A CRITICAL STYLISTIC ANALYSIS OF AFRICAN FEMINISM IN CHIKA UNIGWE'S *NIGHT DANCER*

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Abstract

This study aims at analysing how language helps to establish the ideology of African Feminism in the text, *Night Dancer*. The study adopts Lesley Jeffries Critical Stylistic (CS) Analytical model as theoretical framework. Selected extracts from the text formed the data for the study. The extracts were subjected to Jeffries selected CS tools while simple descriptive analysis was adopted for data analysis. The findings reveal that while naming and describing had the highest instance in the text with 58%, presenting others' speech and thought had the lowest, that is, 1% respectively. Thus, the study found out that although Critical Stylistic tools such as naming and describing, representing actions/states and events, equating and contrasting, enumerating and exemplifying, assuming and implying and presenting others' speech and thought were deployed in the text at varying degrees, they all synergised in no small measures to establish the coherence (meaning) of the extracts and the overall linguistic construction of the ideology of African Feminism in the selected text.

Keywords: African, Feminism, Stylistics, Ideology, Language

Introduction

The text, *Night Dancer*, tells the story of Mma who represents the liberal African feminist and her stubborn mother, Ezi, who represents the radical African feminist. The study x-rays and chronicles the lives of these two female protagonists, Ezi and her daughter, Mma. The title of the text, *Night Dancer*, is the translation of an Acholi Ugandan word for women thought to be witches for daring to be different or women who go against societal norms and expectations. Britannica (2019) defines the Acholi people as descendants of a variety of Luo-speaking people believed to have migrated centuries back from

South Sudan to a district of Uganda called Acholi. The text is divided into three parts. Part One, which is set in Enugu (the Coal City) in South Eastern part of Nigeria, has Fourteen (14) chapters. Part Two, set in Lokpanta in the 60s, has Fifteen (15) chapters while Part Three has its setting in Kaduna in 2002 with three chapters.

Most feminist texts like the *Night Dancer* highlight women's plights like subjugation and maltreatment in marriage with the aim of projecting female assertion or voice for possible change in societal norm(s). Other issues like rape, sexual harassment and violence against women are central focus of feminist writers; they seek to resolve these by calling attention to them in their write ups and advocacies (Opara 12-13 cited in Nsirim, 2016).

The notion of African Feminism may have been criticised by some scholars who view Africa as very diverse. This school of thought is of the opinion that since Africa is diverse, what affects women from the Maghreb countries for instance, like Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt and Morocco may be different from what women south of the Sahara like Nigeria, Ghana, Cameroun, and Benin Republic go through (Atanga, 2014). It could be argued however that African feminism is feminism championed and innovated by African women irrespective of where they come from in Africa. These women seek ways of making right the conditions and needs of African women in their writings. This study adopts Lesley Jeffries Critical Stylistic (CS) analytical model as theoretical framework.

A Brief Synopsis of the *Night Dancer*

The *Night Dancer* written in three parts reveals who played what role, what happened, and why they happened. The story revolves around a young lady called Mma whose paternity in most part of her formative years is shrouded in secrecy. In the text, Ezi is Adanma's mum. She is married to Mr Mike Ugwu, a business man based in Kaduna who runs a thriving supermarket. She walks out of her marriage upon realizing her husband fathers a son with her house maid, Rapu. She is badly hurt by that singular incident, especially since she does not

have a son. She has Mma, a daughter, after several years of waiting. Before her death, Ezi pens her life story in letters to her daughter titled *'My Memoirs: The Truth about My Life'*. These memoirs reveal the truth about her mother's past life and why she did what she did. Thus, Ezi's sudden death makes Mma who hitherto resented her mother to know a lot more about her past. This unexpected turn of events makes her to rethink the resentment and contempt she held towards her mother as she reunites with the family she never knew she had. The language of the text establishes that the society is patriarchal; hence, Ezi's rebellion against the tradition is faced with societal stigma from within and without. Consequently, her family disowns her as she chooses to be a single parent; a decision that makes her to be disparaged and disdained by her society.

Theoretical Framework

This work is premised on the analytical tools of Critical Stylistics (CS), a functional approach to linguistic criticism developed over the last decade by Lesley Jeffries. The field, CS emerged with Lesley Jeffries publication titled *'Critical Stylistics: The Power of English'* (Jeffries, 2010). It attempts to provide the missing link between Stylistics (textual choices) and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) which is an analytical approach that studies how ideologies, identities and inequalities are produced, reproduced and maintained in text, in social and political contexts (Ibrahim, 2017). Language is the useful instrumentality for uncovering or establishing ideology, power, inequality, dominance, and resistance. Critical Stylistics is thus, a fusion of two linguistics methodologies, that is CDA and Stylistics, to forge a new approach called *Critical Stylistics (CS)*. CS offers a more developed and rigorous theory than CDA using a set of tools. Accordingly, CS emerged as a method of exposing ideologies in texts and offers a fully developed textual grounded model that helps text producers to create a worldview which Halliday refers to as the ideational function of texts. These tools, as postulated by Jeffries (2010), include: naming and describing; representing actions/state and events; equating and exemplifying;

enumerating and contrasting; prioritising; constructing time and space; hypothesizing; assuming and implying; negating; and presenting others' speech and thought (Jeffries, 2010, Reeve, 2014).

Methodology

The data for this work are Fifteen (15) extracts from the text, *Night Dancer* (2013) by Chika Unigwe, an award-winning Nigerian author in the Diaspora. The researcher subjected the text to the six selected CS analytical tools as postulated by Jeffries (2010). In this work, therefore, the researcher deployed six of these tools namely: naming and describing; representing actions/state and events; equating and exemplifying; enumerating and contrasting; assuming and implying; and presenting others' speech and thought respectively to the selected extracts with a view to uncovering how language use in the text establishes the ideology of African Feminism.

Night Dancer: A Critical Stylistic Analysis
Extract 1

> With sons you could afford to be complacent but not with daughters. You hold your daughters close to your chest, you stifled any desire they might show, you straitjacketed them in sensible brassieres and you kept a close watch on the relationships they formed. (ND, 2013:66)

It appears from the extract above that the African society places high premium on raising daughters well so they could marry young men that have great potentials without placing such on the sons. Unigwe (2013, p.66) could be argued to have exemplified this notion as she succinctly asserts the above through Mma.

The CS linguistic tool of naming and describing seems to play a significant role here as could be seen in the choice of nouns as referent pointers which also serve to describe the actors. The nouns which describe critical actors in the extracts include: *sons, daughters, brassieres, chest* and *desire*. Although the use of deictic references such as *you* and

your under the CS linguistic tool 'constructing time and space' is not a focus in the work, it also helps to identify and point to the referents. Jeffries (2010:36) argued that naming and describing is the linguistic process by which people, places and things are typically identified in language including adjectival ways in which entities and their ideological consequences are characterized.

Representing actions/states and events is the second CS tool deployed as seen in the verbs used. This tool focuses on the predicators (verbs) in sentences. The predicator is where the actions and processes that take place between entities (the actors) in texts are represented. That is, the verbal element of the clause which tells the reader what actions or events have been or are carried out. The verbs include *hold*; *stifled*; *show*; *straitjacketed*; *kept*; *watch*; *and formed.* The lexical verb *'stifled'* which is presented in the past tense as in: *'You stifled any desire they may show'* suggests that daughters do not have liberty for self-expression as boys; as such, desires in daughters are suppressed or silenced as soon as signs become visible. The choice of 'straitjacketed' suggests restraining, confining and or constricting of the girls. This is a common practice in African societies where girls are meant to be seen and not heard. This attitude is likely to prevent the female folk from exercising and realising their full potentials when not checked.

A third tool in this extract is the use of equating and contrasting which serves as antonymous relationships in the form of opposition and parallel structure as can be seen in *'with sons you could afford to be complacent but not with daughters'*. It should be noted here, that two contrasting linguistic items of 'sons' and 'daughters' appear juxtaposed. The clause *'hold your daughters close to your chest'* shows the importance parents place on raising their daughters in Africa. In the patriarchal society such as the one in which the text is set, parents deliberately curtail and checkmate the desires of their daughters at the same time watching and scrutinizing the kind of relationships they keep.

The African society could, therefore, be argued to in a way contribute to stifling the humanity of girls. Accordingly, the text portrays the society in which the text is set as one that cannot afford to

be complacent with daughters, but may be with their sons. Girls are taught to do their chores well and are prepared to be chaste until they get married to that suitable suitor. One may argue that if parents can deploy the amount of energy - they deploy in raising daughters, into raising their sons as well, the society may be devoid of all the evils besetting it. Perhaps, this may be the reason Adichie (2012), a Nigerian self-acclaimed feminist in the diaspora, in her popular you-tube video TEDx Talk titled, *'We Should All Be Feminists'* suggests the way to start to change the trajectory of raising daughters and sons differently. According to Adichie (2012), "we do a great disservice to boys in how we raise them". This stifling of the humanity of girls can also be seen in Ezi's parents kicking against Ezi's desire to study accounting. Her mum tells her specifically to jettison her desire to do a course such as that. For women, according to her, are meant to study courses like nursing or education so as to be more available to their families. This is one projection of the African society, as captured in *Night Dancer*.

Extract 2

> Bad homes stank and they did not want to stink. They wanted to attract the right sort of man and the right sort of man did not turn up at Ezi's door. Enugu was too small for girls to be seen in a house of ill-repute (ND, 2013:p.68)

In Africa, there is the stereotyping of single-parenting, especially by mothers. People hardly show empathy with the situations of single mothers. The first CS tool used here is representing actions/state and events. The verbs used in this extract to represent actions, states and events include: *stank*; *stink*; *wanted, did*; *turn*; *seen.* These predicators typically express actions by the actor (s). Imagine describing the home of a single mother with such strong verbs as *stink* and *stank* just because there is no father figure in the home. In this ***extract 2*** also, one could see that the society refers to such homes without fathers as homes of *'ill repute' (ND, 2013, p.68).*

A second CS linguistic tool used here is assuming and implying. Here, two technical terms in pragmatics play a critical role. These terms are presupposition and implicature. Whereas, presupposition deals with assumptions that may or not be true as saying for instance that children from single parents are from homes that *stink* or of *ill-repute*, implicature handles both the *said* and *unsaid* in utterances (that is, the undertones or ideological effects of such words or utterances). Jeffries (2010:93) asserts that one of the powers of language and English in particular is the use of assumption and implication to create ideological effects. In pragmatics, implicature (implying) deals with meaning beyond the level of semantics on the basis of context. Therefore, people pass unjustifiable judgments against single mothers as is the case of Ezi (Mma's mum). The fact that societal frowns against single parenting is seen in the text as Ezi practically raises Mma singlehandedly after walking out of her marriage *(ND, 66-67)*. Single parenting, especially by a mother in most African societies, is seen as being against societal demands and expectations. People may not as much as blink an eye if it is a man raising his daughter alone, but will, if it is a woman as such an action could be said to raise questions as to why the woman is not married, as well as label her as being promiscuous. The other married women will keep such single mothers at bay on suspicion the single mothers can snatch their husbands.

Extract 3

> 'The women guarded their men with watchful eyes and sharp-sharp tongues.' (ND, 82)

Ezi said the above about her neighbours. Extract 3 deploys naming and describing as in nouns such as *'women'*, *'men'*, *'eyes'*, and *'tongues'*. Adjectival phrases such as *'watchful eyes'* and *sharp-sharp tongues* are also used to describe actors in the text. This CS tool can be seen to package a lot of ideological effects in the choices of referents used especially with the adjectival phrases of *watchful eyes* and *sharp-sharp tongues* to describe Ezi's neighbours who are women and their

perception of her as a single parent. Presupposition and implied statements are also seen here. The women do not only guard their men with watchful eyes so as not to get them snatched from them by the likes of Ezi whom the society sees as a free woman, but also keep them in check or from derailing and running off with other women. A third CS tool used is representing action/state and event is seen in the use of the predicator *guarded.* The women tend to be very circumspect with their men around Ezi for fear she may snatch them. Ford-Gilboe and Campbell (1996) assert that the single parent family has commonly been viewed as a deviant pathological and less functional than the traditional nuclear family, especially if those kinds of families are headed by women. The patriarchal African society seems to support this position that only men can be successful heads of families and thereby reinforce a negative stereotyping of single parent families headed by women in the society.

Extract 4

>Be a leader, not a follower! No child of mine is going to be a cow. Be the herdsman! Who decides what's fashionable? Who has the right to tell you what's in trend? Your classmates/the media? You are not stylish if you follow the herd. You should stand out. Create your own style, then you'll be truly stylish. (ND, p. 71)

In **extract 4,** it can be seen that Ezi directs Mma to be the boss-lady; to lead while others follow. This stance or view point may be frowned at in most patriarchal societies as these societies hold the view that men should be the heads and not the other way round. Three CS linguistic tools can be seen from the foregoing and these are: naming and describing; equating and contrasting; and enumerating and exemplifying. The following nouns *"leader; 'follower', 'child', 'cow', 'herdsman', 'trend', 'classmates', 'media'*, and *'herd'* function to name and describe the referents. *'Be a leader, not a follower! No child of mine is going to be a cow. Be the herdsman* suggests the use of the second tool, equating and contrasting. The whole extract can be said to be an example of the

third linguistic tool of enumerating and exemplifying. The ideology in Ezi's choice of language as seen in these CS linguistic tools suggests emancipation. Ezi sells this radical ideology to Mma, a more liberal or conservative feminist, with a view to making her break away from the debacle of women being caged and not allowed self-expression. The text also reveals that Ezi is bold, brave and a radical. She believes no one can dictate to her. She symbolizes an African female that opposes the widely held cliché of women being the weaker sex. She proves that through a dint of hard work, she can carve a niche for herself in a man's world.

Extract 5

> 'A parent never apologises even if he regrets his actions. It is the child who should apologise. Ezi knew that. And we waited. She knew what she had to do'. (ND, 2013:106)

It could, therefore, be deduced that Ezi's radical stance inhibits her from forgiving and accepting her husband back and even from going to ask for her parents' forgiveness since the severing of marriage relationship with her husband. One may further argue that Ezi's father's assertion in '*Parent*', '*child*', and *'Ezi'* suggests the use of naming and describing to identify the key actors of Ezi and her parents. Ezi's radicalism sees her taking an opposing radical feminist approach against societal norms and practices. She refuses to seek forgiveness from either her husband or parents, for she believes strongly in her rights. With the benefit of hindsight, one can say Ezi remains unapologetic because she holds the view that she has not done anything wrong. In other words, she is of the opinion that she is the one deserving of their apology, as she is the one hurt by her husband's infidelity and betrayal of trust. This position of hers, however, one could say, is in contradiction with practices in African society which hold the view that the woman must still forgive and forget the past, given that the African man is, by nature, polygamous.

Extract 6

> As soon as they got into the car, Aunty Ezi turned to her husband. 'Despicable man. He can't look after the multitude he has and he has the guts to worry about someone else's childlessness? Am I God, Mike? Am I God? (ND 2013:148)

Extract 6 has the following linguistic items for naming and describing referents: *'car', 'aunty', 'Ezi', 'husband', 'man', 'multitude', 'childlessness', 'God'* and *'Mike'* which appear twice. This further portrays a woman who is bold and brave and who is not cowed by the man. She is not inhibited by societal expectations; such that tend to stifle the woman's self-expression by holding that women should not be outspoken. This tool also packages the ideological effect of the burden of childlessness in the African society. Ezi has already grown tired of the constant nagging from her husband's relatives; especially; uncle Silas, over her childlessness. Her reaction, therefore, indicates her resolve to challenge the status quo. In her frustration, she thunders, *"Am I God, Mike? Am I God?"*.

Extract 7

Ezi's mother in-law declares:

> 'I am glad he's found you. And with these child-bearing hips of yours, you'll soon be filling up the house with babies'. (ND 2013:95)

The ideology of societal expectation for a young woman when she gets married is to have children. This portrayal in the text is through the character of Mike's mum, and this is seen when Mike takes Ezi home to introduce her as the person he would be marrying. Her expressions, *'Child-bearing hips'* (noun phrase) and *'babies'* (noun) suggest naming and describing as well. Presupposition and implicature, as seen in *'Child-bearing hips',* is also suggestive that the actor is assuming and implying that Ezi's hips indicate that she cannot only get pregnant, but carry babies through pregnancies to term.' This is the expectation in a patriarchal society: hence, when the opposite happens, as in the

inability of a woman to have children, especially sons after the first few years of marriage, trouble sets in. The African society sees motherhood as defining the woman and especially if such a woman has sons. In Africa, having sons entitles the woman to property or inheritance. It also entitles her to respect and honour from her husband and kinsmen. In the *Night Dancer*, Ezi initially enjoys love and respect from her in-laws, as seen in the characters of her mother in-law and Uncle Silas, but their patience begins to wane after years of childlessness. Mma's birth does not assuage their feelings, especially the mother in-law who would prefer Ezi gives her a son as grandchild.

Extract 8

> 'Your mother was stubborn. But maybe we shouldn't have pushed her out the way we did. A man never stops loving his child. Obala, blood, it's a strong thing'. (ND 2013:105)

'Your mother was stubborn' as uttered by Mma's grandfather, again confirms this radicalism in Ezi. Naming and describing as in the use of *'mother'*, *'man'*, *'child'*, and *'obala' (blood)* can be seen in the extract. The equating and contrasting tool is also seen in the use of *'but'*. The use of the contrasting tool - *'but'*- indicates some form of regret on the part of Ezi's parents. Perhaps, they should have shown some more empathy rather than dwell so much on the stigma and on what society would say of them as a family when Ezi walked out of her marriage.

Extract 9

The omniscient author declares

> 'When Ezi met Mike, she liked to say, she had not been looking for a husband. She was not like one of those women who measured their worth by the ease with which they snagged a man'. (ND 2013:175)

Ezi's radicalism sees her not having the thought for marriage before she meets Mike. She believes she can survive on her own with or without a man. Again, naming and describing include *'Ezi'*, *'Mike'*,

'husband', women', 'worth', and 'man'. Therefore, the expression, 'She was not like one of those women'...could be said to suggest *equating and contrasting.* She had bigger plans and ambitions which may or not include having a man. Representing action/state and event is also seen in the use of action verbs like *'met', liked', 'looking', 'measured'* and *'snagged'* to package the ideological effect of Ezi's radicalism.

Extract 10

Ezi has this to say of herself in extract 10:

> I am a pioneer... I am one of the few women in my department. It is up to us to encourage other women by staying on and chasing our dreams. And no those dreams do not include marriage, at least until I have my degree firmly in my hand (ND 2013:176).

From extract 10, naming and describing linguistic items include '*pioneer', 'women'* (which appears twice), *'department', 'dreams'* (which appears twice also), *'marriage', 'degree',* and *'hand'.* Equating and contrasting can be seen in the expressions: '*I am one of the few women'* and *'other women'.* The effect of language here cannot be overstated, for it depicts the radical stance of Ezi. It can be argued, therefore, that Unigwe portrays the main character, Ezi, as a firm and strong believer in the power of education and its attendant transforming power in emancipating her in particular and women in general from the stifling grip of the patriarchal African society, into becoming forces to be reckoned with.

Extract 11

> She had her own plans, she said. She was bent on going to the university, succeeding in a man's world. (ND2013:103)

It could also be argued that Unigwe succinctly portrays Ezi as a different breed from women of her time. Thus, *Night Dancer* illustrates that, while other women like Madam Gold, Rapu and even Mma accept the definition of them as given by the society, Ezi chooses not only to reject such a definition, but also to challenge it. She vows to go to the

university and succeed *'in a man's world'* in spite of the resistance from her family who may feel too much education is bad for a woman. *'In a man's world'* is an example of a noun phrase in naming and describing that also lays credence to the patriarchal society of most African societies. Ezi probably realises that with education, emancipation from societal inhibitions on women of her time will be faster. Societal norm expects a woman not to only go back and accept her husband after he commits adultery and marries the other woman, but also expect her to still remain submissive. It could be suggestive, therefore, that Ezi's decision not to go back to her husband is deeper than mere anger of being betrayed. It is more of an opposition to tradition than anything else *(ND 2013:110).* Within the context of the foregoing, it may not be out of place, therefore, to refer to Ezi as an African feminist, because of her critical role in the *Night Dancer*. As an African feminist, she challenges tradition, especially as it regards patriarchal dominance, as she not only makes her points but also stands by them without fear.

Extract 12

> 'In Lokpanta women did not speak to their husbands like that if they disagreed, they saved their anger and their words for when they were with their fellow women'. (ND 2013:146)

Rapu, a village crude girl from Lokpanta typifies the societal norm of women not challenging the status quo. She makes the above utterance in *extract 12* when Ezi calls Mike's uncle, Silas, a snake. Naming and describing are as used here, *'Lokpanta'*, *'women'* (which appear twice), *'husbands'*, and *'anger'*. The expression *'In Lokpanta women did not speak to their husbands like that...* suggest a contrast to Ezi's attitude and thus, the use of equating and contrasting. The use of CS Representing action/state or events can be seen in the verbs like *'did'*, *'speak'*, *'disagreed'*, and *'saved'*. A fourth CS tool deployed in the text in extract 12 which is presenting others' speech and thought (speech and thought presentation) is seen in the voice of Rapu. Leech and Short (1981) posit that linguistic and extra linguistic contextual features

determine the mode of speech and thought presentation by fictional writers. These speeches and thought presentation are influenced by syntactic and lexical changes which may take the modes of Direct Speech (DS) as in the case of extract 12 or indirect speech. The use of this CS tool implies that women should be complacent and subservient. This shows a contrast between two types of women in the text: the radical and the conservative. While Ezi is seen as a radical, Rapu is complacent and subservient as she seems to accept societal demands without questioning, even to her detriment. '*They saved their anger and their words for when they were with their fellow women*' also suggests that such conservative women can only discuss with their fellow women who do not have the power to effect any change. Ezi on the other hand, however, believes this should change; hence, she is seen as some rebel of some sort. Ezi cuts the picture of a woman who feels liberated. A woman who feels she can take her time off her house chores; after all she can afford to have servants at her beck and call in direct opposition to what is obtainable in her time.

Extract 13
In Rapu's voice again in extract 13
> 'Aunty Ezi did not rise until close to noon when she sauntered out to inspect the food, opening pots and gazing in them as if they contained some secret message for her'. (ND 2013:171)

Three linguistic tools are in this extract above. The first is thought and speech presentation as seen from Rapu's point of view. The second is naming and describing as is seen in '*aunty*', '*Ezi*', '*noon*', '*food*', '*pots*', and '*message*' and the third is - representing action/state and or events, as seen in the choice of predicate verbs like '*rise*', '*sauntered*', '*inspect*', '*opening*', '*gazing*' and '*contained*' is the third CS tool. The *Night Dancer* shows two sets of feminists: the radical feminist, who Ezi represents and the conservative feminist, which Mma represents. Mma, Ezi's daughter, is a direct opposite of her - whereas Ezi's laughter is unbridled and loud, Mma's is timid and a chuckle at most. Mma's tone

of voice whenever she speaks is low and demure, while Ezi's is loud. Ezi believes men are dispensable while Mma sees them as an integral part of the family unit and thus, vows while growing up that she will not live like her mum *(ND 2013:68).*

Extract 14

'Your mother was an impatient woman...She was born impatient (ND 2013:102). Again, while extract 14 shows Ezi to be impatient, Mma is shown to be patient. No wonder Mma's grandfather says the above of Ezi, his daughter. The CS tool deploys naming and describing of referents as in *'mother' and 'woman'.*

Extract 15

'The door swung in to reveal a thick-waisted woman in a too-long skirt and a too-white lace blouse with silver sequins. This was Rapu, the other woman in her father's life'. (ND 2013:123)

Finally, the text captures aptly, the concept of the other woman. The author deploys naming and describing devices such as *'thick-waisted woman', 'the other woman' and 'father's life'* to describe the intruder as it were, the usurper of Mma's mum's position in her father's life with the intent and purpose to get the sympathy of the readers. The *'thick-waisted'* is pre-modifying the noun *'woman'* in the sentence. Although, the other noun phrases *'too-long skirt'* and *'too-white lace blouse'* portray Rapu as a homely sanctimonious woman, Mma feels her looks do not portray the real her. After all, in her mind's eye, Rapu may have stolen her father's heart away from where it should be originally – with her mum. The expression: *'This was Rapu, the other woman in her father's life'* - also carries some implicature, some underlying undertone, suggesting Rapu to be a husband snatcher, a usurper of some sort; hence, the use of CS's assuming and implying tool. The text thus, showcases the story of the intriguing character of Rapu, the former uneducated maid whose poor parents gave to the Ugwus' hoping that fortune would smile on them through her and who later becomes the *other woman* or wife to Mr

Ugwu, Ezi's legal husband. Her fortune changes when she becomes the mother of the sought-after son of Mr Ugwu.

TABLE 1: NUMBER AND DISTRIBUTION OF CS TOOLS IN SELECTED EXTRACTS

Extract	Naming & describing	Representing actions/state and events	Equating & contrasting	Enumerating & exemplifying	Assuming & implying	Presenting other's speech thought
Extract 1	5	7	1	-	-	-
Extract 2	-	6	-	-	1	-
Extract 3	5	1	-	-	2	-
Extract 4	9	-	3	9	-	-
Extract 5	3	-	-	-	-	-
Extract 6	9	-	-	-	-	-
Extract 7	1	5	1	-	-	-
Extract 8	6	-	1	-	-	-
Extract 9	9	-	2	-	-	-
Extract 10	2	-	-	-	1	-
Extract 11	1	-	-	-	-	-
Extract 12	5	4	1	-	-	1
Extract 13	6	6	-	-	-	1
Extract 14	2	-	-	-	-	-
Extract 15	11	-	1	-	-	-
Total	74	29	10	9	4	2

Findings and Conclusion

Table 1 and Figure 1 show the distribution and frequencies of the six selected CS's analytical tools in the *Night Dancer*. It can be seen that naming and describing has 74 occurrences in the selected extracts signifying 58%, representing action/state or event has 29 signifying 23%, equating and contrasting has 10 signifying 8%, enumerating and exemplifying has 9 signifying 7%. Whereas, assuming and implying has 4 signifying 3%, speech and thought presentation has 2 signifying 1%. Naming and describing has the highest frequency probably due to the role it plays in helping text producers describe characters adequately. The use of naming and describing components such as nouns and noun phrases help to package up ideas or information which are not basically only about the entities but a description of a process, event or action

(Jeffries, 2010:19). It appears from selected extracts therefore that the CS tools helped to describe the main actor, Ezi as a radical African feminist and brought to the fore the concepts of African feminism and the two types of concepts showcased in the text. These are the radical feminists on the one hand represented by Ezi and the liberal/conservative feminists represented by Mma, madam Gold and Rapu. The language of the text exudes the tale of one woman taking on her world squarely and daring to be different even if this places her against her society and brings her societal stigmatisation.

Accordingly, the concept of African feminism, as mentioned earlier may have been criticised by some scholars because of the diversities that exist in tongue and creed in Africa as well as differences in ethnicity and political leanings which affect how women conceptualise ideology but it can be seen from the text that the concept does exist. The researcher, however, accepts that these diversities are real but holds the view that African feminism is an important concept that can be explored and brought to the fore by African writers, in particular and writers in general, to help create awareness on the plights of women in Africa with the view to bringing about change. For instance, the controversy, about African Literature does not stop the fact that literary writings from Africa are categorised under African Literature. It is African feminism therefore, because it is championed and innovated by Africans (who may be men or women) which addresses the needs of African women in the African continent. The researcher also believes that for the voice of the African feminist to really matter and be efficient and effective feminists, they must carry out their advocacies not with the intent of rebelling but through systematic dialogue; drawing attention to the myriad of problems facing women with the ultimate goal to effect change.

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