘bad’ word can cause injure (destruction) when uttered. All through the anthology, Osundare is able to describe the concept of ‘the word’ using various metaphorical forms.

i) ‘The word is an egg’

In the first stanza Osundare metaphorically uses ‘pink fire’ to create the reality in the use of words: fire can purifies, burns (destroy) and create, and so is the tongue – hence ‘My tongue is a pink fire’. The ‘word’ cannot be produced without the ‘tongue’; so the tongue is important in the production of words. The product of the tongue – ‘the word’ is given a metaphorical image of ‘fire’; depending on the context of using this product ‘the word’, the receiver’s ears may be burnt ‘set ablaze’ meaning it is unpleasant and so destructive to the hearer. ‘When proverbs clash’ implicitly referring to the difficulty in accepting the instructions, or expression of basic truth given through ‘words’ especially in abnormal situations – ‘in the street of waiting laughter’. The situation in which the persona in the poem finds himself is unpleasant and so there is lack of joy or the expression of joy has become ‘waiting laughter’. ‘Murmuring’ implies dissatisfaction and the fear to speak out or express one’s feeling. So when most people are afraid to express their feelings, the elderly one – metaphorically ‘the lips of the setting sun’ are able to vocalize their feelings sorrowfully in form of ‘a dirge’. This

lamentation of the elders in the society may, like 'egg', bring about reformation or deformation depending on the socio-political condition as well as the psychological state of the receiver. The expression 'missing stars...' metaphorically creates darkened situation which implies lack of good things or development and hence

a dirge from the lips of the setting sun
...sing little wreaths

For missing stars...

The lexicons 'moon' and 'stars' are used to imply a state of the brightness of life – happiness, comfort, joy, etc., but as far as the persona is concerned, the society is deprived of this brightness. However in spite of this lack of brightness (abnormality in the society), 'the word' must be uttered with caution because like an egg

If it falls on outcrop
Of a stumbling tongue

It breaks
Ungatherably (14)

The poet metaphorically creates the reality that what is said can be misinterpreted, spread around wrongly, and impossible to retrieved.

ii) 'Divining word'

In this poem, the poet metaphorically presents 'word' as a fighter - 'horizontal thrust of words' for the rights of the commoners who are in terrible (dark) conditions – 'germ- / Igniting towards the light'. 'Idioms' implies words that will soothe the commoners' socio-economical situations but draw the attention of political leaders to the truth or realities of the moment. And

Marching flank to flank
Against army of silence (15)

These 'idioms' (word) which are 'Clamorous like anklebells', metaphorically speaking, are powerful, influential and fearless fighters. Although, the 'words' are fighting for the commoners, they mean no harm hence, they are 'serene like a water lily'; they are advocating for peace and tranquility in the society.

The poem persona releasing that words are sacred 'cut a path on the divination tray' can create negative and positive effect, he becomes apprehensive - 'long for... the company they keep'- on the use of words. In this poem, Osundare uses concrete metaphors to present the 'word' as a vicious physical object, an activist.

iii) 'Falling off the tress of words'

In this poem the poet metaphorically creates the image of 'word' as an entity that is so powerful and destructive. Consequently, if a person is downgraded or the spirit is broken through negative use of words, such a person will never recover from the damage caused because like egg once broken it cannot be gathered or mended:

But there is no doctor
For him who falls off the tree of words (21)

Osundare, in this poem, metaphorically paints the pictures and presents his audience the realities of the negative effects of the use of foul language which is similar to spoilt eggs. He uses the following phrases to psychologically reduce the addressee to a very low level:

... litter the streets of my ears – metaphorically
meaning useless and dirty person

- ... scurry like a frightened rabbit – implies a coward
 - ... talks as ... a grindstone for hot pepper - implies blurred utterances like a person who stammers
 - ... lightning fingers
 - ... dived ... into the bottom of Aduke's pot ...
- (21)

In these last three lines above, the persona implies that the addressee is a thief and a defiant.

The use of these down grading words 'litter', 'frightened rabbit', 'grindingstone', 'lightning fingers', etc., is an expression of anger and hate. The poet demonstrates the reality of polluted words can damage beyond repairs.

The fear of uttering 'words' which 'break ungatherably' may lead to 'Silence' the title of section III of the anthology; this Osundare metaphorically referred to as 'Trapped word' and 'Pregnant word'

iv) 'Trapped words'

In this poem the poet implicitly demonstrates the fact that 'words' cannot be imprisoned; they will certainly push out like unbroken egg which turns out as a new life – chick and pushes out of the egg shell. Similarly,

- ... word sweats - create the image of a woman in labour In the prison of Silence

Of course, it is impossible to trap 'words', so the word is still active even when trapped

Syllables peep
Behind the sentry

The silenced word 'sweats' implies being anxious to be set freed and so

Breaks beak and breath
Against the absolute bars

'Words' are presented metaphorically as entity that is very strong and obstinate that in spite of being 'trapped' it still '... reigns' and perform its legitimate function of creating:

Committing voice
To Truth
And Dreams (40)

This poem demonstrates the reality that silence communicates.

v) 'Pregnant words'

The poet metaphorically describes the negative effects of not speaking out at the appropriate time. In stanzas 1-3 he paints images of discomfort and abnormalities as a result of not speaking out. Whoever refuses to speak, suffers

... burn the lip
Like forbidden fruits

... rattle the teeth
Like refrigerated idioms

... dwell the stomach
Like a storm waiting for a wing (45)

The poet creates the reality that 'words' are so powerful and mysterious that they cannot be blocked from performing nature's duty. And whoever refuses to speak out becomes '... an emperor's statue' implying that such a person is not living anymore nor useful to the society. And when someone is unable or refuses to speak out, probably due to unfavourable

situations, the person's outlook and disposition still communicates '...chinks speak volumes'.

A table showing some metaphorical expressions, the implied realities and the form of metaphor

Expression	Image / Reality	Metaphor Form
The word is an egg	Productive and destructive entity	Ontological
My tongue is a pink fire ... set your ears ablaze	Destructive agent	Ontological
... lips of the setting sun	The voices of elders	Structural
... the moon / ... missing stars...	Lack of development and socio amenities	Structural
Stumbling tongue	A person who cannot keep secret	Orientalational
Marching flank to flank	A fighter	Orientalational
horinzontal thrust of words	A powerful entity	Orientalational
... like anklebells	Noisy and influential entity	Structural
... like water lily	Gentle and peaceful entity	Ontology
On the divination tray	Sacred entity	Structural
... litter the streets of my ears	irritant and a pest	Ontological
... grindingstone for hot pepper	Unsmooth utterances	Ontological
Scurry like a frightened rabbit	Fearful person	Structural
... only sees in the dead of night	A coward / not bold	Structural
... lightning finger... dived.. Aduke's pot...	A rebellious person of a defiant	Structural
Breaks beak and breath	A strong and obstinate entity	Ontological

Against the absolute bars		
...word sweats ... syllables peep	An entity that cannot be restrained	Ontological
... burn the lip / ... rattles the teeth	A person who is upset and uncomfortable	Structural
... an emperor's statue	Lifeless entity	Structural
... chinks speak volumes	Pictorial Transmission of information	Ontological

Non-verbal Metaphor

Non-verbal metaphor consists of the use of signs, gestures, symbols and shapes to communicate meaning in an indirect manner. In this paper, graphic or non-verbal metaphor refers to the **significance of infrequent use of punctuation marks which is considered an** indirect means of passing the writer intention or meaning. The essence of the use of punctuation in a written discourse is to graphically represent the pauses which occur during speech and to group grammatical units into meaningful groups. However, whenever a writer chooses to deviate from the conventional method of punctuation symbols, it is done purposefully and hence communicative.

Osundare, in a creative mode, uses punctuation marks sparingly especially the full stop, which is an end marker, as well as some other internal markers such as commas, semi-colons and colons in most of the poems in the collection. The use of punctuation marks always signifies pause of varying degrees. The absence of these marks therefore, creates a continuous flow of the message of the poems. Osundare metaphorically create the impression that the entire collection is characterized by one whole and indivisible message: the word is powerful and cannot be restrained in any form. Thus he metaphorically creates a bonding for the information contained in the collection.

The poem, 'The word is an egg', flows continuously with no end markers. However, elliptical marker, comma and colon are used once. The use of elliptical marker in the 5th stanza

And sing little wreath
For missing stars ...

metaphorically concretizes and reiterates the concept of missing. Thus, what is missing is not simply the 'stars' but it includes all the elements that bring about illuminations.

Comma and colon are used in

The Word, the Word
Is an egg:

The use of these two markers helps to draw the reader's attention to the concept of the largeness of 'the word'. The letter 'w' is capitalized to metaphorically create the reality that it is a sacred entity that must be used with 'respect.' Similarly, the colon is used to vividly astonish the reader the effect of lack of caution in the use of the sacred entity 'the word'. In 'Divining word' the only punctuation mark used is the hyphen in

For a tribe of idioms germ-
Inating towards the light

It is used to create the reality of the unusual effect of idioms which is not outward but innate. By truncating 'germ-/Inating', Osundare metaphorically emphasizes the importance of idioms which is to prune unacceptable traits or/and to emphasis a societal conventional manner of behaviour. In 'Falling off the tree of words' the poet uses commas, semi-colon and elliptical markers. Although these punctuations are used in line with the conventions of punctuation, the elliptical marker in

And your lightning fingers
Which dived last season into
The bottom of Aduke's pot...

is used metaphorically to concretize the fact that something got missing in Aduke's pot when the addressee's lightning fingers 'dived' into it. In the poem, 'Trapped words', there is no end mark. The only punctuation mark which features in it is the semi-colon

Of dumb windows;
Across this vast solitude
A stubbornness

The poem, 'Pregnant word', does not feature any punctuation mark except for the possessive mark used in a conventional mode.

The five selected poems are characterized by absence of the full stop.

Conclusion

Through his lexical maneuvering, Osundare has been able to display in linguistic and graphic manner the ideology of poetic composition which is 'to compress, to say much in little' (Leech, 1969, 78) Osundare has succeeded, through bountiful use of metaphorical expressions, to extend to multiple levels Yoruba belief of 'the word is an egg'. In an implicit manner he demonstrates and illustrates the reality of the 'word' as an entity that is so powerful that it is both productive and destructive, and cannot be reduced to passivity. He not only idolizes the 'word' in a very crafty and creative manner, but also metaphorically emphasizes and reveals the importance of the concept of 'words' as well as its qualities. He creates various strata of the meanings of 'the word' in such a manner that it is real, concrete and permanent (memorable) in the minds of his readers.

To achieve this, he employed concrete metaphors to create images of physical concepts for abstract ideas. Osundare employs three basic verbal metaphors: structural metaphor which deals with the configuration of one concept in terms of

another; orientational metaphor which ‘organizes a whole system of concepts with respect to one another’; and ontological metaphors which help to elaborate experiences in term of physical entity and substance. He also makes use of non-verbal (graphic) metaphor. Through non-verbal metaphor, Osundare creates a typographical display of the entire collection which at the end represents an unending space of free-floating meaning connections between the poems in his collection. Thus, the collection *The Word is an Egg* can be perceive as an egg that has been broken into pieces of poems and impossible to be gathered together as a whole.

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