

**UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA**



**A STYLISTIC ANALYSIS OF AMA ATA AIDOO'S SHORT STORIES "IN  
THE CUTTING OF A DRINK", "THE MESSAGE" AND "CERTAIN WINDS  
FROM THE SOUTH"**

**REGINA KONADU ABANKWA**

**MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY**

**2025**

**UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA**



**A STYLISTIC ANALYSIS OF AMA ATA AIDOO'S SHORT STORIES "IN THE CUTTING OF A DRINK", "THE MESSAGE" AND "CERTAIN WINDS FROM THE SOUTH"**



**REGINA KONADU ABANKWA  
(8180540002)**

**A thesis submitted to the school of Graduate Studies, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy (English Language)**

**Department of English Education  
Faculty of Foreign Languages Education  
UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA**

**NOVEMBER, 2025**

All material contained within the thesis, including without limitation text, logos, icons, photographs and all other artwork, unless otherwise stated, is copyright material of University of Education, Winneba. Use may be made of any material contained within the thesis for non-commercial purposes from the copyright holder. Commercial use of material may only be made with the express, prior, written permission of University of Education, Winneba.

Copyright © University of Education, Winneba



## DECLARATION

### Candidate's Declaration

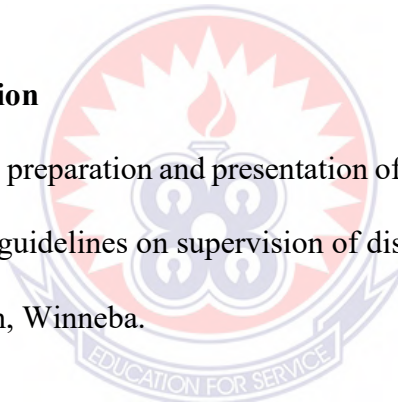
I, REGINA KONADU ABANKWA, hereby declare that except for references to other people's work which have been duly cited, this dissertation is the result of my own original research and that it has neither in whole nor in part been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

Signature .....

Date .....

### Supervisor's Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this dissertation was supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of dissertation laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.



Name .....

Signature .....

Date .....

## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to my husband, Rev. Francis Omanpeh Siaw and to the five adorable boys: Justice, Benedict, Nana Yaw, Kwasi and Paa Kofi. You are the best!



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Bible verse in Proverbs 11:14 is apt in saying “Where there is no guidance, a people fall, but in an abundance of counsellors there is safety”. This work has come to fruition through the counsel and support of various personalities and I consider it a duty to express my gratitude to a number of them. I am extremely grateful to my supervisor, Mr Peter Kofi Afful for his guidance, useful comments, insightful suggestions, questions and corrections that has gone a long way to shape this work. I am equally thankful to the various lecturers in the department of English Education of UEW for making me stand strong in various aspects in the study of English Language. I must acknowledge the support and motivation of my very good friends Mrs Harriet Okoh Turkson (of blessed memory), Mr Ebenezer Ghampson and Mr Benjamin Ofori Yeboah who kept on encouraging me to keep on working on this thesis in spite of the challenges I was confronted with. I am also grateful to my colleagues, especially to Esther Amponsah and Rebecca Opokua for their support in diverse ways. Justice, my son, I am grateful for your technological support. Finally, I am grateful to my husband for his immense support that has enabled me to focus on this work. To all who in one way or the other has made this work possible, I say thank you and God bless you all.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>DECLARATION</b>	iii
<b>DEDICATION</b>	iv
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b>	v
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b>	vi
<b>LIST OF TABLES</b>	ix
<b>ABSTRACT</b>	x
<b>CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION</b>	1
1.0 Background to the Study	1
1.1.1. Brief Summary of the Short Stories	3
1.1.2. A Brief Biography of the Writer	4
1.2. Statement of the Problem	5
1.3 Purpose of the Study	8
1.4 Objectives of Study	9
1.5 Research Questions	9
1.6 Significance of the Study	9
1.7 Delimitation	10
1.8 Organisation of Work	10
1.9 Summary of the Chapter	11
<b>CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW</b>	12
2.0 Introduction	12
2.1 History and Focus of Stylistics	12
2.2 Sub-Divisions of Stylistics	15
2.3 Aims and Functions of Stylistics	18
2.4. Theoretical Framework	19
2.4.1 Foregrounding	20
2.4.1.1 Linguistic Deviation	21
2.4.1.2 Forms of Linguistic Deviation	21
2.4.1.3. Types of Linguistic Deviation	22
2.4.2. Checklist of Linguistic and Stylistic Categories	32
2.5 Review of Previous Works	22

2.6. Summary	25
<b>CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY</b>	27
3.0 Introduction	27
3.1.1 Research Approach	27
3.1.2 Research Design	28
3.2 Source of Data	28
3.2.1 Sampling	30
3.3 Data Analysis Procedure	31
<b>CHAPTER FOUR: ANALYSIS, FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION</b>	38
4.0 Introduction	38
4.1 Thematic Concerns in ‘In the Cutting of a Drink’	38
4.2 Thematic Concerns in ‘The Message’	39
4.3 Thematic Concerns in ‘Certain Winds from the South’	41
4.3 Findings	43
4.3.1 In the Cutting of a Drink	43
4.3.2 Lexical Categories (In the Cutting of a Drink)	43
4.3.2.1 General Impressions	43
4.3.2.2 Nouns and Pronouns	45
4.3.3 Grammatical Categories	46
4.3.3.1 Sentence Types	46
4.3.3.2 Sentence Complexity	48
4.3.3.3 Clause Types	49
4.3.4 Context and Cohesion	50
4.3.4.1 Cohesion	51
4.3.4.2 Context	53
4.3.5 Figures of Speech	54
4.3.5.1 Repetition	55
4.3.5.2 Simile	56
4.3.5.4 Other Tropes	57
4.4. The Message	60

4.4.1 Lexical Categories (in The Message)	60
4.4.1.1 General Impressions	60
4.4.1.2 Nouns and Verbs	61
4.4.2. Grammatical Categories	61
4.4.2.1 Sentence Types	61
4.4.2.2 Sentence Complexity	62
4.4.3. Context and Cohesion	64
4.4.3.1 Context	64
4.4.3.2 Cohesion	65
4.4.4. Figures of Speech	66
4.5 Certain Winds from the South	70
4.5.1 Lexical Categories in Certain Winds from the South	70
4.5.1.1 General Impressions	70
4.5.1.2 Nouns and Verbs	71
4.5.2 Grammatical Categories	72
4.5.2.1 Sentence Types	72
4.5.2.2 Sentence Complexity	74
4.5.2.3. Clause Types	76
4.5.3. Figures of speech	76
4.5.4 Context and Cohesion	78
<b>CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>86</b>
5.0. Introduction	86
5.1. Summary of Findings	86
5.3 Recommendations	88
5.4 Suggestions for Further Study	89
<b>REFERENCES</b>	<b>91</b>
<b>APPENDICES</b>	<b>95</b>



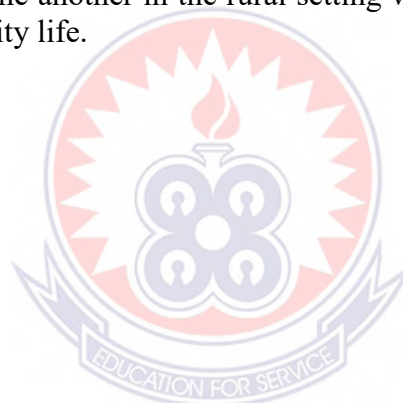
## LIST OF TABLES

<b>Table</b>	<b>Page</b>
4.1: Lexical Categories in the Short Story “In the Cutting of a Drink”	46
4.2: Lexical Categories in the Short Story “The Message”	61
4.3: Lexical Categories in the Short Story “Certain Winds from the South”	72



## ABSTRACT

This study analyses Ama Ata Aidoo's short stories, "In the Cutting of a Drink", "The Message" and "Certain Winds from the South" from a stylistic point of view. It employs the devices of foregrounding to analyze the short stories based on the checklist of linguistic and stylistic categories proposed by Leech and Short (2007). The study sought to identify the significant linguistic features in the text, what the linguistic features have been used for, and how the foregrounded features contribute to the development of the themes of the stories. The study finds that Ama Ata Aidoo uses specialized or localized vocabulary in the three short stories and that she uses concrete nouns extensively to give physical appeal to especially the settings of the short stories. She uses various sentence types for specific purposes. She has a way of weaving round by describing things, events, places and even feelings through the use of various subordinate clauses instead of naming them. The author adopts the traditional folktale style of narrating her stories and prefers the first-person narrator point of view. Ama Ata Aidoo succeeds in making her stories authentically African as she uses various linguistic features to bring out themes such as the rural- urban divide that promotes migration, change of identity and moral decadence that characterized post-independent Ghana. She emphasizes the ritual of pitying in the local community which indicates love and concern for one another in the rural setting which contrasts greatly with 'no one cares' attitude of city life.



## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.0 Background to the Study

As a branch of general linguistics, stylistics deals with a wide range of language varieties and styles that are possible in creating different texts; whether spoken or written, monologue or dialogue, formal or informal, scientific or religious, literary or non-literary. Stylistic Analysis is one of several approaches to the study of literary texts.

Significantly, there are various views about what stylistics is about. Whilst some people see it as a subject on its own, others perceive it to be only a means to an end. Stylistics has been identified as an interplay between literary criticism and linguistics; that is, the “application of linguistic theories to study the semantic import in a literary text”. Leech and Short (2007:9) are of the view that ‘Stylistic has, implicitly or explicitly, the goal of explaining the relation between language and artistic function.

Widdowson (1975) is of the view that Stylistics is neither a discipline nor a subject of its own. It is rather a means of linking disciplines and subjects. Hawthorne (1994:284) on the other hand opines that Stylistics is a field that has grown up as a recognized academic discipline, situated on the borderline between the study of language and the study of literature. Simpson (2004) offers an interesting view of Stylistics; he opines that to do stylistics is to explore language; creativity in language use.

Some writers and scholars sometimes describe stylistics as Literary Linguistics, Literary Stylistics, and so on, because at first, the focus of stylistics was on literary texts but Turner (1973), points out that, “the style of a legal document or a scientific paper, a publicity leaflet or the instruction for operating a washing machine, can be described

and evaluated”. In fact, all kinds of texts (discourse) – political, media, recipe, among others, are now found within the scope of interest of stylistics.

However, literary text is an important tool for stylistics as it is used as a back-up to the analysts’ intuitions about the meaning of texts, (Mills, 1995:7). This is supported by Leech and Short (2007:13) when they express the view that Stylistics falls as part of literary criticism, where linguistics is used instrumentally as a matter of convenience because its practicality in providing some sort of ‘toolkit’ of analysts of literature and for students to use when undertaking literary interpretation. It is therefore clear that stylistics is useful in literary criticism whether it is perceived as a subject on its own or as part of literary criticism. In fact, its usefulness extends beyond the analysis of literary texts as various kinds of texts could be analysed using stylistic tools. One thing that comes out from the views of the various scholars is that, stylistics employs linguistic tools to analyse texts. It thus gives opportunity to whoever is doing a stylistic analysis to put language (at the various levels) into practice. The essence of learning something is to be able to practise it hence to do a stylistic analysis is to practise linguistics: draw attention to the artistic value of various linguistic forms.

Many sub-fields have emerged from stylistics such as Generative Stylistics, Discourse Stylistics, Pragmatic Stylistics, Feminists Stylistics, and others.

The present study seeks to conduct a linguistic stylistic analysis of the short stories selected. Summaries of the selected texts and a brief biography of the author are presented in the next two sections of this work.

### **1.1.1. Brief Summary of the Short Stories**

#### ***In the Cutting of a Drink***

A man is sent to Accra to look for a family member (sister) who, at the age of ten, has been given to a woman to be trained as a home keeper and a dressmaker. However, this girl has not been seen for twelve years and the worried family, wants to know what had happened to her. Through the man's shock of life and scenes in Accra, Ama Ata Aidoo offers the rural-urban divide that provides the allurements necessary for migration even if the outcomes were always not as had been conceived from the beginning. Through the narrator's eyes, we become observers of the cultural change that is taking place: women living and cooking for men they are not married to; women drinking beer with men and those working as prostitutes. Aidoo brought out the cultural, moral and developmental gap between the city and the rural centres. The man is even shocked of the number of cars he sees and wonders who pays for all the electricity, expressed as lights, consumed. At the end, he finds his sister at a nightclub where she works as a prostitute. Shocked at this discovery, the sister is bold enough to tell him that, 'Every work is work'.

#### ***The Message***

The Message is a funny story of how we receive and treat messages and of misunderstanding of the old about new developments in technology especially. When an old woman receives a message that her pregnant grand-daughter in Cape Coast has been 'opened up' and the baby removed, she instantly presumes her dead and began mourning. In this mood, she boards a lorry to Cape Coast to the hospital where the incident has taken place. At the hospital even when she sees Esi Amfoa, (her

granddaughter) dressed and lying in bed, she cannot think of her not being dead, until she begins to speak.

### ***Certain Winds from the South***

“Certain Winds from the South” is a short story by Ama Ata Aidoo that is set in a small Muslim community in the northern part of Ghana. It focuses on a man named Issah who decides to migrate to the south to search for job opportunity. He is pushed by the harsh economic situation in his community such that he cannot adequately cater for his wife, Hawa and his newly born baby, Fuseini. This decision hits hard on M’ma Asana, his mother-in-law as it reminds her of her own fate when her husband moved to the south to join the army and never came back. M’ma Asana is saddled with the burden of solely taking care of herself, her daughter and grandson.

#### **1.1.2. A Brief Biography of the Writer**

Ama Ata Aidoo, born Christina Ama Aidoo was born on 23<sup>rd</sup> March, 1942. She hails from Saltpond, in the Central Region of Ghana. She is an author, poet, playwright and academic. She is nicknamed ‘Literary Mama’. She attended Wesley Girls High School in Cape Coast from 1961 to 1964. She enrolled in the University of Ghana, Legon in 1964 where she found her ‘writer self’. She sets out to make her stories “as authentically African as possible”. While she was still a student, she wrote her first play *The Dilemma of a Ghost*. The play, initially staged in 1965, was published the following year, making Aidoo the first published African woman dramatist. She went further to write another play *Anowa*. Aidoo’s first novel, *Our Sister Killjoy* (1977) generated many controversies but she was never perturbed. She has other works such as *The Girl Who Can and other Stories*, *Diplomatic Pounds and Other Stories*, *Changes*, *A Love Story* and her collection of short stories, *No Sweetness Here*.

After graduation from the university, she was appointed a junior research fellow at the Institute of African Studies at the University of Ghana. She has also served as a visiting professor to the English, African and American studies departments of several universities and colleges in the United States, including most recently, Brown University. In 1982 she was appointed minister of education in Ghana, making her the first woman to hold that position.

Throughout her career, Aidoo has been unabashedly feminist. In 2000, she established the Mbaasem Foundation to promote and support the work of African Women Writers. (Culled from Encyclopedia Britannica). She died May 31, 2023 in Accra.

## **1.2. Statement of the Problem**

Stylistic analyses of short stories have been conducted by many researchers. Chandio and others (2017), from the University of Sindh, Pakistan, conducted a stylistic analysis of Ahmed Ali's short story *Our Lane*. The study looks at how the author uses linguistic features like nouns, adjectives, conjunctions and sentence complexity to portray the social, political, economic, religious, psychological and cultural conditions of the colonized natives of the Indian sub-continent in the wake of British colonial rule.

Another study of a short story was conducted by Amir (2018) of *The Tell-Tale Heart* by Edgar Allan Poe. She sought to analyze the story from a stylistic point of view. The paper concludes that Poe in his short story has extensively used literary and rhetorical devices to prove insanity, obsession, guilt, tension and other recurring themes of the story.

Diribu A.(2012) has also undertaken a stylistic analysis of selected short stories of Edgar Allan Poe, which takes foregrounding as a framework. Hence, the analysis focuses on the prominent linguistic features and literary devices.

By studying these works, it has been observed that conducting a stylistic analysis of a short story could be challenging in that the linguistic features of a text manifest in various modes and circumstances, such as through the characters, setting, plot or even narration. Due to this complex phenomenon, many researchers tend to focus on only a few parameters in their analysis. When this is done, one cannot fully appreciate the impact of stylistic analysis of the text. In this study the researcher has done an in-depth analysis of the short stories *In the Cutting of a Drink*, *The Message* and *Certain Winds from the South* focusing on foregrounded patterns only.

Furthermore, though Ama Ata Aidoo, a prolific Ghanaian author, poet, playwright, academic has many novels to her credit, her collection of short stories in her book “No Sweetness Here” contains eleven short stories of which three have been selected. The selected stories are written in ‘Ghanaian flavored English’. These three short stories address issues that came up in the colonial and post-colonial era, such as modernization and the conflicts associated with it. Her works have therefore attracted a lot of studies, comments and essays. Prominent among these include *In My Mother’s House: A Study of Selected Works by Ama Ata Aidoo* and *Buchi Emecheta by Asante* (2000); and *The Defense of Culture in Ama Ata Aidoo’s ‘No Sweetness Here* by Ogede (1994)

Several scholars have studied Ama Ata Aidoo’s writings from various perspectives.

Odammten (1994), for instance, devotes an entire book to the analysis of Aidoo’s work: *The Art of Ama Ata Aidoo: Polylectics and Reading against Colonialism*.

Sackeyfio (2023) wrote an article in memoriam which was published by Cambridge University Press. She discusses the life and works of Ama Ata Aidoo, emphasizing her contribution to literature, culture and women empowerment (feminism). Ezenwa-Ohaeto (2003) published in the magazine *Research in African Literature*; A review of “Emerging Perspectives of Ama Ata Aidoo”. Sutherland -Addy E. (1989) made a research review of Ama Ata Aidoo’s works which is entitled *Narrative Techniques and the Role of Commentators in Ama Ata Aidoo’s Works*. This work offers a review of Ama Ata Aidoo’s short stories, such as *No sweetness Here*, *Satisfaction*, and her plays *The Dilemma of a Ghost* and *Anowa*. In this review, Esi comments on the unique narrative technique and the choice of characters Ama Ata Aidoo uses in her works.

There are many more other papers on the works of Ama Ata Aidoo. Unfortunately, much attention has not been given to the analysis of her short stories. The closest is “An Analysis of Two Short Stories in ‘The Return and In the Cutting of a Drink,’” (Kibin, 2025). Another one “African Literature Speaks of Short Stories such as In the Cutting of a Drink, The Return ...” (<https://www.writework.com>). Asante (2000), conducted a Stylistic Analysis of Selected Short Stories of Ama Ata Aidoo. The study looked at some selected short stories from the book *The Girl Who Can and Other Stories*. The author focused on finding the use of various sentence types and the use of descriptive adjectives in the selected short stories: *The Girl Who Can*, *She-Who-Would-Be-King* and *Heavy Moments*. This work picks only one aspect each from the lexical and the grammatical categories of stylistic studies. At the end the researcher found that Ama Ata Aidoo made use of various sentence types: simple, complex, compound, compound-

complex sentences and descriptive adjectives to address her concerns and the change she fought for in the society.

*No Sweetness Here* was the set book for studying Core Literature at the senior high school. As a teacher, I took my students through the study of the short stories through literary criticism. Literary analysis of texts falls short in many ways since the analysis is mainly subjective; based on one's intuitions. The researcher has therefore set out to adopt a more scientific way of studying these stories in order to capture insights that literary analysis could not provide. Since it is not practical to study all eleven stories from the book *No Sweetness Here*, this research work focuses on three of the stories: *In the Cutting of a Drink*, *The Message* and *Certain Winds from the South*.

The present study conducts a linguistic stylistics study of Ama Ata Aidoo's *The Message, In the Cutting of a Drink* and *Certain Winds from the South* from her collection of short stories *No Sweetness Here*. The stylistic analysis of the given stories has been carried out using the checklist of stylistic categories proposed by Leech & Short (2007). The study identifies the linguistic features which have been foregrounded and how they have been used to highlight the thematic concerns in the selected short stories.

### **1.3 Purpose of the Study**

There are many ways a literary text like a short story could be analyzed. This study seeks to use linguistic tools to analyze stylistic features foregrounded in the selected short stories in order to identify how these foregrounded patterns contribute to the interpretation and development of the themes of the short stories.

#### 1.4 Objectives of Study

The objectives of this work are to:

1. identify the foregrounded linguistic stylistic features in *The Message*, *In the Cutting of a Drink* and *Certain Winds from the South*;
2. find out the ways that the identified stylistic features have been used;
3. examine the relationship between the foregrounded features and the development of themes of the stories.

#### 1.5 Research Questions

The following are the questions this work seeks to address.

1. What are the foregrounded linguistic stylistic features used in the selected texts?
2. What have the identified stylistic features been used for?
3. How do the foregrounded features contribute to the development of the themes of the stories?

#### 1.6 Significance of the Study

The short story belongs to the literary genre, prose. It is therefore common to analyse it through literary criticism. However, the use of linguistic tools to analyse both literary and non- literary texts is gaining grounds in recent times. Linguistic Stylistics employs linguistic tools to analyse texts, making the analysis objective.

The study will bring out the linguistic features (in terms of foregrounded patterns) of the short stories *The Message*, *In the Cutting of a Drink* and *Certain Winds from the South* by Ama Ata Aidoo, in order to help students and other learners appreciate these stories from the linguistic point of view and also this study will serve as a reference for researchers.

### **1.7 Delimitation**

The study is limited to the identification of foregrounded features in the short stories, *The Message*, *In the Cutting of a Drink* and *Certain Winds from the South* from Ama Ata Aidoo's book, "No Sweetness Here." The research focuses on the linguistic stylistic analysis of these stories with the purpose of identifying how the use of foregrounded features in these stories contribute to the development of various thematic concerns raised in the short stories.

The researcher believes that the analyses of these three short stories will contribute to bringing out the style of Ama Ata Aidoo as an African writer of short stories.

The researcher is interested only in identifying deviant features such as at the level of lexical, grammatical, dialectal and also at the semantic level as well significant figures of speech used in the text. Foregrounding is realized by linguistic deviation and linguistic parallelism. The study is limited to identifying linguistic features in terms of linguistic deviation and to evaluate how they lead to foregrounding.

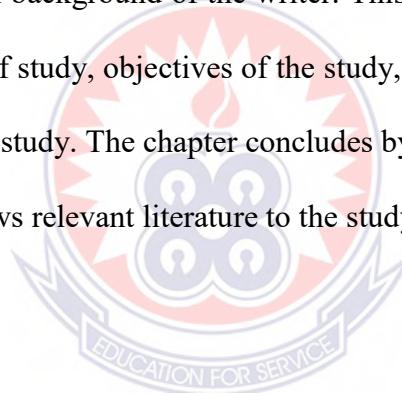
### **1.8 Organization of Work**

This study is organized into five chapters. Chapter one of the study looks at the background to the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study and scope of the study. Chapter two reviews literature related to the study. Theoretical and conceptual reviews as well as discussion of empirical studies relevant to the study has been presented. Chapter three divulges the methods and procedures employed in collecting and analysing the data for this study. Specifically, this chapter discusses the research approach and design. Chapter four presents the analysis of findings and discussion of the findings based on the research

questions of this study. The chapter is divided into subsections based on the research questions raised concerning the study. The three short stories are discussed separately; *In the Cutting of a Drink* first, followed by *The Message* and then *Certain Winds from the South*. The final chapter gives a summary of the entire work, states the findings and draws conclusions. Recommendations for further studies has also been made.

### **1.9 Summary of the Chapter**

So far, this introductory chapter has provided a general background to the study. It first elaborates on what stylistics is about and further discusses the suitability of linguistic stylistics for the present study. A brief summary of the selected short stories has been given as well as a brief background of the writer. This is followed by the statement of the problem, purpose of study, objectives of the study, research questions, significance and delimitation of the study. The chapter concludes by giving the outline of the thesis. The next chapter reviews relevant literature to the study.



## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.0 Introduction**

This section reviews concepts like stylistics and linguistic stylistics related to the topic. First the history and focus of stylistics is presented. It further outlines the sub-divisions, aims and functions of stylistics. It also explains the theoretical framework that is applied in this study such as foregrounding, linguistic deviation and the checklist of linguistic and stylistic categories as proposed by Leech and Short (2007) will be explained. It further reviews previous studies on the short story relevant to this present study.

#### **2.1 History and Focus of Stylistics**

Modern day Stylistics started as ‘Rhetoric’ in the ancient times. It taught its students how to structure an argument, how to make effective use of figures of speech and generally how to pattern and vary a speech or a piece of writing so as to produce the maximum impact (Barry, 2009:198). Rhetoric in medieval times was especially useful in training people for the church, the legal profession, and political or diplomatic life. Throughout the nineteenth century and by the beginning of the twentieth century, rhetoric in this sense was gradually absorbed into linguistics. At this time linguistics was usually known as ‘philology’ and was almost entirely historical in emphasis. It involved studying the evolution of languages, and the interconnections between them and speculating about the origins of language itself. In the twentieth century, there was a movement away from this historic emphasis to the concentration on how language as a system is structured, looking at such aspects as the way meanings are established and maintained, and the options available (and their consequences) in structuring sentences.

Shortly before the First World War, a new form of rhetoric emerged, with a new interest in literary style and its effects. In the 1920s and beyond, groups and individuals showed interest in this sense of rhetoric and it was evident in their works. A strong instance of this is observed in the work of the Russian Formalists in the 1920s and in the work of the Czech linguist Roman Jakobson, leader of the Prague Linguistic Circle. Jakobson lived in America after the Second World War. There was a famous ‘conference on style’, which was held at Indiana University in 1958, and proceedings published in 1960 as *Style in Language*, edited by Thomas Sebeok. The conference was notable for many reasons. Jakobson’s ‘Closing Statement’, triggered much controversy as it seemed to announce a takeover bid for literature on the part of linguistics. This was so as the gist of the Sebeok collection of material seems to claim that, Linguistics offers a more objective way of studying literature and the book tends to set up ‘a confrontation of camps’ (Roger Fowler’s phrase) between literary and language studies. Fowler reacted to this unnecessary distinction by editing a collection called *Essays on Style and Language: Linguistic and Critical Approaches to Literary Studies* (1966) to mediate the stretch between linguistics and literature. Helen Vendler reviewed this work in the journal *Essays in Criticism* (1966:457-63).

By the 1980s a new dimension to linguistics had emerged, a form of ‘discourse analysis’ which will enable linguistics to comment on and analyse the structure of complete pieces of writing, rather than just the isolated phrases and sentences to which it had previously been restricted. This gave rise to what came to be called the ‘new stylistics. People sometimes describe stylistics as literary linguistics, literary stylistics, and others, because at first the focus of stylistics was on literary texts but Turner (1973) points out that, “the style of a legal document or a scientific paper, a publicity leaflet or the

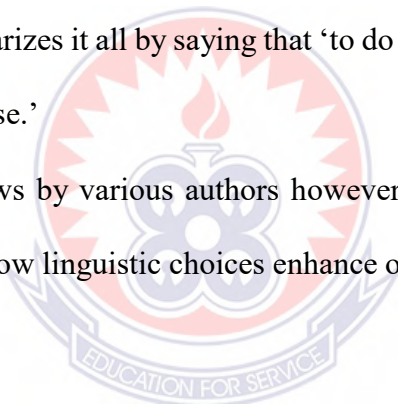
instructions for operating a washing machine, can be described and evaluated”. In fact, all kinds of text (discourse) – political, media, recipe among others are now found within the scope of interest of stylistics. However, literary text is an important tool for stylistics as it is used as ‘back-up’ to the analysts’ intuitions about the meaning of texts (Mills,1995:7). Stylistics takes a close look at the text and analyses its significant language forms for the sake of interpretation; it comes close to practical criticism. Stylistics, in fact, has a great effect in almost every kind of critical approach. According to various dictionaries, Stylistics, a branch of Applied Linguistics, is the study and interpretation of text of all types and or spoken language in regard to their linguistic and tonal style, where style is the particular variety of language use by different individuals and or in different contexts.

Over the years, scholars have viewed Stylistics in terms of its relationship to linguistics, literature or else as being interdisciplinary. Halliday (1964), for example, considers stylistics in terms of its relationship to linguistic when he defines it thus, “the description of literary texts, by methods derived from general linguistic theory”. This view is supported by Busse & McIntyre (2010) when they define stylistics as “The study of style in language and how these results from the intra-linguistics factors”. Linguistics in this sense means the application of linguistic theories to study the semantic import in a literary text.

According to Widdowson (1975:3), however, Stylistics is essentially a means of linking literary criticism (literature) and linguistics. That is to say, Widdowson views stylistics as interdisciplinary approach to the study of texts, that is, stylistics is neither a discipline nor a subject. It is rather a means of linking disciplines and subjects. This view is echoed by Mills (1995:4) and William Van Peer (1988:2). Contrary to their position,

Hawthorne (1994:284) also opines that Stylistics is a field that has grown up as a recognized academic discipline, situated on the borderline between the study of language and the study of literature. This view has been supported by some scholars. Simpson (2004:2) explains that stylistics enhances our ways of thinking about language and exploring language, in turn, enhances our understanding of texts. Verdonk (2002:2) defines stylistics as the “analysis of distinctive expression in language and the description of its purpose and effect”. Bradford (1997:1) says that stylistics is an “elusive and slippery topic, every contribution to the vast, multifaceted discipline of literary studies will involve an engagement with style”. According to Fish (1981:33), Stylistics comes as a reaction to the subjectivity and impressionism of literary studies. Simpson, (2004) summarizes it all by saying that ‘to do stylistics is to explore language, creativity in language use.’

All these different views by various authors however point to the fact that stylistics draws our attention to how linguistic choices enhance our appreciation of texts; be they literary or non-literary.



## **2.2 Sub-Divisions of Stylistics**

At the theoretical level, scholars had at first divided stylistics according to its bipolar orientation, into Linguistic and Literary Stylistics. Although there were disagreements among scholars about this distinction at the early stage of the sub-categorization, it is relevant to point out that the distinction was not based on any textual or methodological differences but was based on their general differences of purpose. Wales (2001:438) explains Linguistic Stylistics as a ‘kind of stylistics which focus of interest is not primarily literary texts, but the refinement of a linguistic model which has potential for further linguistic or stylistic analyses. Similarly, Carter (1984) distinguishes between

the two when he describes Linguistic Stylistics as “the purest form of stylistics” in that its practitioners attempt to derive from the study of style and language variation, refinement of models for the analysis of language and thus they contribute to the development of linguistic theory. The scholar also considers Literary Stylistics as the discipline aiming at the “provision of a basis for a fuller understanding, appreciation, and interpretation of avowedly literary texts.”

Stylisticians applied the theory of Generative Grammar of Noam Chomsky to the analysis of literary texts with no great concern about stylistic functions and their contribution to meaning. It is concerned mainly with the linguistic description of stylistic devices. This approach was described as Generative Stylistics. It was however found to be inadequate in providing interpretive tools as to how stylistic effects are achieved. To mitigate the shortcomings of this approach, a group emerged, the Generative Semanticists whose major concern was the inadequacy of explanation to the nature of deep structure and the semantic roles it offers. This approach which takes the syntactic processes as a mechanism for characterizing the literary style and of linguistic effects is known as ‘Generative Stylistics.’

M.A.K. Halliday on the other hand developed a functionally based linguistic theory in the late sixties. This new theory emphasizes the social dimensions of language. This model, which stresses the interplay of different aspects of language (ideational, interpersonal and textual), is designated as ‘Functional Stylistics’.

Following serious criticism of Halliday’s approach, Fish (1981) came up with an approach to literary analysis which advocates the dynamic processes involved in the

activity of reading the text and the literary competence of the interpretive community who share the same normative strategies. This approach is termed ‘Affective Stylistics’. In the 1970s, the study took a practical approach which involved teaching language using literary texts. This is known as Pedagogical Stylistics (Widdowson, 1992; Brumfit, 1983; Watson & Zyngier, 2022) and others.

There was a revolt against textualist approach to stylistics. This gave rise to ‘contextualist’ and ‘Discourse Stylistics’. This approach emphasizes that the literary style can be best interpreted if it is related to its context and not just isolated sentences. The focus on social context gave rise to ‘Feminist Stylistics’ (Burton, 1982 and Mills, 1995). Feminist stylistics focuses on the linguistic portrayal of gender-related concerns within a text and also the feminist narratology in relation to the narrative structure can be studied under feminist stylistics.

‘Critical Stylistics,’ also came up. It involves the investigation of the ways in which social meanings are manifested through language. This tendency is informed by the fusion of critical linguistics and critical discourse analysis (Fowler, 1991). Cognitive Stylistics, which “combines the kind of explicit, rigorous and detailed linguistic analysis of literary texts that is typical of the stylistic tradition with a systematic and theoretically informed consideration of the cognitive structures and processes that underlie the production and reception of language” (Semino & Culpeper, 2002: ix) also came up.

‘Corpus Stylistics’ also emerged with the interest of stylisticians in a way computational technique can be applied to literary works. Another trend is ‘Multimodal Stylistics’. This approach takes into account other semiotic modes involved in a literary work of art (Stubbs, 2008). A sub-discipline known as Narrative Stylistics, which seeks to identify

and analyze the nature of narratives also came up. This entails using narratological concepts as frameworks for stylistic analyses (Simpson, 2004).

### **2.3 Aims and Functions of Stylistics**

The term 'Stylistics' became associated with detailed linguistic criticism because, at the first time it developed, the study of authorial style was a major critical concern, and linguistic analysis, allied to statistics, was popular with the more linguistically inclined critics. To some degree, it is a less happy name now, as stylisticians have, by and large, moved away from the study of style and towards the study of how meanings and effects are produced by literary texts. There have been a few attempts to change the name of the enterprise: for example, to literary linguistics, or critical linguistics. But none of the labels so far proposed covers all the aspects of field adequately (for instance, the two just mentioned can just as easily apply to areas not covered by stylistics and do not adequately represent the psychological aspects of the approach), and so 'stylistics' has survived as the most popular label, despite its shortcomings.

Crystal (2018) observes that, in practice, most stylistic analyses have attempted to deal with the complex and 'valued' language within literature, that is, literary stylistics. He goes on to say that in such examination, the scope is sometimes narrowed to concentrate on the more striking features of literary language.

So far, it could be deduced that stylistic analysis has two main objectives: first to enable the readers to make meaningful interpretation of the text itself, second, to expand knowledge and awareness of the language in general. Thus, although the aim of using stylistics is to help students to read and study literature more competently, it also provides them with excellent language practice.

The following, according to Barry (2009:203-205), are some of the aims of stylistics.

- (i) *Stylisticians try to provide 'hard' data to support existing 'intuitions' about a literary work.*
- (ii) *Stylisticians suggest interpretations of literary works based on linguistic evidence.*
- (iii) *Stylisticians attempt to establish general points about how literary meanings are made.*

Barry (2009:207) states that one of the major goals of stylisticians is to “describe technical aspects of the language of a text – such as grammatical structures – and then use this data in interpretation.” He further states that, by using this concrete approach, he or she develops an objective interpretation. The technical aspect of a work based on how the author used word choice, grammar, and so forth can then derive meaning. Simply put, stylistics aims to make the interpretation of literary texts more objective so that the interpretation of such texts would be valid.

#### **2.4. Theoretical Framework**

For the linguistic stylistics analysis of Ama Ata Aidoo’s short stories, *The Message, In the Cutting of a Drink* and *Certain Winds from the South*, this work adopts the theory of foregrounding. Foregrounding as a theory was developed by Irina Vladimirovna Arnold, a scholar of St Petersburg, in the middle of the twentieth century (Meniailo, 2020). This theory has been used by scholars worldwide, but massively by Russian scholars. This work specifically focuses on the devices of deviation only. This will be done using the checklist of stylistic categories proposed by Leech and Short (2007:61-64).

### 2.4.1 Foregrounding

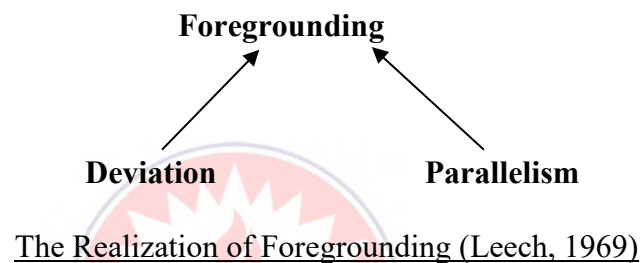
The term foregrounding has its origin with the Czech theorist Jan Mukarovsky; it is how Mukarovsky's original term, 'aktualisace', was rendered in English by his first translator, (Cuddon 2012:284). It refers to the range of stylistic effects that occur in Literature, whether at the phonetic level (such as alliteration, rhyme), the grammatical level (such as inversion, ellipsis), or semantic level (such as metaphor, irony).

As Mukarovsky pointed out, foregrounding may occur in normal, everyday language, such as spoken discourse or journalistic prose, but it occurs at random with no systematic design. In literary texts, on the other hand, foregrounding is structured. It tends to be both systematic and hierarchical. That is, similar features may recur, such as a pattern of assonance or a related group of metaphors and one set of features will dominate the others, (Muskarovsky, 1970:20), a phenomenon that Jakobson termed 'the dominant' (1987:41-46). Miall and Kuiken, (1994) refer to foregrounding as stylistic variation that evokes feelings and prolong reading time. Indeed, there is some evidence that foregrounding in literary texts strikes readers as interesting and captures their attention. Hunt and Vipond (1985) investigated the effects of textual features that they, following Labov (1972), refer to as "discourse evaluations". These are described as words, phrases, or events that are 'unpredictable against the norm of the text' and that convey the narrator's evaluations of story characters or events.

Foregrounding is therefore any linguistic highlighting that attracts the reader's attention. It also refers to the concept of making certain features prominent in a text. Verdonk (2002) states that foregrounding is the psychological effect a literary reader has as s/he is reading a work of Literature. This is because foregrounding is perceptual. Foregrounding can occur at all levels of language. According to Wales (1989),

foregrounding can be achieved in a variety of ways usually grouped into two main types: parallelism or repetition (syntagmatic foregrounding) and deviation (paradigmatic foregrounding). Menaiilo V. (2020), in her article “I.V. Arnold’s Theory of Foregrounding and Its Application to Text Analysis”, identifies four principal elements of foregrounding: the strong position of a text, repetitions of different levels of language, the convergence of stylistic devices and defeated expectancy. These elements are basically in line with Wales’ terms of classification.

- Foregrounding is realized by linguistic deviation and linguistic parallelism.



#### **2.4.1.1 Linguistic Deviation**

The term linguistic deviation was first coined by Geoffrey Leech in 1969. Deviation is unexpected irregularity in a text. Wales (1989:12, cited by Jeffries, L & McIntyre, D.2010) defines deviation as “violations of linguistic norms.” In language usage, there is a trend or a norm to be followed. Hence, moving away from the trend or the normal code indicates deviation. The norm has to do with the rules, conventions and regulations that guide different linguistic activities.

Deviating from the norms then produces a foregrounding effect.

#### **2.4.1.2 Forms of Linguistic Deviation**

There are two forms of deviation namely, internal (local) deviation and external (general) deviation. (Awonuga C, 2018 as cited by Rahman and Weda, 2019).

Internal deviation refers to the violation of the inherent rule of the text under analysis.

That is, where the author breaks a standard s/he has set in a particular text.

External deviation, however, goes beyond the text to indicate the rules governing the language itself. It ranges across all levels of the language.

#### **2.4.1.3. Types of Linguistic Deviation**

Leech (1969) identifies eight types of linguistic deviation. They are: lexical deviation, phonological deviation, grammatical deviation, graphological deviation, semantic deviation, deviation of register, deviation of historical period and dialectal deviation.

There is lexical deviation when the writer invents a new word or uses words in innovative ways. Grammatical deviation is a kind of deviation in which the writer disregards the rules of sentence or syntactic features. Phonological deviation is the deviation in sound or pronunciation which is done deliberately in regard to preserving the rhyme. There is graphological deviation when the writer disregards the rules of writing. It is the line- by- line arrangement of the words on the page with irregular margins. Semantic deviation is a sort of deviation related to the irrational elements of meaning in a text. It deals with the figurative meaning of words and expressions. There is dialectal deviation when a writer uses words or structures that pertain to socially or regionally defined dialects. Deviation of register is where a writer borrows language from other fields of study other than literary. Finally, there is deviation of historical. In this kind of deviation, the writer uses archaic words or structures which are no longer used in standard language to enhance the aesthetic value of a text.

#### **2.5 Review of Previous Works**

This gives a reasonable cause to conduct a linguistic study to find out the particular style of the writer and how linguistic features help to establish and maintain that style.

Leech and Short (2007), in their book *Style in Fiction*, try to find out why it is more difficult to conduct linguistic study of prose. They consider that whereas in poetry, aesthetic effect cannot be separated from the creative manipulation of the linguistic code, in prose, it tends to reside more in other factors (such as character, theme, argument) which are expressed through, rather than inherent in “language”

They further explain that it is more difficult to identify the stylistic feature in prose than in poetry due to its voluminous nature. Whereas poetry is concentrated (often made of a few lines), you need to read volumes of lines, paragraphs or passages in a prose to establish the writer’s style or an instance of linguistic deviation. There is the problem of how to select – what sample passage, what features to study. “... this has resulted in researchers concentrating on only a few areas – neglecting a lot more when it comes to stylistic analysis of prose.” (Leech & Short 2007).

However, several more researchers and other scholars have made a way through these obstacles and have done a lot of stylistics analyses of prose or more specifically, the short story that I wish to discuss because such a review provides useful insights for this present study.

Zainab A.A. (2019) has conducted a stylistic analysis of the selected short stories by Mary Flannery O’Connor and William Sydney Porter. In this study, the researcher considered four selected short stories by two American Writers. The purpose of the study is stated as to discover the figurative use of the language through the language choice to understand its effects on readers. The researcher discovered that both writers used distinctive styles in revealing meanings and reinforcing the aesthetic value

showing a different impact on literature for many years. The focus of this work is mainly on the figures of speech (which is more related to literature than to linguistics).

Amir (2018) also conducted a stylistic analysis of the short story *The Tell-Tale Heart* by Edgar Allan Poe. The paper concludes that Poe in his short story has extensively used literature and rhetorical devices to prove insanity, obsession, guilt, tension and other recurring themes of the story. This work also seems to focus more on literary stylistics than on linguistic stylistics. These works seem not far from literary criticism as they fail to incorporate the analysis of linguistic features such as in terms of the lexical or syntactic.

Chandio (2017) also conducted a stylistic analysis of Ahmed Ali's short story *Our Lane*. The study analyses how the author has used linguistic features like noun, adjective, conjunction, sentence complexity to portray the social, political, economic, religious, psychological and cultural conditions of the colonized natives of the Indian Subcontinent in the wake of the British colonial rule. This study establishes that Ahmed Ali's use of adjective is in consonance with the established norm, whereas the average length of sentences is shorter than the length of an average modern sentence. While rebutting colonial narrative, he deviates from the standards of English language: excessive use of coordinating conjunction 'and'. Most adjectives of positive characteristics qualify the past, whereas the adjectives referring to present are either of negative or of neutral characteristics. With this, the writer recognizes the glory of the past and condemns the disintegrating present and uncertain future in the colonized land. This work attempts to bring out how linguistic features could highlight the thematic concerns inherent in a text and thus serves as a good example of conducting a linguistic stylistic analysis of a short story.

Bari Khan, A and others (2015) did a similar study of the short story *The Last Word* by Dr. A. R. Tabassum. The formative elements of the story, such as point of view, characters and allegorical element, are discussed in detail so as to give a better insight of the story. The story is analyzed stylistically in terms of figures of speech where grammatical, lexical and phonological schemes are considered, following the checklist of linguistic and stylistic categories proposed by Leech and Short. Features of repetition, parallelism, alliteration, consonance, assonance and rhyme are the focus of the study. This detailed work serves as a good guide in terms of how to apply the checklist provided by Leech and Short (2007) to do a stylistic analysis.

Diribu A. (2012) has also done a stylistic analysis of some selected short stories of Edgar Allan Poe. This thesis attempts to analyze some selected short stories of Edgar Allan Poe from the stylistic perspective. Within the stylistic analysis, foregrounding is taken as a framework. The study therefore focuses on the prominent linguistic features and literary devices. The study revealed that almost all the foregrounded features, like parallelism, repetition and deviation are highly manipulated to show the unique style of Poe. This work brings out foregrounded features which are embedded in literary text such as in the short story. Again, by taking up more than one story from the same author, this work serves a good basis for this present work.

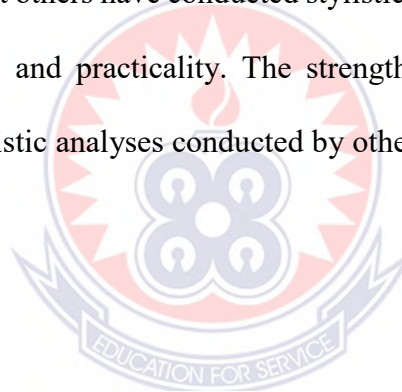
## **2.6. Summary**

Relevant literature has been reviewed in this chapter. The review touches on Stylistics, the theoretical framework and review of previous works. Under Stylistics, the history and focus of stylistics, sub-divisions, aims and functions of stylistics were reviewed. With the theoretical framework, concepts such as foregrounding and linguistic deviation (forms and types) were delved into. It was found that there are two main forms

of deviation: internal and external. On the other hand, there are eight types of linguistic deviation (according to Leech, 1969) which are lexical, phonological, grammatical, graphological, semantic, deviation of register, deviation of historical period and dialectal deviation.

Previous works on stylistic analyses have also been reviewed. The works of Zainab Ali Abed, Amir, Chandio, Bari Khan and Aderawere looked at and the relevance of each to this present study has been brought up.

So far, this section has clarified what linguistic stylistics is about, its relevance in analyzing texts as well as challenges in its practicality as far as the short story is concerned. The fact that others have conducted stylistic analyses of various short stories points to its relevance and practicality. The strengths and the shortcomings of the previous works on stylistic analyses conducted by other researchers serve as a guide to this present study.



## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODOLOGY

#### 3.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the research approach and the design employed in this study. It further explains the data sampling and collection procedure, as well as the procedure used in analyzing the data.

#### 3.1.1 Research Approach

The approach to this study is the qualitative research approach. According to Bogdan and Biklen (1982:28), qualitative research is descriptive. Shohamy (1989:124) proposes that descriptive research involves a collection of techniques used to specify, delineate or describe naturally occurring phenomenon without experimental manipulation.

In addition, Bogdan and Biklen (1982:39- 48) suggest that a qualitative research is a research procedure bringing about the descriptive data in the form of written or oral data from the subjects of the research being observed. In other words, qualitative research is actually concerned with the data that are described in words instead of in numbers or in measures. As a result, the nature of qualitative research is to describe particular phenomena or situations that become the focus of the research.

In this study, the phenoAidoo's collection of short stories, *No Sweetness Here*. Using the descriptive qualitative research approach, this study seeks to reveal the linguistic stylistic features employed by Ama Ata Aidoo in her shmena or situation being described is the text from Ama Ata ort stories, *In the Cutting of a Drink, The*

*Message and Certain Winds from the South*. The lexical categories, grammatical categories, the figures of speech, as well as context and cohesion will be described and how these features bring out the thematic concerns of these short stories.

### 3.1.2 Research Design

The research design is textual analysis. Textual analysis is a broad term for various research methods used to describe, interpret, and understand texts. The methods used to conduct textual analysis depend on the field and the aim of the research. It often aims to connect the text to a broader social, political, cultural, or artistic context. There are four major approaches to textual analysis: rhetorical criticism, content analysis, interaction analysis, and performance studies. (Frey, Botan & Kreps, 1999). Content Analysis is the specific design used in this study. Content Analysis is used to identify, enumerate, and analyze occurrence of specific messages and message characteristics embedded in texts. Amy Luo (2019), states that content analysis can be both quantitative (focused on counting and measuring) and qualitative (focused on interpreting and understanding). This type of design is appropriate for this study since it is considered an unobtrusive technique because researchers study texts that already exist rather than asking people to produce texts. A famous industrialist once said, 'A person's language, as a rule is an index of his or her mind'. This suggests that examining word choices can provide insights into people's character. The essence of this message is also a basic premise of textual analysts. Their mission is understanding how people think, and consequently act, by studying patterns displayed in their discourse, broadly defined.

### 3.2 Source of Data

Ama Ata Aidoo, is a Ghanaian author, poet, playwright and academic. Her notable works include the following,

- *The Dilemma of a Ghost* (1965), Longman;(a play)
- *No Sweetness Here* (1969) (a collection of short stories);
- *Anowa* (1970), Longman; (a play based on a Ghanaian legend)

- *Our Sister Killjoy: or Reflections from a Black – eyed Squint* (1977), Longman; (a novel)
- *Someone Talking to Sometime* (1986), Harare College Press; (a poetry collection)
- *Changes: A Love Story* (1993), Feminist Press; (a novel)
- *An Angry Letter in January* (1992) (poetry)
- *The Girl Who Can and Other Stories* (1997) (a collection of short stories); • *Diplomatic Pounds and Other Stories* (2012) (a collection of short stories);
- *After the Ceremonies* (2017), among others.

Ama Ata Aidoo has written many short stories throughout her long career, eleven of which were published together in 1995 in the collection *No Sweetness Here and Other Stories*. The stories are: Everything Counts, For Whom Things Did Not Change, In the Cutting of a Drink, The Message, Certain Winds from the South, No Sweetness Here, A Gift from Somewhere, Two Sisters, The Late Bud, Something to Talk about on the Way to the Funeral and Other Versions. Out of these stories, three have been selected for the purpose of this study. The stories are mostly set in the late 1960s and early 1970s Ghana, a little over a decade after the country gained its independence in 1957. She explores themes from the post - colonial period like “The push and pull between modernization and tradition, urbanization and rural life, shifting identities of people being sorted in new socio – economic ways and the politics of gender. In this collection, Ama Ata Aidoo explores post-colonial life in Ghana with characteristic honesty and humor. Tradition wrestles with new urban influences as Africans try to sort out their identity in changing culture. True to the tradition of African storytelling, the characters come to life through their distinct voices and speech.

### 3.2.1 Sampling

The study analyzed texts from three selected short stories from Ama Ata Aidoo's collection of short stories, *No Sweetness Here*. Out of the eleven short stories, three have been selected to identify the linguistic stylistic features in these short stories and how these features help in the development of the themes. The choice of short stories from the collection was by purposive sampling. According to Patton (1990\2002) and Kuzel (1999), purposive sampling represents a group of different non – probability sampling techniques, also known as “judgemental”, selective or subjective sampling. Purposive sampling relies on the judgement of the researcher when it comes to selecting the units that are to be studied. The main goal of purposive sampling is to focus on particular characteristics of a population that are of interest which will best enable one to answer the research questions. Specifically, homogeneous sampling was employed. Homogeneous sampling is a purposive sampling technique that aims to achieve a homogeneous sample; that is, a sample whose units share the same (or very similar) characteristics or traits. I settled on the three short stories *In the Cutting of a Drink*, *The Message* and *Certain Winds from the South* because of the similarities in their themes and in their plots. They all address issues pertaining to changes in the social life, technological advancement and the misunderstanding of such issues, rural - urban divide and the like that characterized the post- colonial era. In terms of their plot, they all involve a situation where one moves from a rural setting to an urban area in search of a blood relation or a better life. The end of the search in all situations turn out to be situational irony as the ‘narrator’ in the story *In the Cutting of a Drink* concludes, “I was sent to find a lost child. I found her a woman”. In the same way, *The Message* concludes that “And by the bed the old woman was trying hard to rise and look at the only pot which had refused to get broken”. In the same way, M’ma Asana concludes in *Certain*

*Winds from the South* that, “Now my daughter, you know another man who went to fight in other people’s war and he never came back” after telling Hawa how her father travelled to the south to seek for a better life and never came back.

### **3.3 Data Analysis Procedure**

The data used in this study are selected from the three short stories: *In the Cutting of a Drink*, *The Message* and *Certain Winds from the South*. These are stories from the book *No Sweetness Here* by Ama Ata Aidoo. These three short stories are part of a collection of short stories which talk about post-colonial Ghana; the positive and negative changes; the confusion of understanding modern trends by the old and those from the countryside; the shift in our cultural practices and moral issues that cropped up in the renaissance era are well represented in these three short stories. These themes have been explored using varied word forms, phrases and sentences as well as rhetoric devices. It is these features that are selected to be studied. The relevant selected expressions are coded and then placed under predetermined linguistic stylistic categories. Items in their categories are further examined to identify how they relate to the themes and concerns raised in the texts.

Neuman et al (2011) outlines six steps in conducting textual content analysis. These are:

1. Formulate the research question
2. Decide on units of analysis
3. Develop a sampling plan
4. Construct coding categories
5. Coding and intercoder reliability check and
6. Data collection and analysis.

Accordingly, this research is guided by three research questions. Analysis will be based on descriptions. Appropriate texts which show linguistic deviations will be selected from the three short stories to be coded based on the checklist of linguistic stylistic categories as proposed by Leech and Short (2007). Coding and intercoder reliability check will be conducted. Data will then be collected and analyzed under the four general headings: lexical categories, grammatical categories, figures of speech, and cohesion and context.

There are three stages involved in the data analysis. The first stage was to identify the general linguistic features in the text. This includes the simplicity or complexity of the vocabulary, the distribution of grammatical entities in the texts, among other things. In the second stage, the researcher looked for how the stylistic features such as lexical categories, grammatical categories, figures of speech, and cohesion and context were foregrounded in the text. The identified features were classified under the appropriate headings.

The third stage was to investigate the communicative implications of the stylistic features identified. This is done by analyzing how these linguistic features contribute to the themes of the short stories based on the evidence of the frequency of the stylistic features as recorded, how they are used and to explain why some features are used predominantly as against others used sparingly.

### **3.4. Checklist of Linguistic and Stylistic Categories**

Leech and Short (2007), propose a checklist of linguistic and stylistic categories for analyzing texts.

The categories are placed under four general headings: lexical categories, grammatical categories, figures of speech, and cohesion and context. The purpose of the list is

heuristic so it envelopes other features (categories). It is also natural for categories to overlap, so that the same feature may well be noted under different headings.

#### A: Lexical Categories

1. General –The text is analyzed in terms of the simplicity or complexity of the vocabulary; formality or colloquialism; is the vocabulary descriptive or evaluative? General or specific? Other meanings such as emotive, associations of words are considered as against their referential meaning are also considered. Idiomatic phrases or notable collocations as well as specialized vocabulary are considered. Other features of vocabulary such as morphological categories, semantic fields are also taken into account.
2. Nouns – The specific type of nouns: abstract, concrete, proper or collective nouns are all analyzed.
3. Adjectives – The frequency and the kind of attribute adjectives refer to are noted and whether adjectives are restrictive or non-restrictive; gradable or non-gradable; attributive or predicative are all considered.
4. Verbs – The kind and the nature of verbs are analyzed. They may be lexical – stative or dynamic; transitive or intransitive; or linking.
5. Adverbs – The frequency and the semantic functions of adverbs are looked at. Sentence adverbs such as conjuncts and disjuncts are also taken note of.

#### B. Grammatical Categories

1. Sentence Types – The types of sentences: declaratives, interrogatives, imperatives and exclamatory; used by the author is analyzed. Other minor sentence types such as verbless sentences and the functions they perform are all considered.

2. Sentence Complexity – Sentences are analyzed in terms of their simplicity or complexity of structure. The average length of sentences, the ratio of dependent clauses as against independent clauses among other things are considered.
3. Clause Types – Consideration is given to the types of dependent clause which are preferred (relative clauses, adverbial clauses, nominal clauses). Other clause types such as, various types of non- finite clause (infinitive clauses, -ing clauses, -ed clauses, verbless clauses) are also noted.
4. Clause Structure – Consideration is given to the significant use of clause elements (for example, frequency of objects, complement, adverbials; of transitive or intransitive verb construction).
5. Noun Phrases - Are they relatively simple or complex? Where does the complexity lie (in pre-modification by adjectives, nouns, etc., or in post-modification by prepositional phrases, relative clauses, etc)? Occurrence of listings such as sequences of adjectives, coordination or apposition must be noted.
6. Verb Phrases – Are there any significant departures from the use of the simple past tense? For example, notice occurrences and functions of the present; of the progressive aspect; of the perfective aspect; of modal auxiliaries. Look out for phrasal verbs and how they are used.
7. Other Phrase Types – Is there anything to be said about other phrase types: prepositional phrases, adverb phrases, adjective phrases?
8. Word Classes – We may also consider minor word classes: prepositions, conjunctions, pronouns, determiners, auxiliaries, interjections. Are particular words of these types used for particular effect?
9. General – We need to take notice of any general types of grammatical construction used to special effect. Do lists and coordination (such as list of nouns) tend to occur

with two, three or more than three members? Does the coordination, unlike the standard construction with one conjunction (sun, moon and stars) tend to omit conjunction (sun, moon, stars) or have more than one conjunction (sun and moon and stars)?

### C. Figures of speech

Here we consider the incidence of features which are foregrounded by virtue of departing in some way from general norms of communication by means of the language code. For identifying such features, the traditional figures of speech (schemes and tropes) are often useful categories.

1. Grammatical and Lexical – Are there any cases of formal and structural repetition or of mirror-image patterns? Is the rhetorical effect of these ones of antithesis, reinforcement, climax, anti-climax, etc .
2. Phonological schemes – Are there any phonological patterns of rhyme, alliteration, assonance, etc? Are there any salient rhythmical patterns? Do vowels and consonant sounds pattern or cluster in particular ways? How do these phonological features interact with meaning?
3. Tropes – Are there any obvious violations of, or departures from, the linguistic code such as neologisms, deviant lexical collocations, semantic, syntactic, phonological or graphological deviations? Such deviations will often be the clue to special interpretations associated with traditional poetic figures of speech such as metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, paradox and irony. If such tropes occur, what kind of special interpretation is involved?

#### D. Context and Cohesion

Context refers to the external relations of a text or part of a text, seeing it as a discourse presupposing a social relation between its participants and a sharing by participants of knowledge and assumptions. Cohesion on the other hand refers to ways in which one part of a text is linked to another are considered: for example, the ways in which sentences are connected. This is the internal organization of the text.

1. Cohesion – Does the text contain logical or other links between sentences or does it tend to rely on implicit connections of meaning? What sort of use is made of cross - reference by pronouns, by substitute forms or ellipsis? Alternatively, is any use made of elegant variations- the avoidance of repetition by the substitution of a descriptive phrase? Are meaning connections reinforced by repetition of words and phrases, or by repeatedly using words from the same semantic field?

2. Context – Does the writer address the reader directly, or through the words or thoughts of some fictional character? What linguistic clues are there of the addresser – addressee relationships? What attitude does the author imply towards his or her subject? If a character's words or thoughts are represented, is this done by direct quotation or by some other method (example, indirect speech, free indirect speech). Are there significant changes of style according to who is supposedly speaking or thinking the words on the page.

### 3.5. Summary

This chapter has looked at the Research Approach, Research Design, Source of Data, Sampling, Data Analysis Procedure and the Checklist of Linguistic and Stylistic Categories (proposed by Leech and Short). The research approach to this study is the qualitative research approach, the research design is textual analysis. The text for the

analysis was taken from Ama Ata Aidoo's collection of short stories in the book *No Sweetness Here*.

Purposive sampling technique, specifically, homogeneous sampling was employed in this research work. The reason for settling on this sampling technique has been explained. The data analysis procedure used to collect and analyze data has been explained. The checklist of linguistic and stylistic categories proposed by Leech and Short (2007) has been expounded. The checklist identifies four general headings that can be used to classify linguistic stylistic features. These are lexical categories, grammatical categories, figures of speech and cohesion and context.



## CHAPTER FOUR

### ANALYSIS, FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

#### 4.0 Introduction

This chapter analyses the data, presents findings and discusses the same. It takes a look at the thematic concerns in the three selected texts. It further analyses the linguistic features which are foregrounded in the texts and finally examines how these features help in the development of the themes in these short stories.

In order to contextualize the discussions that follow the analysis, the presentation first sums up the works' major themes below.

#### 4.1 Thematic Concerns in 'In the Cutting of a Drink'

*In the Cutting of a Drink* just like the other stories, addresses issues that came up after Ghana had attained independence. These issues are outlined as follows:

##### (a) Rural-Urban Migration

This story exposes the rural-urban divide that provides the allurements necessary for migration. The description of the Circle, the number of cars running the streets, the street lights in the night and the club house are all things that the village folks have never experienced. In fact, the narrator entreats his folks to make a point to see the beautiful lights he was talking about. Besides, the city dwellers seem to enjoy some freedom of lifestyle as for an instance, nobody cares how you dress or even how one dances.

##### (b) Cultural Change

One property Ghanaians inherited from our colonial masters is their way of life. Being our superiors for such a considerable period of time, we seem to prefer their way of life.

The independence of city life tends to fuel this tendency: women living with men they are not married to; women dining with men; women drinking beer and also drinking beer and lemonade as against our local drinks such as palm-wine. Adopting such lifestyle amounts to loss of our identity such that young women want to look like the white by wearing wigs (long silky hair) and putting on red lip-stick. Wearing a cloth is even seen as out of the way, instead the ladies wear very tight clothes. These are some of the concerns Ama Ata Aidoo raises in this short story.

### **(c) Morality**

Morality is a major concern which this short story brings up – Is prostitution considered ‘work’? The freedom of city life seems to make room for immoral behaviour such as ‘big men’ living (flirting) with young women by taking them to live with them in their bungalows. Women drinking hard liquor, smoking cigarettes and engaging in prostitution have all been brought up. One other moral decadence that seems to characterise city life is stealing – the narrator’s bag was stolen as soon as he set foot in the city.

### **(d) Influence**

Last but not least, Ama Ata Aidoo draws our attention to the power of ‘influence’ which has made it possible for us to drift from our way of life and also to abandon our good moral upbringing. The narrator was influenced by Duayaw to go to the nightclub with him, drank beer, danced with strange women, all against his normal self.

## **4.2 Thematic Concerns in ‘The Message’**

Ama Ata Aidoo, through her short story, *The Message*, addresses diverse concerns pertaining to post independence Ghana. Among them are the following:

**(a) Misunderstanding of the old about new developments in technology.**

The whole story revolves around the misunderstanding of the old and the rural folks about new trends in technology, specifically, what a caesarean section is all about. For this reason, old Esi Amfoa goes into a state of anxiety and deep sorrow on receiving a telegram message that her only grand-daughter has been opened up and her baby removed. This message is received with grief as everyone in the village who hears it sympathizes with the old woman – ‘Esi, we have heard of your misfortune.’ They even presume her dead – ‘If the only child of your only child died, won’t you weep?’ and Esi Amfoa asks herself, ‘Have they buried her... where? She thinks again’ I have buried all my children and now I am going to bury my only grandchild!’

The careful operation of a caesarean section which is performed by an expert to safeguard the lives of mother and child is misunderstood to mean a haphazard undertaking where a knife is used to cut through the mother’s belly to remove the baby. In the end is a situational irony where the narrator recounts, ‘And by the bed the old woman was trying hard to rise and look at the only pot which had refused to get broken.’

**(b) The ritual of pitying in Ghana**

Another issue this story brings up is the ritual of pitying in Ghana. When one is confronted with a difficult situation, the burden is borne by the entire community by sympathizing with the person. Even those who are considered enemies would express their sympathy. Both the young and the old would also express their sympathy as seen in these lines: My daughter, it is very serious.

‘Mother, may God go with you.’

Everyone who heard what had happened expressed sympathy in one way or the other;

‘Eno due, due, due...I did not know.’

This ritual of pitying brings the contrast between rural life and that of the urban areas: in rural communities, there is love and concern for one another whereas in the urban areas, no one cares about others and their problems.

### **(c) Identity**

One issue that permeates all stories in this book is the loss of identity that plagued post independent Ghana. European names are preferred by the younger generation such that the old woman had difficulty in locating her grandchild because she did not know her European name – Mary Koomson for Esi Amfoa and then the scrappy nurse under training has the name, Jessy Treeson. Adopting such names was the order of the day.

The tremendous cultural change that was taking place fuelled this loss of identity as Ghanaians, for an instance, the modern woman is described as thin, skinny and hard as against the older folks who were fleshy, tender but strong. Draba Anan remarked, ‘These modern girls.... Now here is one who cannot even have a baby in a decent way. But must have the baby removed from her stomach. Tchiala.’ Then another passenger retorts, ‘Draba, here is me, sitting quiet and this lady of muscles and bones being cheeky to me’. Later in the story, Draba Anan thought about the nurse, ...’ but maybe I will break my toe if I kicked at her buttocks.’ Another area where we have lost it is the respect we give to the elderly, such as refusal to offer seat to elders and also using derogatory remarks against the elderly.

## **4.3 Thematic Concerns in ‘Certain Winds from the South’**

### **(a) Hardship**

Characters in the story experience hardship. M’ma Asana’s husband was a soldier who fought in the World War II and subsequently died some twenty years before when M’ma

had given birth to Hawa. She had to raise her daughter alone which had caused her to experience hardship. As if that is not enough, the harvest had been bad as M'ma draws our attention to the "wretched pile of cola-nuts" which she would be sending to the market the next day. There is fear of starvation in the face of this difficult time and that is a force strong enough to push a man like Issa to travel to the south to seek for greener pasture as he puts it "what will be the use in my staying here and watching them starve? ...And that is why I am going (p59).

### **(b) Strength**

In spite of all that M'ma Asana had gone through, she does not give up hope. She is still strong enough to encourage her daughter who could not bear the pain of parting with her husband, Issa, since she has been there before. M'ma Asana shows physical strength for her age. While everyone is asleep she stays on doing this or that to make sure everything is in order before she will go to sleep. In fact, her experience has taught her to be strong since she had no choice when the husband died but be determined to handle her life and that of her daughter. M'ma mentions that Hawa had a lot of strength because at the time of her husband's death, her breast went dry but Hawa managed to survive (p64).

### **(c) Silence**

Silence is one theme Ama Ata Aidoo brings out in this story. The men in the story can choose to do whatever they want to do whereas the women seem to be helpless. This is typical of the patriarchal African society where the voice of the woman does not matter. It seems older women like M'ma Asana are given some recognition but not young women like Hawa as Issa comes to tell M'ma of his decision to go the south at a time when he knew so well that Hawa would be asleep. Throughout the story, Hawa's voice

is not heard even when M'ma was conversing with her. Though the women are silent, they are the ones who suffer from the consequences of the choice the men make.

### **4.3 Findings**

The findings of the study are presented here in the order of the research questions. All the three research questions are discussed for one story before the same set of questions are discussed for the next story.

#### **4.3.1 In the Cutting of a Drink**

Research Question 1 – What are the foregrounded linguistic stylistic features used in the text? The researcher sought to discover the lexical categories, grammatical categories, items used to establish context and cohesion, as well as point out instances of the marked use of language in figures of speech

#### **4.3.2 Lexical Categories (In the Cutting of a Drink)**

This section takes a look at Ama Ata Aidoo's choice of vocabulary which indicates foregrounding through linguistic deviation and how these linguistic choices reinforce the themes in the story.

##### **4.3.2.1 General Impressions**

In all, Ama Ata Aidoo's use of vocabulary in the short story *In the Cutting of a Drink* could be described as simple. This is because the narration is done by a simple village folk. Colloquial expressions are used as the unknown narrator narrates his experiences directly to his listening village folks. The narrator uses descriptive expressions to paint vivid pictures of what he experienced in the city. Some things are described instead of naming them as in these examples.

(1) ...the thing which was like a big bowl on a very huge stump of wood.

(2) ... that narrow place that looks like a box.

(3) She was as black as you and I, but her hair ... like that of a white woman.

(4) Her lips ... look like a fresh wound.

(5) The whole place was as clear as the sky.

With such expressions, he described places, objects, people and scenes and even how he felt- (a) I was trembling like water in a brass bowl.

(b) I felt as if the whole world was made of cars in motion.

These expressions give the indication that the narrator is naïve and overwhelmed by the scenes in the city. He echoes his naivety by using indefinite pronouns like something, somewhere, anywhere, anyone and the likes to refer to people and places.

Some specialized vocabulary and expressions characterized the narrator's speech. These include the following:

(1) drop down (to alight from a vehicle) – originally, drop down is a nautical expression which means to sail, move or row down a coast or down a river to the sea but here it has been used to mean to alight from a vehicle.

(2) jump in (board a car)- the Cambridge Dictionary defines this expression as a phrasal verb which means to interrupt when someone else is speaking. In this context it means to board a car.

(3) cut beer/ cut me a drink – cut collocates with solid but here it has been used with 'drink' or 'beer' which is liquid.

(4) Klase Tri- a corrupt form of 'class three'

(5) lamlale – a corrupt form of lemonade (a fizzy drink).

All these expressions define the level of the narrator's language and make the narration very informal.

#### 4.3.2.2 Nouns and Pronouns

There are three hundred and sixty-four (364) Nouns used in the story, *In the Cutting of a Drink*. Three hundred and fifty- six (356) representing 98% of the nouns are concrete nouns used to name places and people. There are only eight abstract nouns which are ‘wonder’, ‘purpose’, ‘crime’, ‘case’ ‘time’ ‘question’, ‘space’ and then ‘intention’. This reflects the fact that the narrator had encounters with mostly people and places rather than ideas and situations. More importantly, the narrator had a duty to paint a vivid picture of the city to his relatives since they have never been to the city. This he does successfully using mainly concrete nouns.

Five hundred and fifty (550) Pronouns have been used of which two hundred and eighty-two (282) representing 51% are first person personal pronouns. This is so since there is only one narrator giving a personal account. He constantly refers to people, places and things he has mentioned earlier, and to himself and his experiences. This makes his account authentic and clear emphasizing the developmental gap between the city and the rural communities, which lures rural folks to move to the city.

**Table 4.1: Lexical Categories in the Short Story “In the Cutting of a Drink”**

Word Class	Frequency
Nouns	364
Concrete Nouns	356
Abstract Noun	8
Pronouns	550
1 <sup>st</sup> Person	282
Others	268

### 4.3.3 Grammatical Categories

Grammatical elements which are foregrounded through linguistic deviation are analyzed based on their significant contribution to the development of the theme(s) in the short story, *In the Cutting of a Drink*.

#### 4.3.3.1 Sentence Types

The author uses mainly declarative sentences. Declarative sentences indicate finality or certainty. In this story the ‘narrator gives an eye-witness account of city life to his relatives back at the village. In fact, he has a duty to present situations and events as they are. He must thus, be factual, hence the extensive use of declarative sentences. Sometimes however, he uses interrogative sentences for special effect. They are used to express shock as in these examples:

Are all these beings that are passing this way and that way human?

- (1) Did men buy all these cars with money...?
- (2) Ei, are all these people children of human beings?
- (3) And where are they going?
- (4) And what do they want?
- (5) Have they no homes?
- (6) Do not their mothers like them?
- (7) Young woman, is this the work you do?
- (8) Young man, what work do you mean?
- (9) Do you not know what work?
- (10) And who are you to ask me questions?
- (11) I say who are you?
- (12) Do you know me?

At other times, interrogatives are used to express what bothers the narrator's mind. The following are such examples.

- How is it some people are lucky with school and others are not?
- Did not Mansa go to school with Duayaw here in this very school which I can see for myself? What have we done that Mansa should have wanted to stop going to school?
- Have I said anything to show that Mansa is dead?
- ... have you not been drinking this women's drink all the time?
- Did you not know?
- And how do we dance?
- Ei! My little sister, are you asking me a question?
- Oh! You want to know whether I found Mansa?
- I am cooking the whole meal for you. Why do you want to lick the ladle now?
- Are you all weeping?
- What is there to weep about?

Furthermore, interrogatives are used to express doubt. Below are such examples:

1. Do you think you can find a woman in this place?
2. Where can we find her if someone big has married her and she is now living in one of those big bungalows which are some ten miles from the city?

There are only a few imperative sentences mainly used to interrupt the narration to call for a drink. A few exclamatory sentences are also used to draw attention to the fact that women are emotional, including the following:

- As for you women!

Another one has been used to show the narrator's excitement and delight in this,

‘Everyone should see them ... and there are so many of them! as he talked about some beautiful lights he saw in the city.

#### 4.3.3.2 Sentence Complexity

But for the opening sentence and a few more, most of the sentences are short but in terms of their structure, they are mainly complex. The sentences vary in length: long, medium and short. The average sentence length is about twenty- three (23) words, ranging from three (3) to sixty- one (61). According to James Scott (2019), Mike Markel suggests that an average of 15 to 20 words is the most effective sentence length. However, he advised against writing sentences that were all the same length as this may breed monotony and makes reading uninteresting. It is therefore in line that Ama Ata Aidoo used sentences of varied length in this text. In fact, long sentences were used under the following circumstances:

- His opening sentence (40 words)
- Describing the Circle (58 words)
- Describing the event (dancing with the ladies) that led to finding Mansa (61 words)
- Efforts made to give Mansa a good life (54 words)

The complex structure of the sentences is due to three types of clause relationships:

1. Subordination
2. Coordination and
3. Both coordination and subordination.

Generally, the sentences in this text have complex structure. This is because, the narrator described events, people and places using adverbial, adjectival or noun clauses, as he is

not familiar with what he talks about, and again, he wants to furnish his audience with every detail of his journey. This he did perfectly as indicated by these instances:

1. ‘as we went round the thing which was like a big bowl on a very huge stump of wood, ...’ (that is a fountain).
2. ‘We walked through many streets until we came to a big building where a band was playing (a night club)
3. ‘... we had gone to a place where they had given a dance, but I did not know’ (a club).
4. ‘But as we were talking about the dancing, something made Duayaw turn to look behind him where four women were sitting by the table ...oh! He turned his eye quickly, screwed his face into something queer which I could not understand and told me that if I wanted to dance ...’ (describing how people regard prostitutes).
5. ‘... she jumped up and said something in that kind of white man’s language which everyone, even those who have not gone to school speak in the city (Hello).
6. ‘When the band stopped playing, she told me to take her to where they sold things to buy her beer and cigarettes (the bar).

#### **4.3.3.3 Clause Types**

A variety of dependent clauses have been used in this text but the profound use of adverbial clauses and adjectival clauses cannot be overlooked. These clauses are used where single words could have been used. This is due to the fact that the narrator does not know the actual names of the things he talks about and that he had given a very detailed account of his journey so that his people will appreciate the efforts he had made to find Mansa. The adverbial clauses give details of ‘when’, of events and actions.

These are examples of adverbial clauses used in the text:

1. "I stopped walking *just before I stepped into the Circle itself.*" (time)
2. "*As we went round the thing* which was like a big bowl on a huge stump of wood.(time).
3. "*Each time I tried to raise my eyes,* I was dizzy ..." (time)
4. *Immediately we arrived at the station,*" (time) 5. "*When the clock struck about two-thirty...*" (time).
- 6." He sat by me *while I ate...*" (time).
- 7." *When Duayaw knew that I was properly awake, ...*" (time) 8. "*When we were on the streets,* I could not believe my eyes. (time).
9. "*until we came to a big building.*" (time).
10. "*As soon as we sat down ...*" (time).
11. "*as we were talking about dancing ...*" (time).
12. "*Immediately one of them saw me,*" (time).
13. "*When the music ended ...*"
14. "... *after she has refused to go,* we finally took her to this woman ..." (time).
15. "We are thinking of her *as we last saw her when she was ten years old.*" (time)
16. "I was looking at him *all the time he was talking.*" (time).
17. "*Before I went in,* I thought the building was big, but *when I went in,* I realized..." (time).

#### 4.3.4 Context and Cohesion

We now take a look at how the writer uses context and cohesion to indicate foregrounding and to highlight the themes that have been implied in the short story, *In the Cutting of a Drink*. First let's take a look at cohesion.

#### 4.3.4.1 Cohesion

According to Wikipedia, cohesion is the grammatical and lexical linking within a text or a sentence that holds a text together and gives it a meaning. In this context, the researcher identifies the various strategies the writer used to achieve unity in the text and how this helps to bring out the meaning of the text.

Discourse markers are used extensively to indicate or address the other characters who were present as the narrator gives his report. These are some examples:

- ✦ I say, my uncles, ...
- ✦ But my elders, ...
- ✦ My mother, ...
- ✦ Ei! My little sister ...
- ✦ Oh, my mother and my aunt, oh little sister, ...
- ✦ My brother ...

Other discourse markers indicate the people's response to his report, such as; ▪ 'My mother do not interrupt me ...'

- ✦ Do you cry 'My Lord', mother?
- ✦ 'Do you say' Ei, uncle, ...
- ✦ 'Yes, that was the case, uncle,'
- ✦ 'Do not be surprised, uncles.
- ✦ 'My uncle, do not say ...'
- ✦ 'My uncles, I too was surprised too.
- ✦ Ei! My little sister, are you asking me a question?
- ✦ '... are you all weeping?

‘Hm’ is used to indicate how overwhelmed some incidents have been.

‘Yes’ is used from time to time to assure the listeners that he (the narrator) was telling them the truth.

The use of these markers helps bring out the mood of the narration and helps readers understand how the rural folks see the changes that are taking place in the urban areas.

There is also extensive occurrence of ellipsis in the narration. This is because he has to pause many times to comment about the audience’s reaction to something he has said or to address them. These are some examples:

- ✦ ‘But mother, that is twelve years ago ...
- ✦ ‘But I must continue with my tale ...’
- ✦ I too cried “My Lord .... Yes I too did
- ✦ I would not like to stop somewhere and tell you the end ...
- ✦ ‘Cut me a drink’...

Sometimes the ellipsis indicates he could not completely describe a situation or he is overwhelmed. Some examples include the following:

- ✦ It is very hard to find a place to sleep in the city ...
- ✦ ... and he started laughing a certain laugh ...
- ✦ ... but she does not come from our parts ...
- ✦ ... but this woman asked for “Beer” ...
- ✦ ... no one cares if you dance well or not ...
- ✦ Any form of work is work ...is work!

‘But’ has been used many times but usually not as a coordinating conjunction. It is even used to start some sentences. It has been used many times as a discourse marker to link one situation to the other.

The use of discourse markers helps to keep the narration flowing. This kind of narration is in line with the narration in ‘Ananse stories’ where one person sits to tell the story while the others listen and react in many ways. Briefly, the author’s use of unconventional discourse markers helps readers to know the other characters (who were just listening), know how they feel about the narrator’s report, how the narrator feels about his experiences and more importantly to keep the narration flowing.

Moreover, the extensive use of adverbs, adverbial phrases and adverbial clauses of time, helps to maintain the chronological coherence of the text. This, in effect, helps the audience to understand the circumstances that led the narrator to accomplish his task and that it was an arduous task.

#### **4.3.4.2 Context**

Quora. Com explains context in linguistics as the information surrounding a word or expression that helps to determine its meaning. It further states that setting includes the physical setting, the speaker and their intentions, the listener and their background knowledge as well as the linguistic and cultural context. That is to say, context is indicated by the writer’s choice of setting, characters and their intentions for acting or saying something. Context indicates what is acceptable or otherwise with regards to the culture of the people involved. It is a sum up of why things happen and why people do what they do.

This text is an eye- witness report of a narrator hence the use of the first-person pronouns (I, we, me, us) to indicate the first-person narrator.

The narrator employed different reporting styles. He uses Direct Speech (DS) in these instances:

‘Where are you going?’ he asked me. “I am going to Mamprobi,” I replied. ‘Jump in,’ he said, ... (This describes his interaction with the taxi driver in Accra). This way of reporting makes readers feel the presence of the driver in the narration. Again, in his interaction with Duayaw at the club, He said, ‘And this is no wonder, have you not been drinking this women’s drink all the time?’ “Does it make one cold?” I asked him. ‘Yes’, he replied.

“You know I cannot dance the way you people dance,” I told him. ‘And how do we dance? He asked me.’ “I think you all dance like white men and as I do not know how that is done, people would laugh at me,” I said.

He also used direct speech when reporting his interaction with the *bad women of the city*. This interaction marks the climax of his narration, so bringing in the direct words of this interaction helps readers accept what actually happened.

“Young woman, is this the work you do?”

“Young man what work do you mean?”

“Do you not know what work?”

“And who are you to ask me such questions? I say who are you?”

Apart from these few cases where direct speech was used, the rest of the narrative is given by reported rendition.

#### **4.3.5 Figures of Speech**

Figures of speech are integral part of any language. It is used extensively not only in our day- to -day speech but also in written text and oral literature. These are words or phrases used in a distinctive way to produce rhetorical effect. To say it in very simple terms, it

is a phrase whose actual meaning is different from its literal meaning (erageedu.com).

Ama Ata Aidoo uses various figures of speech in her short story, *In the Cutting of a Drink* to reinforce the themes and the meaning of the text. Let us consider some of them.

#### 4.3.5.1 Repetition

‘but’ has been repeated so many times in this text. This is a mark of non-fluency and it echoes the bewilderment of the narrator of the scenes in the city he is describing.

‘Yes’ has also been repeated now and then in the narration. This is to assure the listeners that he was telling them the truth. His tale seems incredible to the village folks so the need to assure them it is the truth he is telling them.

‘Duayaw has done well for himself’ has been repeated by the narrator to indicate he was really impressed with Duayaw’s life in the city. Another phrase that has been repeated is ‘fast asleep’. This indicates the narrator’s shock that people could sleep on Saturday afternoon which is the main time for farm activities back at the village. This emphasizes the contrast between life in the city and that of the village that tends to lure people, especially the youth to run to the cities. ‘Cut me a drink’ has been repeated three times – once in the middle of the narration, twice when he had almost ended. This is to indicate the climax of his narration and that what he was about to disclose was very unpleasant and so he needs something to make him emotionally strong enough to break the news to his relatives.

‘Work’ has been repeated in these sentences: “This is no work”, “Is this the work you do?” “What work do you mean?” “Do you not know what work?” Also, “Any kind of work is work” is repeated three times and the story ends on the repetition of “Any form of work is work ... is work ... is work! This sparks the debate about whether ‘prostitution’ could be considered as work. The ‘work’ that is been talked about so much

is Prostitution. The mood of the narrator is clear enough to indicate that he disapproves prostitution as work and thus condemns it.

#### 4.3.5.2 Simile

Since the narrator is naïve about many things he talks about, he resorts to simile in a bid to make things clear to his listeners. The narrator tends to use simile by comparing the situations to common things as in these instances:

*“that narrow place that looks like a box” (the inconvenience of city life)*

*“She was as beautiful as sunrise” (an attraction to city life)*

*“The whole place was as clear as the sky” (an attraction to city life)*

*“the daughter of a woman cut beer like a man” (moral decadence of city life)*

*“I think you all dance like white men” (cultural change)*

*‘She was as black as you and I but her hair was very long and fell on her shoulders like that of a white woman’. (loss of identity)*

*‘Her lips ... looked a like a fresh wound’ ‘with mouth that looked like clotted blood’ (loss of identity).*

To describe the Circle vividly, he describes it this way ‘which was like a big bowl on a very huge stump of wood’. Again, he describes the night scene in the city thus, “The whole place was as clear as the sky”. With such expressions, the narrator succeeds in making the unfamiliar, strange city life, clear and familiar to the village folks.

#### 4.3.5.4 Other Tropes

Other tropes such as alliteration, euphemism and understatement have been used for special effects. The following examples point to the use of tropes.

- ‘How can *folks find* time to *sleep* on *Saturday* afternoons?’ (alliteration)
- ‘We *hailed* each other *heartily*’. (alliteration)
- ‘His room has *fine furniture*’. (alliteration)
- ‘I looked round and did not find my bag.’ (understatement / euphemism)

Rhetorical questions abound in the text indicating that the narrator is overwhelmed by the scenes and situations he observed in the city, which points to the vast gap between city life and that of the village. This serves as a major factor pushing the youth to the city where they enjoy modern social amenities and freedom of life such as cannot be found in the rural areas. The following are such examples:

- ‘Did men buy all these cars with money?’
- ‘Who is paying for all these lights?’
- ‘... big bungalows which are some ten miles from the city?’

#### **Research Question 2: What have the foregrounded stylistic features been used for?**

The researcher further analyses what the linguistic stylistic features identified in the short story “In the Cutting of a Drink” been used for.

The lexical categories identified indicate the narrator’s level of understanding of the issues he is describing. The use of corrupt forms of English language such as “Klase Tri” for class three; the use of non-standard forms such as “drop down” for alight and

“jump in” to mean boarding a vehicle and also using “cut” with a “drink” instead of a solid are all deviations from the normal usage. These deviations make the expressions prominent leading to foregrounding. Issues such as the hectic city life and the attempt to give a decent life to the girl through education and training have been highlighted.

The grammatical categories identified such as long sentences, the complex structure of the sentences, and the perverse use of clauses where single words could be used are all indication that the narrator is overwhelmed. These are deviations which lead to foregrounding of such features pointing to the complexity of city life which contrast greatly with the simplicity of rural life. The context of the narration shows deviation, in that, there is only one anonymous narrator and the rest being audience and the use of non- conventional forms of discourse markers, typical of story- telling pattern in the local communities; thus, africanizing the prose.

In terms of figures of speech, simile has been used mainly to make the unfamiliar familiar. This is done by comparing ‘vague’ things with common, concrete things such as ‘box’, ‘sky’, ‘stump of wood’, ‘water in a brass bowl’ among other things. The repeated words and expressions such as ‘but’, ‘yes’, ‘cut me a drink’ among others have been used in a specialized way to keep the story flowing and assure audience of the authenticity of the story because it sounds so strange to the village folks. “Duayaw has done well for himself”, has been repeated three times. The narrator makes mention of fine furniture in Duayaw’s small room as one of the indications of good living in the city coupled with the fact that “folks find time to sleep on Saturday afternoons”. The alliterations highlight these factors that tend to point to a comfortable living in the city and serve as one of the factors attracting the youth from the rural areas to the cities.

**RQ3: How do the foregrounded features contribute to the development of the themes of this story?**

a) The pervasive use of concrete nouns, the use of simile to make unfamiliar things familiar, and the details of the narration through the use of various clause types, such as adjectivals and adverbials result in painting a picture of the rural-urban divide that tends to fuel rural-urban migration. The repetition of ‘work’ draws one’s attention to the fact that people move to settle in the city for job opportunities; being it legitimate or not.

b) The narrator draws our attention to the change in identity that characterized post-independence Ghanaian societies especially in the cities. This is achieved through the use of simile such as in these examples: “I think you all dance like white men”; “I say, she was as black as you and I, but her hair was very long and fell on her shoulders like that of a white woman”; “Her lips with that red paint looked like a fresh wound”, among others. The repetition of “beer” is an indication of a shift in our identity as people in the city prefer beer to our local drinks such as palm wine.

(c) Our attention is drawn to the moral decadence typical of city life. Bewildered by the extent of deterioration, the narrator, using interrogatives, questions the reasons for people going to such extent: “Do not their mothers like them?” Again, he uses simile to point to such decadence – “I sat with my mouth open and watch the daughter of a woman cut beer like a man”. Being embarrassed by these acts of immorality, the narrator resorts to the use of euphemism by describing the prostitutes as ‘the bad women of the city’ and also the politicians who prefer to flirt with young women in their bungalows as ‘big men’. The narrator uses understatement to point to some moral issues in the city:” I looked round and did not find my bag”. He is simply saying that his bag was stolen as soon as he set foot in the city.

#### 4.4. The Message

##### **Research Question 1: What are the foregrounded linguistic stylistic features in the text?**

The researcher sought to discover the lexical categories, grammatical categories, items used to establish context and cohesion, as well as point out instances of marked use of language in figures of speech in the short story, *The Message*.

#### 4.4.1 Lexical Categories (in The Message)

##### 4.4.1.1 General Impressions

The vocabulary used in *The Message* is generally simple, colloquial typical of simple village folks. The expression which happens to be ‘The Message’ is “They opened her up, And the baby removed”. This phrase sets the mood of frustration, desperation only because the village folks could not fully comprehend the import of the message. The words paint the picture of using a knife to cut someone’s stomach and taking out the baby as against a careful operation of a caesarean section. All the words used center on the message - They opened her up, And the baby removed. People react to this message by pitying the old woman, Esi Amfoa. This also brings up the vocabulary of pitying someone, ‘poo- pity’; ‘Eno due, due, due’ (which means, ‘woman accept our condolences’). Some specialized vocabulary used include ‘tengram’, a corrupt form for ‘telegram’; ‘draba’ also for ‘driver’. Other local words used include the following: ‘odwumfo’, (carver), ‘yoo’, (yes or I’ve heard you), ‘meewuo’, (I’m doomed), ‘Eno’(woman), ‘due’ (receive my condolence). Another word used in special way is ‘somersaulted’ to indicate how the old woman entered the hospital ward where her grand-daughter lay.

#### 4.4.1.2 Nouns and Verbs

In all, two hundred and eighty- three (283) nouns have been used- all of them, concrete. These nouns mainly refer to people, places and things that are talked about. As many as three hundred and ninety (390) verbs have been used. This is due to the fact that there is continuous interaction among the characters in the form of dialogue. Unlike in ‘The Cutting of a Drink’ where the narrator was the only person speaking, in this text, the speech of each person is represented and not merely reported. This makes this text lively and active hence the rampant occurrence of verbs in the text.

**Table 4.2: Lexical Categories in the Short Story “The Message”**

Word Class	Frequency
Nouns	283 (all concrete)
Verbs	390

#### 4.4.2. Grammatical Categories

Ama Ata Aidoo in her short story, *The Message*, used various grammatical elements and the research sought to find the linguistic stylistic features imbedded in the grammatical categories of this short story.

##### 4.4.2.1 Sentence Types

Ama Ata Aidoo in *The Message* used variety of sentence types: declaratives, interrogatives, imperatives and exclamatory sentences. The opening statement declares the ‘message’ (They opened her up). The following sentences depict the misunderstanding, confusion, and desperation in relation to this message.

Consequently, it is followed by interrogatives, some of them forming pairs, that is, question followed by an answer or another question. The following are examples of such structures.

‘They opened her up?’

‘Yes, opened her up.’

‘And the baby removed?’

‘Yes, the baby removed.’

“Have you heard it?”

“What?”

“This and this and that...”

‘And, how is she?’

Am I not here with you? Do I know the highway which leads to Cape Coast?’

“And anyway, how can she live?”

“And have you got ready your things?”

“Yes ...No.”

‘Maami Amfoa, where are you going?’

‘My daughter, I am going to Cape Coast’

There are a few instances where Exclamatory sentences are used to show intense emotions

‘... how it reeks, the smoke!’

‘... and now I am going to bury my only grandchild!’

Imperatives are sparingly used in this text. There are only two instances:

‘Esi bring her here back home whatever happens’

‘Look here my sister ...’

#### **4.4.2.2 Sentence Complexity**

The text is written in the direct words of the various characters (the village folks) forming dialogues. The characters thus interact directly among themselves. Typical of

conversations, most of the sentences form adjacency pairs and the sentences are conditionally relevant to the next and to the next. This way, the sentences are mainly of simple structure where others are sentence fragments (choppy). These are such examples:

“Mother, may God go with you.”

‘Yoo, my daughter’.

“Is it heavy?”

‘Yes, very heavy indeed’

“Here is the old woman.”

‘Whose grandchild ...?’

“Yes!”

The few longer sentences are mainly compound sentences such as:

‘These people on the Coast do not know how to do a thing and I am not going to have anybody mishandling my child’s body’.

“You are looking for somebody and can you read?”

The last part (last three sentences) of the text has some complex sentences depicting mainly the attitude of (i) the city folks (modern girls) to the village folk: Scrappy nurse - under - training, Jessy Treeson, second generation- Cape - Coaster - her -grandmother - still remembered - at Egyaa No 7 said, ‘As for you villagers’, and giggled.

The complexity is due to very complex appositives.

(ii) How modern girls (women) are regarded.

‘Draba Anan looked hard at Jessy Treeson, looked hard at her: her starched uniform, apron and cap ... and then dismissed them all ... “such a cassava stick ... but maybe I will break my toe if I kicked at her buttocks”, he thought’ (44 words)

And the last, which is the conclusion and the resolution,

‘And by the bed the old woman was trying hard to rise and look at the only pot which had refused to get broken’ (24 words).

#### **4.4.3. Context and Cohesion**

The researcher at this point intended to identify items used to establish context and cohesion.

##### **4.4.3.1 Context**

Understanding the context of a text is very important as it helps readers appreciate why character(s) speak or react in a way. The context borders on the point of view of the narration, the narrative technique used.

The text has been written in two forms: the first part is written as dialogue just like drama. The very words and interactions among the characters are written directly in free direct speech representation. This gives the text a conversational nature. In fact, features of conversation such as ‘Turn-taking, Adjacency pairs, Conditional relevance’ are observed in this text. It is therefore a first- person narrator where each character speaks for himself or herself in the form of dialogue.

The story opens with the paradox; ‘It should not be said but they say they opened her up’. This becomes the issue of the whole community and each character talks about this issue.

The second part, unlike the first part is written in narrative form. There is also a shift in the point of view of the narration to the omniscient (Third- person) narrator. The

narrator, omniscient, tells of the thoughts, attitudes and the identity of some characters up to the resolution of the whole story. Contrary to the expectation of old Esi Amfoa, she finds her only grand-daughter lying neat and nice in bed. Her reaction is overwhelming when young Esi Amfoa spoke. She could not simply accept the fact that her grand-daughter was alive, strong and healthy and not dead as she presumed. ‘And by the bed the old woman was trying hard to rise and look at the only pot which had refused to get broken’. Mary Koomson (young Esi Amfoa) is described by Dr Gyamfi as a tough bundle as against the claim of Draba Anan that, being cut open is a sign of weakness of modern women. Moreover, Jessy Treeson, described as ‘a second-generation-Cape-Coaster-her grandmother-still-remembered at-Egyaa No7’; yet she has the guts to call Maami Esi Amfoa a ‘villager’. Furthermore, her physical appearance is described and criticised as being hard and bony in these words: “Such a cassava stick ... but maybe I will break my toe if I kicked at her buttocks’ he thought”.

Unlike ‘In the Cutting of a Drink’ where the narrator only tells us about his journey, in ‘The Message’, we are taken along the journey to its end.

#### **4.4.3.2 Cohesion**

The research aimed at finding out how the use of linguistic stylistic elements helps the writer to achieve unity in this text and thus help readers to understand the text in totality. The most striking feature of cohesion in the story is the use of dialogue. From this, the sentences form pairs where the other serves as an answer or another question to what has been said earlier. This is seen from the beginning and throughout the first part as in the following: ‘They opened her up?’

‘Yes, opened her up.’

‘And the baby removed?’

‘Yes, the baby removed’.

Another feature of cohesion is the omission of subject as in 'Yes, opened her up' instead of 'They opened her up'. Also, in 'Yes, very heavy indeed' instead of 'Yes, it is very heavy indeed'. The omission of the subject indicates a link between the two lines.

#### **4.4.4. Figures of Speech**

Ama Ata Aidoo in her short story, "The Message" makes use of various figures of speech to enhance the meaning of the text, sustain the interest of the reader and emphasize the themes brought up in this text. A few have been identified and analysed based on their relevance to the development of the thematic concerns of this text.

##### **Irony**

The whole story is grounded on situational irony. Maame Esi Amfoa, as well as the entire village folks presumed young Esi Amfoa dead after going through a caesarean section. The message they were all contemplating was regarded as a misfortune ("Now, that is the end of me and my roots..."). At the end however, it comes out that young Esi Amfoa (Mary Koomson) is alive, strong and kicking and that she has delivered a pair of twins – a message which is pleasant. Instead of the annihilation of Maame Esi Amfoa's lineage and root, there is progenation of her lineage and root. There are profound instances of verbal irony. For an instance, Maame Esi Amfoa laments, 'it's me has ended up like this'. Whiles she takes the negative import of this statement, the opposite (the positive) turns out to be true of her situation. There is also verbal irony when Jessy Treason, described as a second- generation Cape - Coaster -her - grandmother - still - remembered - at - Egyaa No.7, calls Maame Esi Amfoa a villager.

## Hyperbole

Ama Ata Aidoo shows her comic side through the use of exaggeration. A lot of situations have been exaggerated as in these instances:

- a. 'All so thin and dry as sticks – you can literally blow them away with your breath'.
- b. '. . . but maybe I will break my toe if I kicked at her buttocks'.
- c. 'After all what do they swallow my children for?'
- d. 'The old woman somersaulted into the room and lay groaning, not screaming, by the bed.'

In the first two instances, the exaggeration was made to emphasise the skinny nature of modern girls as against the fleshy nature, typical of the African woman. This draws our attention to the change of identity that goes with modernization. The third instance is an indication of the emotional state of Maame Esi Amfoa as she sets off to Cape Coast (a feeling of sorrow and hopelessness). That was the same way she felt when she got to the hospital and she saw her granddaughter lying in bed. She presumed her dead and thus her attitude.

### **Research Question 2: What have the foregrounded stylistic features been used for?**

The text is written in the very words of the illiterate village folks and thus the vocabulary is simple and colloquial. Their inability to pronounce certain words correctly such as 'tengram' for telegram and also 'draba' for driver indicate their level of literacy and thus it is not strange that they cannot understand the message sent through the telegram "They opened her up, and the baby removed". The strange reaction of the entire village folks to this message is somehow exaggerated as they all presumed her dead and thus

expressing condolences instead of congratulations. All the expressions are therefore deviations from the normal situation. In the African society one is expected to receive words of congratulations on giving birth and not expressions of pity and despair.

The short story is supposed to be written in prose form but in this text, it is written in conversational form hence the use of sentence fragments; question followed by an answer (forming adjacency pairs). This in effect deviates from the normal form of prose. The arrangement of the sentences makes the whole text more of a drama than a prose. This makes the story lively and brings to life the typical way of life of the rural folks and the way they understand issues related to technological advancement. The simplicity of the sentences reflects the simple way of life of the village dwellers and that there is no wonder why they do not understand a simple procedure like a caesarean section. The last part of the story contrasts greatly with the first part in that there is a shift in the point of view of the narration; a change in the sentence structures and their form. That is, dialogues have shifted to narratives and an omniscient narrator replaces the first-person narration. Moreover, the simple sentences change to complex ones. All these changes occurred when the narrator moved from one setting to the other – from the village to the city, that is drawing attention to the complex nature of city life. The writer thus used lexical features, grammatical features, as well as context to emphasize the contrast between the rural way of life which was intact after independence as against the total shift in the life of the city dwellers. All these deviations lead to foregrounding at various levels: lexical, grammatical and also at the semantic.

**Research Question 3: How do the foregrounded features contribute to the development of the themes?**

- a) The ritual of pitying in the African society is emphasized through the use of local words and words expressing sympathy such as, “Poo pity”, “Eno due”. In the typical African community, the entire society shares the misfortune of a member even if they hate the one. Here is an example: “I see Mensima coming ... And there is Nkama too ... and Adwoa Meenu ... Now they are coming to *poo pity* me. Witches, witches’ witches ...” That is, though Maame Esi Amfoa accuses these relatives as being responsible for her misfortune, they also came to express their sympathy and concern. These expressions seem to give the person involved courage to face whatever it is, knowing that she is not alone.
- b) Ama Ata Aidoo has used foregrounded features to emphasize the change in identity that characterized post - independence Ghana. For an instance, the young ladies are described as bony and hard as in this “You go and watch them in the big towns. All so thin dry as sticks – you can literally blow them away with your breath. No decent flesh anywhere. Wooden chairs groan when they meet with their hard exteriors”. This description is accrued to modern girls. The typical African woman is supposed to be fleshy and soft. Another hint of a change in identity is the adoption of European and English names such that the old woman could not find her granddaughter (Esi Amfoa) because she came to the hospital with the name, Mary Koomson. The scrappy nurse under training also bears the name Jessy Treeson though she comes from Egyaa No. 7 (a native town near Cape Coast). These names sound strange, ridiculous and indicate loss of our identity as Africans. Another aspect of our culture that we have thrown away is the respect we accord elders such as offering our seats

to the elderly in public transport, being polite in our speech and so on. The young people in the bus refused to offer a seat to the old woman until the driver chided them. Jessy Treeson also spoke harshly to the old woman:

‘You are looking for somebody and can you read?’ This is in contrast with the driver patience, kind words and assistance he offered the old woman.

- c) The foregrounded features also emphasize the difficulty of the old and the village folks in understanding technological advancement such as a Caesarean section. This is evident in their expressions of pity and despair. For an instance Maame Esi Amfoa laments, ‘I hope they have not cut her up already’. She actually presumed her granddaughter dead just because she does not understand the procedure the doctors use to safeguard lives. She almost collapsed on reaching the hospital and spoke of corpse and burial having lost all hope of the survival of her granddaughter.

#### **4.5 Certain Winds from the South**

##### **4.5.1 Lexical Categories in Certain Winds from the South**

The researcher sought to identify the lexical items used in this story to find any marked use of certain vocabulary and how they reinforce the themes of the story.

##### **4.5.1.1 General Impressions**

The writer uses simple informal vocabulary which is mainly descriptive, just like the characters who are simple village folks. Though it is a third person narrator, the words of the characters are often presented directly. Words like ‘kraal’, ‘pile of cola-nuts’, ‘reed-bowl’, ‘grassland’, ‘twenty years’, give vivid description of the setting. The words centre on the daily life of the village folks hence not specific but general. Words like ‘eyed’, ‘sweet-toothed’, ‘craned’, ‘the pit of her belly’, ‘womb’, ‘Allah’, ‘Ramaddan’, are

examples of specialized vocabulary in this story. The words revolve round the hardship they were facing and then Issa's going down south.

#### 4.5.1.2 Nouns and Verbs

The writer uses nouns and verbs extensively throughout the story. Out of the 2859 words used in the story, there are about 275 nouns used in the story. Apart from about 18 of them which are abstract nouns, (thrill, pleasure, birth, death, pain, pregnancy, smartness, stir, excellencies, scandal, staying, patience, madness, strength, time, youth, abundance, marriage), the rest are concrete.

There are about as many as 541 verbs used in the story. The story opens with series of dynamic (action) verbs – ‘eyed, spat, picked up, put down, pick up, bit at it, threw it back, spat again and stood up’. Just before Issa came around, the dynamic verbs gave way to stative verbs, specifically over-use of ‘was’ in the following example; the money was in the bag, the grassland was still, Hawa was sleeping and so was Fuseini. These concrete nouns together with the dynamic verbs create an action-packed story. The verbs are mostly of the past tense, typical of narratives. However, the present tense is used intermittently to present direct speeches of the characters. The dynamic verbs denote both physical and mental actions. These are used to present the actions and the thoughts of the characters. Thus, readers are taken into what motivates the characters to do what they do. For an instance, Issa is going to the south to get a job in order to save his family from starvation. Again, M'ma Asana's husband joined the army because of peer influence; “How could he sit by and have other boys out-do him in smartness?”

**Table 4.3: Lexical Categories in the Short Story “Certain Winds from the South”**

<b>Word class</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Nouns	275
Concrete Noun	257
Abstract Noun	18
Pronouns	343
1 <sup>st</sup> Person	129
3 <sup>rd</sup> Person	115
Others	99
Verbs	541

#### **4.5.2 Grammatical Categories**

Grammatical elements which are foregrounded through linguistic deviation are analyzed based on their significant contribution to the development of the themes in the short story “Certain Winds from the South”.

##### **4.5.2.1 Sentence Types**

The author uses variety of sentence types: declaratives, imperatives, interrogatives as well as exclamatory. Declaratives are used to describe the setting, the characters and the situation they find themselves in. “M’ma Asana eyed the wretched pile of cola nuts, spat, and picked up the reed- bowl. Then she put down the bowl, picked up one of the nuts, bit at it, threw it back, spat again, and stood up”. They are also used to express the thoughts of the characters, such as M’ma Asana. These declaratives are interspersed with interrogatives, imperatives and exclamatory:

“Show me a fresh corpse, my sister, so that I can weep you old tears” (imperative)

“But of course, it was not her husband!” (exclamatory)

“Who comes?” (interrogative).

The interrogatives are used in the interaction between M’ma Asana and Issa:

“Who comes?”

“It is me, M’ma.”

“You Issa, my son?”

“Yes M’ma”

“M’ma, is Fuseini well?”

“Yes”

“M’ma, is Hawa well?”

This kind of dialogue is used when M’ma was trying to convince Issa not to travel to the south – “But my son, why must you travel that far just to cut grass? Is there not enough of it all round here?” He also justifies his decision with a question – “But M’ma, what will be the use in my staying here and watching them starve?” Moreover, M’ma Asana’s interaction with Hawa was done with questions. In that case however, Hawa does not speak directly but whatever she said was reported or repeated by M’ma. Through this interaction we get to know how Hawa feels about her husband’s departure. “Hawa, ah-ah, are you crying? “Why are you crying?” The use of questions in the interactions between the characters brings out the anxiety in Hawa as she listened to her mother’s story.

“Did he come back? No, he did not come back.”

These questions and their responses form pairs which are conversational in nature just as it is in the story “The Message”.

#### 4.5.2.2 Sentence Complexity

The text is in three parts. The initial part which introduces the main characters, the setting and the conflict has an average sentence length of nineteen (19) words. The longest sentence on that part has fifty-six (56) words with the shortest being five (5).

The sentences are mainly compound in nature. There are some complex structures too. The compounding is realized not only with coordinators but also with commas and dashes such as in the following examples.

- M'ma Asana eyed the wretched pile of cola nuts, spat, and picked up the reedbowl.
- Then she put down the bowl, picked up one of the nuts, bit at it, threw it back, spat again and stood up.
- You never know what evil eyes are prowling this dusk over these grasslands - I must pick them up quickly. (p55)
- The grassland was still, Hawa was sleeping and so was Fuseini.
- M'ma came out to the main gate, first to check up if all was well outside and then to draw the door across. (p56)

These are followed by long complex structures.

- On the way to the kraal, her eyes fell on the especially patchy circles that marked where the old pits had been.
- At this time, in the old days, they would have been full to bursting and as one scratched on the remains of the out-going season, one felt a near-sexual thrill of pleasure looking at these pits, just as one imagines a man might feel who looks upon his wife in the ninth month of pregnancy.

However, the second part which is a dialogue has very short and simple structure.

- Who comes?
- It is me, M'ma.
- You Issa, my son?
- Yes, M'ma.
- M'ma, is Fuseini well?
- Yes.

In fact, some of these sentences are choppy sentences or sentence fragments or even a word.

The third part is also a dialogue between M'ma Asana and her daughter Hawa. She first informs Hawa of Issa's departure, and then goes ahead to tell her how her own husband went down south and never came back.

M'ma is the only speaker in the conversation. We never heard Hawa but her reactions are reported to us by M'ma through her comments. Some of the sentences were not completed since M'ma had to pause to comment on Hawa's reactions such as in these:

“He is going south to find work and ... Hawa, where do you think you are getting up to go?”

“Maybe I do not ... see, now you have woken up Fuseini.”

Some of the sentences were not completed since M'ma becomes emotional recollecting such incidents as in this instance: “Twenty years ago. Twenty years, perhaps more than twenty years ... perhaps more than twenty years and Allah please, give me strength to tell Hawa.”

The sentences are thus simple with some, choppy. However, there are some compound and complex sentences. “We hear she became a bad woman in the city and made a lot of money”.

“She is not dead either, for we hear such women usually go to their homes to die, and she has not come back yet ...”

#### 4.5.2.3. Clause Types

Various clause types are used by the writer in this text: noun clauses, adverbial clauses, adjectival clauses and comment clauses. However, the use of adverbial clauses is pronounced. Adverbial clauses are used to indicate time, place, reason, among others.

Some examples have been given below:

- “ ‘I must check on those logs’, she thought, *thinking this misting of her eyes was due to the chill in the air.* ” (Adverbial clause of reason).
- “*On the way back to the kraal*(time) her eyes fell ... *where the old pits had been.*” (place).
- “*When there are no more pregnancies,* there are no more births ... (time).”
- “Show me a fresh corpse my sister, *so that I can weep you old tears*”. (reason)
- “... you got scolded *for serving a woman in maternity antelope.*” (reason)

#### 4.5.3. Figures of speech

In the short story “Certain Winds from the South”, words, phrases, and clauses have been used figuratively to create images that enhance understanding of the text and has implications of the thematic concerns raised in the text. This research identifies such figures of speech and analyses their relevance to the development of the themes and understanding of the text.

## **Metaphor**

Words such as “eyed”, “craned” have been used metaphorically to indicate the effort M’ma Asana is making to keep life going on in the midst of great difficulty. Other expressions such as “the pit of her belly went cold”, “let your heart lie quiet in your breast” to describe the emotional state of M’ma Asana and Issa respectively as they try to cope with the difficult situations they are faced with. This describes M’ma Asana’s state on recollecting how her husband left for the south and never came back. With Issa he is anxious about the state of his wife and newly-born child as he decides to leave them behind to seek for greener pastures. Upon hearing of her husband’s demise, the effect is described thus: the news ... which settled in the pit of my belly. ...some will shoot up, searing my womb, frying my intestines and burning up and up ... I screamed with madness ... Using such metaphors relays the emotional state of the characters so that we become sympathetic towards them. Describing the economic hardship, they were facing, Issa describes it thus, “trade is broken”.

## **Simile**

M’ma seems to be criticizing Hawa for not been a good mother by using simile: “Hawa, now look at how you are stretched down there like a log! Does a mother sleep like this? Again, when M’ma Asana received the news of her husband’s death, the effect on her was so devastating that it is described thus: “The news was like fire ...” “... suddenly like a stream that is hit by an early harmattan my breasts went dry ...” By using such comparisons, a clearer picture is painted of the situation.

## **Other Tropes**

Apart from metaphor and simile, other tropes have been used to special effects. “Twenty years” has been repeated twice, recalling the length of time which has elapsed since a

child was born into the family. This indicates hope. No matter how long it has been, a son is finally born into the family. Then twenty years is repeated four times successively when M'ma recalls her bitter experience. Issa's decision to travel to the south has brought up such memories. "Cut grass" has also been repeated to indicate that there are no better jobs down south.

The author uses understatement and euphemism when referring to one Memunat that she "goes and plays with a soldier" and then "she became a bad woman of the city". This points to vanity and moral decadence that was present even at that time. Such a behaviour is unacceptable and should not be mentioned at all.

Two prominent proverbs were used to indicate that life is cyclical and that what happened in the past repeats itself in the present – "Show me a fresh corpse . . . , so I can weep you old tears" and then "It is old age one has not seen but not youth".

Rhetorical questions abound in this text. They are used mainly to bring out what bothers one's mind and the essence of leaving one's family to seek for greener pastures. These bring out the mood of the story that the writer sees no reason why people from the north should bother to go to the south to look for jobs.

#### **4.5.4 Context and Cohesion**

This research takes a look at how context and cohesion lead to foregrounding and reinforce the themes raised in the short story, "Certain Winds from the South". Let's first consider context.

## Context

Understanding context is necessary for understanding the text. The context provides the reader with the situation, the background picture, where the piece of information came from and what or who is involved. The text is written in the third person narration, otherwise known as the omniscient narrator, hence the use of the third person pronouns (she, her). The narrator however employs varied speech and thought presentations such that, getting to the latter part of the text, one may think it is a first- person narration.

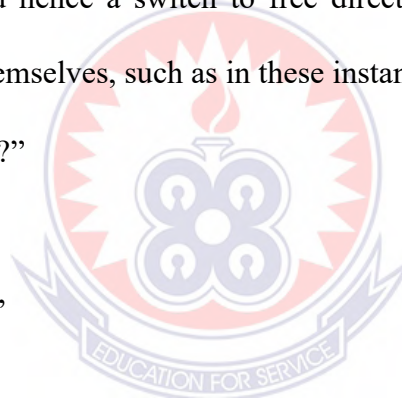
The narrator began with a narrative report of speech presentation (NRSP) which gives more control to the narrator in his report but as the text progresses, he seems to have lost control totally and hence a switch to free direct speech presentation where the characters speak for themselves, such as in these instances:

“M’ma, is Fuseini well?”

“Yes”

“M’ma, is Hawa well?”

“Yes”.



It is clear from the point Issa comes to inform his mother-in-law about him going to the south, the narrator could not control the speech and thoughts of the characters any longer. It may be that, the narrator wanted us to feel the impact of Issa’s decision on his family. In fact, this switch of narration offers the readers the opportunity to witness the conflict, the pain and the anxiety this decision puts the women involved through.

The profuse use of the free direct speech presentation gives a dramatic effect to the text. There is no longer a narration but conversation in which we hear the very words of the characters. Consequently, the third person pronouns give way to the first-person pronouns.

At the point where M'ma starts narrating how her own husband went to the south and never came back, it was only M'ma's words that we see; that of Hawa was only indicated in her speech. Not only was Hawa's speech indicated but also her reactions.

For example:

“And what question do you think you are asking me? How could he take you along when you have a baby whose navel wound has not even healed yet?” “Don't ask me why I did not come to wake you up.”

“And why do you stare at me with such shining eyes?”

“Hawa where do you think you are getting up to go?... and why are you behaving like a baby? ...where are you getting up to go?”

“Hawa ah-ah, are you crying?” Go on weeping ...

All these make the reader know how Hawa feels about her husband's departure even when we have not heard her speak. This way, the readers feel and empathizes with her and thus become very involved with the text (story).

This part of the text is typical of telling of 'Anansesem' where one person alone speaks with the other(s) listening, responding and reacting to the story told.

It could be observed that the narration style in “The Message” (which is conversational) and that of “In the Cutting of a Drink (which is a one-person narration) have been combined in this present text “Certain Winds from the South’, emphasizing Ama Ata Aidoo's versatility in her narration styles.

## **Cohesion**

The writer uses various techniques to achieve unity in the text. Let's now go into what devices have been used to bind the text into a whole and how that leads to foregrounding and how the cohesive strategies bring out the themes of this story.

The most important feature of cohesion is the free direct speech and thought presentation style used in this text profusely. That is, after M'ma Asana was introduced by the narrator in the opening statement, we hear her directly – “I must check on those logs”, and again, “You never know what evil eyes are prowling this dusk over these grasslands – I must pick them up”. In the following sentence when M'ma Asana's name was not mentioned but the pronouns used to refer to her, makes the ideas in the text flow and understandable.

In the first part which is mostly narrative, the frequent use of pronouns (especially, 'she/he') serves to connect the sentences, one to the other. That is, after M'ma Asana was mentioned in the first sentence of the text, any other reference to her is by the use of pronouns - “On her way back to the kraal, her eyes fell on ...”; “The pit of her belly went cold, then her womb moved and she had to lean by the doorway”. Then in the second part where M'ma Asana engages in conversation with Issa, her in-law, the whole narrative turned to conversation where the sentences serve as responses to what one character has said –

“M'ma.”

“What is it?”

“No please it is nothing ...”

In the third part where M'ma talks with her daughter Hawa, cohesion is achieved by M'ma's comments and constant reference to how Hawa reacts to the story she was

telling. Though Hawa does not speak, she is represented in the conversation. Let us consider these extracts as examples:

“Do you ask me why I say we?”

“Because this man was your father” ... Ah – ah, you open your mouth and eyes wide?

Yes, my child, it is of your father I am speaking.” (p 62)

“Do you say oh? ... So don’t say oh. (p 64).

So, in this text, the use of conversation serves as the engine that makes the text flow and become logical.

Another technique used to bind this text is the use of the phrases “In the old days” ...

“but these days”.

Actually, there are three stories in one: Issa going to the south, M’ma’s husband who went to the south to join the army and later fought in the Second World War, some twenty years ago and Memunat who went to the south to become a bad woman of the city. These sub-plots have been well incorporated by comparing the present situation with the past. That is to say life is cyclical and so are the events in this story.

**Research Question 2: What have the foregrounded stylistic features been used for?**

Let us now consider what the linguistic stylistic features in the text “Certain Winds from the South” been used for.

- (a) The short story is a narrative form of writing. It is thus expected that the sentences would be mainly declaratives. However, in this text, there are a lot of sentence fragments, incomplete and choppy sentences due to its conversational form. This form deviates from the normal form of prose. The grammatical categories identified

therefore indicates deviation which leads to foreground Ama Ata Aidoo's drama form of writing her prose which is typical of 'Anansegoro'; a form of folk drama.

(b) The context and cohesion indicate deviation which lead to foregrounding. As the third person, (omniscient) narration, it is expected that the third person pronouns will abound in the text. Instead, it is the first- person pronouns that are used prominently. In all, there are 343 pronouns. Out of that, there are 115 third person pronouns, and 129 first person pronouns. This leaves one wondering whether the point of view of narration the first person or the third person is. This indicates deviation emphasizing Ama Ata Aidoo preference for the first- person narrator whether overtly or covertly.

(c) Figures of speech, especially the proverbs used indicate deviation. The two proverbs used in the text: "Show me a fresh corpse and I will weep you old tears" and also "It is old age one has not seen, not youth" gives indication of comparison of two seasons/generations. This story is set both in the present and in the past (twenty years ago). Bringing the present and the past together as one foregrounds the setting.

By aligning the past with the present, they seem to follow a similar pattern. M'ma Asana's husband travelled to the south when she had given birth to a fresh baby (twenty years ago) and so is Hawa. In the old times, their challenge was the world war which led to economic crisis such that some items like kerosene, tin fish were scarce. In the present too, after independence, there is still economic crisis caused by bad harvest, bad trade and unemployment and human activities such as poaching.

**Research Question 3: How do the foregrounded linguistic features contribute to the development of the themes?**

The foregrounded patterns have implications for the thematic concerns raised in the text, “Certain Winds from the South”. The researcher thus analyses how the foregrounded features bring out the various themes raised in this text.

- (a) Foregrounded features emphasize the strength of M’ma Asana in the face of the challenges she faces as a single mother. Series of dynamic verbs are used to describe the various activities she undertakes even in the night.
- (b) Foregrounded features emphasize the theme of ‘hardship’. The use of words such as ‘wretched’ and ‘miserable’ to describe items such as cola-nuts and antelopes indicates the hardship the people are facing. The use of a word like ‘starve’ also indicates the extreme hardship they are facing, a force strong enough to push a man to abandon his wife and son to go and look for greener pastures. The repetition of the phrase ‘cut grass’ questions the availability of jobs they go seeking for in the south.
- (c) Foregrounded features emphasize the theme of silence and the consequent emotional struggles that women face in the society. Hawa, who is directly affected by her husband’s decision to travel to the south is not heard throughout the text. Her reaction to the news and upon listening to a similar story where the person never returned put her through immense emotional trauma which we only know through M’ma Asana’s comments as she tells her tale.

**Summary of the Chapter**

This chapter has collated and analyzed stylistic linguistic features in the three short stories “In the Cutting of a Drink”, “The Message” and “Certain Winds from the South”

from Ama Ata Aidoo's collection *No Sweetness Here*. The data is analyzed stylistically to identify the foregrounded features. It goes further to analyze how the foregrounded features help develop the various thematic concerns the stories reveal.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.0. Introduction

This section of the thesis presents the summary of the findings, conclusions drawn from the study and then recommendations for future research.

#### 5.1. Summary of Findings

This study focuses on linguistic stylistic analysis of three short stories from Ama Ata Aidoo's collection *No Sweetness Here*: 'In the Cutting of a Drink', 'The Message' and 'Certain Winds from the South'. The study specifically set out to (1) find the significant linguistic stylistic features of the texts (2) What the linguistic stylistic features have been used for (3) How the foregrounded features contribute to the development of the themes.

First, the study found that, Ama Ata Aidoo in her short stories "In the Cutting of a Drink", "The Message" and "Certain Winds from the South" uses localized and specialized vocabulary to give her stories, African or Ghanaian flavour. This she does by using some local vocabulary or corrupting some English words or coining some words, typical of the illiterate Ghanaians (fantés).

Again, Ama Ata Aidoo uses nouns, especially concrete nouns extensively in her short stories. This makes the stories come to life and become vivid such that unfamiliar places, objects and people will appeal to the imagination of the readers. This style of Ama Ata Aidoo makes her work acceptable and easy to appreciate by both local and foreign readers.

Considering the grammatical features of the texts, it was found that the writer uses a variety of phrases and clauses – nominal, adjectival and adverbial for various purposes.

She has established that one can talk about unfamiliar situations by describing them and not necessarily naming them.

Furthermore, the writer adopts the Ghanaian style of story-telling: 'Anansesem' (folktale) and Anansegoro (a form of drama). She seems to say, we can embrace modernization and enhancement in technological advancement without setting aside our identity and cultural heritage. Ukaegbu (2010) wrote on Anansegoro: modern storytelling as narrative trope in contemporary Ghanaian literary theatre. Ama Ata Aidoo's short stories replicate Ukaegbu's article. Asante & Edu (2018) also wrote an article entitled *From Anansesem to Anansegoro: 'Literarising' Akan Folktales* which emphasizes how adopting the traditional folktale styles help preserve our heritage as Africans. Ama Ata Aidoo, unlike Efua T. Sutherland, does this subtly and covertly. She does not use 'Ananse' but simply adopt the style of telling these folktales.

The linguistic stylistic analysis of these short stories revealed that the writer uses various schemes and tropes such as repetition, irony and hyperbole to emphasize the psychological attributes of her narrators. Moreover, the study found out that Ama Ata Aidoo prefers the first-person narrator which is in line with the Akan proverb which alludes that the monkey insists on seeing is believing, that is to say, an eye-witness account is authentic and reliable.

Finally, Ama Ata Aidoo uses various linguistic forms to develop various themes. Foregrounded features present urban life as free and comfortable which serves as allurements for rural-urban drift. This freedom is a panacea for immoral life - stealing, prostitution, drinking and smoking (even by women). Foregrounded features bring out the cultural change and the change in identity that characterized post-colonial Ghana.

This is evident in their dressing (wearing tight dresses, long wigs), dancing like white people, adopting foreign names and ladies keeping slim figures, not to mention a change in behaviour such that women live and dine with men they are not married to, disregarding and disrespecting the elderly.

The afore-mentioned findings reveal that the short stories studied are loaded with a variety of linguistic features that contribute to the development of various thematic concerns.

## **5.2 Conclusions**

The analysis and discussion of the findings make these conclusions possible:

Ama Ata Aidoo in her short stories “In the Cutting of a Drink”, “The Message” and “Certain Winds

from the South” has used various linguistic forms to bring out some thematic concerns such as Loss of Identity, Rural – Urban Migration (the factors that promote it), Morality (among the city dwellers), the Ritual of Pitying in the Ghanaian society, misunderstanding of technological procedures, Economic hardships and the fact that Life is Cyclical that characterized the post independent Ghanaian society.

Ama Ata Aidoo exhibits a high sense of humor as she subtly criticizes and make fun of the post-colonial Ghanaian society. She takes us especially through to their mind set (the psychological state of the people).

## **5.3 Recommendations**

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, I make the following recommendations:

1. Other researchers may take up other short stories of Ama Ata Aidoo for analysis in order to confirm or deny the findings made in this work.
2. Other theoretical approaches of analyzing literary texts like Corpus Analysis, Speech and Thought Presentation, Transitivity Analysis and others, could be used to study the same texts in order to capture insights that this work could not reveal.
3. Students and teachers who undertake literary criticism of texts should back- up their findings with a linguistic stylistic analysis of such texts since literary texts are loaded with linguistic features which have implications for the meaning and the interpretation of texts. Leech and Short (2007:13) opines that stylistics falls as part of literary criticism and that stylistics tries to use practical means to provide interpretation of literary texts. Mills (1995:7) reiterates this view by pointing out that stylistics is used as a back – up to analysts’ intuitions about the meaning of texts.
4. Readers should always pay attention to linguistic forms and choices in literary texts they read as they are crucial for interpretation of the texts.
5. Writers should be mindful of their linguistic choices as they affect the interpretation of what they write. A famous industrialist once said, “A person’s language as a matter of rule is an index to his or her mind”.

#### **5.4 Suggestions for Further Study**

The following suggested topics could serve to confirm, compare or extend the findings made in this study.

- A stylistic analysis of other short stories of Ama Ata Aidoo
- The use of modern tools such as a corpus-assisted analysis of the short stories

- A comparative stylistic analysis of two or more short stories from different African writers.



## REFERENCE

- Amir, S (2018). *A Stylistic Study of the Short Story, "The Tell- Tale Heart" by Edgar Allan Poe*. [https:// doi org/10.5281/zenodo.1404386](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.1404386).
- Amy, L (2019, Revised 2023). *Content Analysis. Guide, Methods and Examples*.
- Asante, E.J.E (2018). *From Anansesem to Anansegoro*. International Journal of Advanced Research and Development.3(3:1): 348-353.
- Asante, S.Y. (2000). *A Study of Selected Works by Ama Ata Aidoo and Buchi Emecheta*. Calgary, Alberta.
- Awonuga, C (2018). *Types of Foregrounding and Literary Interpretation*. International Journal of Language and Literature. Vol.6:1. Pp 69 – 79. American Research Institute for Policy Development.
- Bari Khan, A., Ahmad, S., & Ijaz, N. (2015). "The Last Word" by Dr. AR Tabassum. *Advances in Language and Linguistic Analysis of the Short Story Studies*, 6(3), 10 – 14.
- Barry, P (2009). *Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory*.3<sup>rd</sup> edition. Manchester University Press. Manchester. 352pp.
- Bradford, R (1997). *Stylistics*. 228pp. London. Routledge.
- Brumfit, C & Johnson (1983). *The Communicative Approach to Language Teaching*.Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Burton, D (1982). *Through glass darkly: Through dark glasses*, in R. Carter (ed). *Language and Literature. An Introductory Reader in Stylistics*.London: George Allen and Unwin. Pp 195 – 214.
- Busse, B & McIntyre, D. (2010). *Language, Literature and Stylistics*. In D. McIntyre, & B. Busse, (Eds), *Language and Style*. pp 3-14. Palgrave Macmillan, U.K.
- Carter, R.A (1984). *Stylistics. Annual Review of Applied Linguistics. 5, 91- 100.*, *Language and Style*. P [doi:10.1017/s0267190500001823](https://doi.org/10.1017/s0267190500001823)
- Chandio, M. T. et al (2017). *A Stylistic Analysis of Ahmed Ali's Short Story, 'Our Lane'*. Pakistan: University of Sindh.
- Crystal, D. (2018). *The Cambridge encyclopedia of the English language*. Cambridge university press.
- Cuddon, J. A. (2012). *A dictionary of literary terms and literary theory*. John Wiley & sons.
- Diribu, A (2012). *Stylistic Analysis of Selected Short*. 76pp. Addis Ababa: Addis Ababa University. AAU Libraries.

- Ekpong, M.O. (2011). *A Thematic and Stylistic Analysis of Aidoo's Novels and Short Stories*. LWATI: *A Journal of Contemporary Research*.8(3): 122-14.
- Ezenwa-Ohaeto (2003). *Emerging Perspectives of Ama Ata Aidoo* (Review). *Research in African Literature*. Indiana University Press. 34(3): 184-187.
- Fish, S.E. (1981). *Essays in Modern Stylistics*. 1<sup>st</sup> Ed. Routledge. 26pp.
- Fowler, R. (1991). *Language in the News: Discourse and Ideology in Press*. Vol.1, 272pp. London: Routledge.
- Frey, L., Botan, C & Kreps, G (1999). *Investigating Communication: An Introduction to Research Methods*.15pp. Cambridge: Pearson.
- Halliday, M.A.K.& Matthiesen, C.M.I (2004). *An Introduction to Functional Grammar*. London: Routledge.
- Halliday, MAK. (1964). *The Linguistic Sciences and Language Teaching*. Indiana University Press. 10<sup>th</sup> & Morton, St. Bloomington, India.
- Hawthorne, J (1994). *A Glossary of Contemporary Literary Theory*. New York. Print. Jeffries, L & McIntyre (2010). *Stylistics*.226pp. Cambridge University Press.
- Hunt, R.A, and Vipond, D. (1985). *Crash – testing a transactional model of literary reading. Reader: Essays in reader- oriented theory criticism and pedagogy*, 23-39.
- Kibin, (2025). *An Analysis of Two Short Stories in The Return and in the Cutting of a Drink*. [http:// www. Kibin.com](http://www.Kibin.com)
- Labov, W. (1972). *Language in the inner city: Studies in the black English Vernacular*. U Pennsylvania P
- Leech, G &Short, M (1981,2007). *Style in Fiction: A Linguistic Introduction to English Fictional Prose*. Foreign Language.2<sup>nd</sup> ed. London: Pearson Education Limited.
- Leech, G (1969). *A Linguistic Guide to English Poetry*. New York. Longman. Cited in Nyoni, E, Naidoo Salachi (2011). “*Within and Without the Working of Language in Literary Tex I. V. Arnold's Theory of Foregrounding and Its Application to Text Explication: R E – reading*. William Blake's London International Journal of Asian Social Science. Vol.2:4. Pp 388 – 393.
- Meniailo, V. (2020). *I.V. Arnold's Theory of Foregrounding and Its Application to Text Analysis*. *Interlitteraria*, 25(1) 16 – 25.
- Miall, D.S, & Kuiken, D. (1994). *Beyond Text and Theory: Understanding Literary Response. Discourse Processes*, 17(3), 337 – 352.
- Mills, S (1995). *Feminist Stylistics*. 244 pages. London: Routledge.

- Muskarovsky (1970). *Aesthetic Function, Norm and Value as Social Facts* (Translated from Czech, by Mark E. S. University of Michigan).
- Neuman et al (2011). *Social Research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. 7<sup>th</sup> Ed. 631pp. Allyn & Bacon.
- Odamnten, V (1994). *The Art of Ama Ata Aidoo: Polylectics and Reading against Colonialism*. 202pp. Florida: University Press.
- Ogede, O (1994). *The Defense of Culture in Ama Ata Aidoo's No Sweetness Here: The Use of Orality as a Textual Strategy*. *International Fiction Review*, 21(1&2).
- Pujolras, E (2010). *An African (Auto) biography: Ama Ata Aidoo's Literary Quest*. 421pp. Doctoral Thesis. Department of English and German Studies. Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona.
- Rahman, F & Weda, S (2019). *Linguistic deviation and rhetoric figures in Shakespeare's selected plays*. *European Scientific Language Journey*, 12(1), 37-52.
- Sackeyfio, R (2023). *Ama Ata Aidoo: Ghana's Literary Icon*. *African Studies Review*, 66(4), 1031-1035.
- Seliger, H.W., Shohamy, E.G., & Shohamy, E. (1989). *Second language research methods*. Oxford University Press.
- Semino, S & Culpeper, J (2002). *Cognitive Stylistics. Language and Cognition in Text Analysis*. 333pp. John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Simpson, P (2004). *Stylistics: A Resource Book for Students* (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed) 31pp. London: Routledge.
- Sutherland – Addy, E (1989). *Narrative Technique and the Role of Commentators in Ama Ata Aidoo's Works*. [http://hdl.Handle.net/10520/AJA.19852007\\_130](http://hdl.handle.net/10520/AJA.19852007_130). Institute of African Studies. Research Review NS Vol.5:2. 1989 African Journals.
- Turner, G.W. (1973). *Stylistics*. 256pp. California: Penguin.
- Ukuegbu, U (2010). *Tales, Tellers, and Tale Making: Critical Studies on Literary Stylistics and Narrative Styles in Contemporary African Literature*. 246-265. Berlin: Verlag Dr Muller (VDM).
- Van Peer, W (1980). *The Stylistic Theory of Foregrounding: A Theoretical and Empirical Investigation*. Lancaster University. (United Kingdom).
- Verdonk, P. (2002). *Stylistics*. 125pp. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Wales, K. (2014). *A Dictionary of Stylistics*. Routledge.
- Widdowson, H.G. (1975). *Stylistics and the Teaching of Literature*. 140pp. London: Routledge.

Widdowson, H.G. (1992). *ELT and E.L. Teachers Matters Arising*. *ELT Journal* 46(4).  
333- 339.



## APPENDICES

### *Ama Ata Aidoo — No Sweetness Here and other Stories*

but the driver was talking to me, so I could not look at it properly. He told me he himself was not going to Mamprobi but he was going to the station where I could take a lorry which would be going there. . . .

Yes, my uncle, he did not deceive me. Immediately we arrived at the station I found the driver of a lorry shouting 'Mamprobi, Mamprobi'. Finally when the clock struck about two-thirty, I was knocking on the door of Duayaw. I did not knock for long when the door opened. Ah, I say, he was fast asleep, fast asleep I say, on a Saturday afternoon.

'How can folks find time to sleep on Saturday afternoons?' I asked myself. We hailed each other heartily. My uncles, Duayaw has done well for himself. His mother Nsedua is a very lucky woman.

How is it some people are lucky with school and others are not? Did not Mansa go to school with Duayaw here in this very school which I can see for myself? What have we done that Mansa should have wanted to stop going to school?

But I must continue with my tale. . . . Yes, Duayaw has done well for himself. His room has fine furniture. Only it is too small. I asked him why and he told me he was even lucky to have got that narrow place that looks like a box. It is very hard to find a place to sleep in the city. . . .

He asked me about the purpose of my journey. I told him everything. How, as he himself knew, my sister Mansa had refused to go to school after 'Klase Tri' and how my mother had tried to persuade her to go . . .

My mother, do not interrupt me, everyone present here knows you tried to do what you could by your daughter.

*In the Cutting of a Drink*

Yes, I told him how, after she had refused to go, we finally took her to this woman who promised to teach her to keep house and to work with the sewing machine . . . and how she came home the first Christmas after the woman took her but has never been home again, these twelve years.

Duayaw asked me whether it was my intention then to look for my sister in the city. I told him yes. He laughed saying, 'You are funny. Do you think you can find a woman in this place? You do not know where she is staying. You do not even know whether she is married or not. Where can we find her if someone big has married her and she is now living in one of those big bungalows which are some ten miles from the city?'

Do you cry 'My Lord', mother? You are surprised about what I said about the marriage? Do not be. I was surprised too, when he talked that way. I too cried 'My Lord' . . . Yes, I too did, mother. But you and I have forgotten that Mansa was born a girl and girls do not take much time to grow. We are thinking of her as we last saw her when she was ten years old. But mother, that is twelve years ago. . . .

Yes, Duayaw told me that she is by now old enough to marry and to do something more than merely marry. I asked him whether he knew where she was and if he knew whether she had any children - 'Children?' he cried, and he started laughing, a certain laugh. . . .

I was looking at him all the time he was talking. He told me he was not just discouraging me but he wanted me to see how big and difficult what I proposed to do was. I replied that it did not matter. What was necessary was that even if Mansa was dead, her ghost would know that we had not forgotten her

*Ama Ata Aidoo — No Sweetness Here and other Stories*

Yes, I remember very well, she asked for beer. It was not long before Duayaw brought them. I was too surprised to drink mine. I sat with my mouth open and watched the daughter of a woman cut beer like a man. The band had stopped playing for some time and soon they started again. Duayaw and his woman went to dance. I sat there and drank my *lamlale*. I cannot describe how they danced.

After some time, the band stopped playing and Duayaw and his woman came to sit down. I was feeling cold and I told Duayaw. He said, 'And this is no wonder, have you not been drinking this women's drink all the time?'

'Does it make one cold?' I asked him.

'Yes,' he replied. 'Did you not know that? You must drink beer.'

'Yes,' I replied. So he bought me beer. When I was drinking the beer, he told me I would be warm if I danced.

'You know I cannot dance the way you people dance,' I told him.

'And how do we dance?' he asked me.

'I think you all dance like white men and as I do not know how that is done, people would laugh at me,' I said. Duayaw started laughing. He could not contain himself. He laughed so much his woman asked him what it was all about. He said something in the white man's language and they started laughing again. Duayaw then told me that if people were dancing, they would be so busy that they would not have time to watch others dance. And also, in the city, no one cares if you dance well or not . . .

Yes, I danced too, my uncles. I did not know anyone, that is

*In the Cutting of a Drink*

true. My uncle, do not say that instead of concerning myself with the business for which I had gone to the city, I went dancing. Oh, if you only knew what happened at this place, you would not be saying that. I would not like to stop somewhere and tell you the end ... I would rather like to put a rod under the story, as it were, clear off every little creeper in the bush . . .

But as we were talking about the dancing, something made Duayaw turn to look behind him where four women were sitting by the table. . . . Oh! he turned his eyes quickly, screwed his face into something queer which I could not understand and told me that if I wanted to dance, I could ask one of those women to dance with me.

My uncles, I too was very surprised when I heard that. I asked Duayaw if people who did not know me would dance with me' He said 'Yes.' I lifted my eyes, my uncles, and looked at those four young women sitting round a table alone. They were sitting all alone, I say. I got up.

I hope I am making myself clear, my uncles, but I was trembling like water in a brass bowl.

Immediately one of them saw me, she jumped up and said something in that kind of white man's language which everyone, even those who have not gone to school, speak in the city. I shook my head. She said something else in the language of the people of the place. I shook my head again. Then I heard her ask me in Fante whether I wanted to dance with her. I replied 'Yes.'

Ei! my little sister, are you asking me a question? Oh! you want to know whether I found Mansa? I do not know. . . . Our uncles have asked me to tell everything that happened there, and

*Ama Ata Aidoo — No Sweetness Here and other Stories*

you too! I am cooking the whole meal for you, why do you want to lick the ladle now?

Yes, I went to dance with her. I kept looking at her so much I think I was all the time stepping on her feet. I say, she was as black as you and I, but her hair was very long and fell on her shoulders like that of a white woman. I did not touch it but I saw it was very soft. Her lips with that red paint looked like a fresh wound. There was no space between her skin and her dress. Yes, I danced with her. When the music ended, I went back to where I was sitting. I do not know what she told her companions about me, but I heard them laugh.

It was at this time that something made me realise that they “were all bad women of the city. Duayaw had told me I would feel warm if I danced, yet after I had danced, I was colder than before. You would think someone had poured water on me. I was unhappy thinking about these women. ‘Have they no homes?’ I asked myself. ‘Do not their mothers like them? God, we are all toiling for our threepence to buy something to eat... but oh! God! this is no work.’

When I thought of my own sister, who was lost, I became a little happy because I felt that although I had not found her, she was nevertheless married to a big man and all was well with her.

When they started to play the band again, I went to the women’s table to ask the one with whom I had danced to dance again. But someone had gone with her already. I got one of the two who were still sitting there. She went with me. When we were dancing she asked me whether it was true that I was a Fante. I replied ‘Yes.’ We did not speak again. When the band

*In the Cutting of a Drink*

stopped playing, she told me to take her to where they sold things to buy her beer and cigarettes. I was wondering whether I had the money. When we were where the lights were shining brightly, something told me to look at her face. Something pulled at my heart.

‘Young woman, is this the work you do?’ I asked her.

‘Young man, what work do you mean?’ she too asked me. I laughed.

‘Do you not know what work?’ I asked again.

‘And who are you to ask me such questions? I say, who are you? Let me tell you that any kind of work is work. You villager, you villager, who are you?’ she screamed.

I was afraid. People around were looking at us. I laid my hands on her shoulders to calm her down and she hit them away.

‘Mansa, Mansa,’ I said. ‘Do you not know me?’ She looked at me for a long time and started laughing. She laughed and laughed as if the laughter did not come from her stomach. Yes, as if she was hungry.

‘I think you are my brother,’ she said. ‘Hm.’

Oh, my mother and my aunt, oh, little sister, are you all weeping? As for you women!

What is there to weep about? I was sent to find a lost child. I found her a woman.

Cut me a drink . . .

Any kind of work is work. . . . This is what Mansa told me with a mouth that looked like clotted blood. Any kind of work is work . . . so do not weep. She will come home this Christmas.

My brother, cut me another drink. Any form of work is work . . . is work . . . is work!

## The Message

‘Look here my sister, it should not be said but they say they opened her up.’

‘They opened her up?’

‘Yes, opened her up.’

‘And the baby removed?’

‘Yes, the baby removed.’

‘Yes, the baby removed.’

‘I say . . .’

‘They do not say, my sister.’

‘Have you heard it?’

‘What?’

‘This and this and that . . .’

‘A-a-ah! that is it . . .’

*Meewuo!*

‘They don’t say *meewuo* . . .’

‘And how is she?’

‘Am I not here with you? Do I know the highway which leads to Cape Coast?’

‘Hmmm . . .’

‘And anyway how can she live? What is it like even giving birth with a stomach which is whole . . . eh? ... I am asking you. And if you are always standing on the brink of death who go to war with a stomach that is whole, then how would she do whose

*The Message*

stomach is open to the winds?’ ‘Oh, *poo*, pity . . .’

‘I say . . .’

My little bundle, come. You and I are going to Cape Coast today.

I am taking one of her own cloths with me, just in case. These people on the coast do not know how to do a thing and I am not going to have anybody mishandling my child’s body. I hope they give it to me. Horrible things I have heard done to people’s bodies. Cutting them up and using them for instruction. Whereas even murderers can still have decent burials.

I see Mensima coming. . . . And there is Nkama too . . . and Adwoa Meenu. . . . Now they are coming to . . . ‘*poo* pity’ me. Witches, witches, witches . . . they have picked mine up while theirs prosper around them, children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren - theirs shoot up like mushrooms.

‘Esi, we have heard of your misfortune . . .’

‘That our little lady’s womb has been opened up . . .’

‘And her baby removed . . .’

Thank you very much.

‘Has she lived through it?’

I do not know.

‘Esi, bring her here, back home whatever happens.’

*Yoo*, thank you. If the government’s people allow it, I shall bring her home.

‘And have you got ready your things?’

Yes. . . . No.

I cannot even think well.

It feels so noisy in my head. . . . Oh my little child. . . . I am wasting time. . . . And so I am going . . .

*Ama Ata Aidoo — No Sweetness Here and other Stories*

Yes, to Cape Coast.

No, I do not know anyone there now but do you think no one would show me the way to this big hospital ... if I asked around?

Hmmm . . . it's me has ended up like this. I was thinking that everything was alright now. . . . *Yoo*. And thank you too. Shut the door for me when you are leaving. You may stay too long outside if you wait for me, so go home and be about your business. I will let you know when I bring her in.

'Maami Amfoa, where are you going?'

My daughter, I am going to Cape Coast.

'And what is our old mother going to do with such swift steps? Is it serious?'

My daughter, it is very serious.

'Mother, may God go with you.'

*Yoo*, my daughter.

'Eno, and what calls at this hour of the day?'

They want me in Cape Coast.

'Does my friend want to go and see how much the city has changed since we went there to meet the new Wesleyan Chairman, twenty years ago?'

My sister, do you think I have knees to go parading on the streets of Cape Coast?

'Is it heavy?'

Yes, very heavy indeed. They have opened up my grandchild at the hospital, *hi, hi, hi*. . . .

'Eno *due, due, due*... I did not know. May God go with you...'

Thank you. *Yaa*.

'O, the world!'

'It's her grandchild. The only daughter of her only son. Do

*The Message*

you remember Kojo Amisa who went to sodja and fell in the great war, overseas?’

‘Yes, it’s his daughter. . . .’

. . . O, *poo*, pity.

‘Kobina, run to the street, tell Draba Anan to wait for Nana Amfoa.’

‘. . . Draba Anan, Draba, my mother says I must come and tell you to wait for Nana Amfoa.’

‘And where is she?’

‘There she comes.’

‘Just look at how she hops like a bird . . . does she think we are going to be here all day? And anyway we are full already . . .’

O, you drivers!

‘What have drivers done?’

‘And do you think it shows respect when you speak in this way? It is only that things have not gone right; but she could, at least have been your mother. . . .’

‘But what have I said? I have not insulted her. I just think that only Youth must be permitted to see Cape Coast, the town of the Dear and Expensive. . . .’

‘And do you think she is going on a peaceful journey? The only daughter of her only son has been opened up and her baby removed from her womb.’

O . . . God.

O

O

O

*Poo*, pity.

‘Me . . . *poo* - pity, I am right about our modern wives I

*Ama Ata Aidoo — No Sweetness Here and other Stories*

always say they are useless as compared with our mothers.

‘You drivers!’

‘Now what have your modern wives done?’

‘Am I not right what I always say about them? You go and watch them in the big towns. All so thin and dry as sticks - you can literally blow them away with your breath. No decent flesh anywhere. Wooden chairs groan when they meet with their hard exteriors.’

‘O you drivers. . . .’

‘But of course all drivers . . .’

‘What have I done? Don’t all my male passengers agree with me? These modern girls. . . . Now here is one who cannot even have a baby in a decent way. But must have the baby removed from her stomach. *Tchiaa*’

‘What . . .’

‘Here is the old woman.’

‘Whose grandchild . . .?’

‘Yes.’

‘Nana, I hear you are coming to Cape Coast with us.’

Yes my master.

‘We nearly left you behind but we heard it was you and that it is a heavy journey you are making.’

Yes my master . . . thank you my master.

‘Push up please . . . push up. Won’t you push up? Why do you all sit looking at me with such eyes as if I was a block of wood?’

‘It is not that there is nowhere to push up to. Five fat women should go on that seat, but look at you!’

‘And our own grandmother here is none too plump herself.’

*The Message*

... Nana, if they won't push, come to the front seat with me.'

'... *Hei*, scholar, go to the back....

'... And do not scowl on me. I know your sort too well. Something tells me you do not have any job at all. As for that suit you are wearing and looking so grand in, you hired or borrowed it. . . .'

'Oh you drivers!'

Oh you drivers . . .

The scholar who read this tengram thing, said it was made about three days ago. My lady's husband sent it. . . . Three days. . . . God - that is too long ago. Have they buried her . . . where? Or did they cut her up. . . I should not think about it . . . or something will happen to me. Eleven or twelve . . . Efua Panyin, Okuma, Kwame Gyasi and who else? But they should not have left me here. Sometimes . . . ah, I hate this nausea. But it is this smell of petrol. Now I have remembered that I never could travel in a lorry. I always was so sick. But now I hope at least that will not happen. These young people will think it is because I am old and they will laugh. At least if I knew the child of my child was alive, it would have been good. And the little things she sent me. . . . Sometimes some people like Mensima and Nkansa make me feel as if I had been a barren woman instead of only one with whom infant- mortality pledged friendship . . .

I will give her that set of earrings, bracelet and chain which Odwumfo Ata made for me. It is the most beautiful and the most expensive thing I have. . . . It does not hurt me to think that I am going to die very soon and have them and their children gloating over my things. After all what did they swallow my children for? It does not hurt me at all. If I had been someone

*Ama Ata Aidoo — No Sweetness Here and other Stories*

else, I would have given them all away before I died. But it does not matter. They can share their own curse. Now, that is the end of me and my roots. . . . Eternal death has worked like a warrior rat, with diabolical sense of duty, to gnaw my bottom. Everything is finished now. The vacant lot is swept and the scraps of old sugar-cane pulp, dry sticks and bunches of hair burnt... how it reeks, the smoke!

‘O, Nana do not weep . . .’

‘Is the old woman weeping?’

‘If the only child of your only child died, won’t you weep?’

‘Why do you ask me? Did I know her grandchild is dead?’

‘Where have you been, not in this lorry? Where were your ears when we were discussing it?’

‘I do not go putting my mouth in other people’s affairs . . .’

‘So what?’

‘So go and die.’

‘*Hei, hei*, it is prohibited to quarrel in my lorry.’

‘Draba, here is me, sitting quiet and this lady of muscles and bones being cheeky to me.’

‘Look, I can beat you.’

‘Beat me . . . beat me . . . let’s see.’

‘*Hei*, you are not civilised, eh?’

‘Keep quiet and let us think, both of you, or I will put you down.’

‘Nana, do not weep. There is God above.’

Thank you my master.

‘But we are in Cape Coast already.’

*Meewuo!* My God, hold me tight or something will happen to me.

*The Message*

My master, I will come down here.

‘O Nana, I thought you said you were going to the hospital.  
... We are not there yet.’

I am saying maybe I will get down here and ask my way  
around.

‘Nana, you do not know these people, eh? They are very  
impudent here. They have no use for old age. So they do not  
respect it. Sit down, I will take you there.’

Are you going there, my master?

‘No, but I will take you there.’

Ah, my master, your old mother thanks you. Do not shed a  
tear when you hear of my death . . . my master, your old mother  
thanks you.

I hear there is somewhere where they keep corpses until their  
owners claim them . . . if she has been buried, then I must find  
her husband . . . Esi Amfoa, what did I come to do under this  
sky? I have buried all my children and now I am going to bury  
my only grandchild!

‘Nana we are there.’

Is this the hospital?

‘Yes, Nana. What is your child’s name?’

Esi Amfoa. Her father named her after me.

‘Do you know her European name?’

No, my master.

‘What shall we do?’

‘. . . *Ei* lady, Lady Nurse, we are looking for somebody.’

‘You are looking for somebody and can you read? If you  
cannot, you must ask someone what the rules in the hospital are.  
You can only come and visit people from three o’clock.’

*Ama Ata Aidoo — No Sweetness Here and other Stories*

Lady, please. She was my only grandchild . . .

‘Who? And anyway, it is none of our business.’

‘Nana, you must be patient . . . and not cry . . .’

‘Old woman, why are you crying, it is not allowed here. No one must make any noise . . .’

My lady, I am sorry but she was all I had.

‘Who? Oh, are you the old woman who is looking for somebody?’

Yes.

‘Who is he?’

She was my granddaughter - the only child of my only son.

‘I mean, what was her name?’ Esi Amfoa.

‘Esi Amfoa . . . Esi Amfoa. I am sorry, we do not have anyone whom they call like that here.’ Is that it?

‘Nana, I told you they may know only her European name here.’

My master, what shall we do then?

‘What is she ill with?’

She came here to have a child . . .

‘. . . And they say, they opened her stomach and removed the baby.’

‘Oh . . . oh, I see.’

My Lord, hold me tight so that nothing will happen to me now.

‘I see. It is the Caesarean case.’

‘Nurse, you know her?’

And when I take her back, Anona Ebusuafo will say that I did not wait for them to come with me . . .

‘Yes. Are you her brother?’

‘No. I am only the driver who brought the old woman.’

*The Message*

'Did she bring all her clan?'

'No. She came alone.'

'Strange thing for a villager to do.'

I hope they have not cut her up already.

'Did she bring a whole bag full of cassava and plantain and kenkey?'

'No. She has only her little bundle.'

'Follow me. But you must not make any noise. This is not the hour for coming here . . .

My master, does she know her?

'Yes.'

I hear it is very cold where they put them . . .

. . . . .

It was feeding time for new babies. When old Esi Amfoa saw young Esi Amfoa, the latter was all neat and nice. White sheets and all. She did not see the beautiful stitches under the sheets. 'This woman is a tough bundle,' Dr. Gyamfi had declared after the identical twins had been removed, the last stitches had been threaded off and Mary Koomson, alias Esi Amfoa, had come to.

The old woman somersaulted into the room and lay groaning, not screaming, by the bed. For was not her last pot broken? So they lay them in state even in hospitals and not always cut them up for instruction?

The Nursing Sister was furious. Young Esi Amfoa spoke. And this time old Esi Amfoa wept loud and hard - wept all her tears.

Scrappy nurse-under-training, Jessy Treeson, second-generation-Cape-Coaster-her-grandmother-still-remembered-at-Egyaa No. 7 said, 'As for these villagers,' and giggled.

*Ama Ata Aidoo — No Sweetness Here and other Stories*

Draba Anan looked hard at Jessy Treeson, looked hard at her, all of her: her starched uniform, apron and cap . . . and then dismissed them all. . . . ‘Such a cassava stick . . . but maybe I will break my toe if I kicked at her buttocks,’ he thought.

And by the bed the old woman was trying hard to rise and look at the only pot which had refused to get broken.



## Certain Winds from the South

M'ma Asana eyed the wretched pile of cola-nuts, spat, and picked up the reed-bowl. Then she put down the bowl, picked up one of the nuts, bit at it, threw it back, spat again, and stood up. First, a sharp little ache, just a sharp little one, shot up from somewhere under her left ear. Then her eyes became misty.

'I must check on those logs,' she thought, thinking this misting of her eyes was due to the chill in the air. She stooped over the nuts.

'You never know what evil eyes are prowling this dusk over these grasslands - I must pick them up' quickly.'

On the way back to the kraal, her eyes fell on the especially patchy circles that marked where the old pits had been. At this time, in the old days, they would have been full to bursting and as one scratched out the remains of the out-going season, one felt a near-sexual thrill of pleasure looking at these pits, just as one imagines a man might feel who looks upon his wife in the ninth month of pregnancy.

Pregnancy and birth and death and pain; and death again. . .

When there are no more pregnancies, there are no more births and therefore, no more deaths. But there is only one death and only one pain . . .

Show me a fresh corpse my sister, so I can weep you old tears.

The pit of her belly went cold, then her womb moved and

*Ama Ata Aidoo — No Sweetness Here and other Stories*

find first where you can get water for yourself and your sheep?’

‘Yes, M’ma.’

‘Then how is it you ask me if Fuseni is very well? The navel is healing very fast . . . and how would it not? Not a single navel of all that I have cut here got infected. Shall I now cut my grandson’s and then sit and see it rot? But it is his male that I can’t say. Mallam did it neat and proper and it must be alright. Your family is not noted for males that rot, is it now?’

‘No, M’ma.’

‘Then let your heart lie quiet in your breast. Fuseni is well but we cannot say how well yet.’

‘I have heard you, M’ma . . . M’ma . . .’

‘Yes, my son.’

‘M’ma, I am going South.’

‘Where did you say?’

‘South.’

‘How far?’

‘As far as the sea. M’ma I thought you would understand.’

‘Have I spoken yet?’

‘No, you have not.’

‘Then why did you say that?’

‘That was not well said.’

‘And what are you going to do there?’

‘Find some work .’

‘What work?’

‘I do not know.’

‘Yes, you know, you are going to cut grass.’

‘Perhaps.’

‘But my son, why must you travel that far just to cut grass?’

*Certain Winds from the South*

Is there not enough of it all round here? Around this kraal, your father's and all the others in the village? Why do you not cut these?'

'M'ma, you know it is not the same. If I did that here people will think I am mad. But over there, I have heard that not only do they like it but the government pays you to do it.'

'Even still, our men do not go South to cut grass. This is for those further north. They of the wilderness, it is they who go South to cut grass. This is not for our men.'

'Please M'ma, already time is going. Hawa is a new mother and Fuseni my first child.'

'And yet you are leaving them to go South and cut grass.'

'But M'ma, what will be the use in my staying here and watching them starve? You yourself know that all the cola went bad, and even if they had not, with trade as it is, how much money do you think I would have got from them? And that is why I am going. Trade is broken and since we do not know when things will be good again, I think it will be better for me to go away.'

'Does Hawa know?'

'No, she does not.'

'Are you coming to wake her up at this late hour to tell her?'

'No.'

'You are wise.'

'M'ma, I have left everything in the hands of Amadu. He will come and see Hawa tomorrow.'

'Good. When shall we expect you back?'

'...'

'Issa . . .'

'M'ma.'

*Ama Ata Aidoo — No Sweetness Here and other Stories*

‘When shall we expect you back?’

‘M’ma, I do not know. Perhaps next Ramaddan.’

‘Good.’

‘So I go now.’

‘Allah go with you.’

‘And may His prophet look after you all.’

M’ma went straight back to bed, but not to sleep. And how could she sleep? At dawn, her eyes were still wide-open.

‘Is his family noted for males that rot? No, certainly not. It is us who are noted for our unlucky females. There must be something wrong with them. ... Or how is it we cannot hold our men? Allah, how is it?’

Twenty years ago. Twenty years, perhaps more than twenty years . . . perhaps more than twenty years and Allah please, give me strength to tell Hawa.

Or shall I go to the market now and then tell her when I come back? No. Hawa, Hawa, now look at how you are stretched down there like a log! Does a mother sleep like this? Hawa, H-a-a-w-a!! Oh, I shall not leave you alone. . . . And how can you hear your baby when it cries in the night since you die when you sleep?

. . . Listen to her asking me questions! Yes, it is broad daylight. I thought you really were dead. If it is cold, draw your blanket around you and listen to me for I have something to tell you.

Hawa, Issa has gone South.

And why do you stare at me with such shining eyes? I am telling you that Issa is gone south.

And what question do you think you are asking me? How

*Certain Winds from the South*

could he take you along when you have a baby whose navel wound has not even healed yet?

He went away last night.

Don't ask me why I did not come to wake you up. What should I have woken you up for?

Listen, Issa said he could not stay here and just watch you and Fuseni starve.

He is going South to find work and . . . Hawa, where do you think you are getting up to go to? Issa is not at the door waiting for you. The whole neighbourhood is not up yet, so do not let me shout. . . and why are you behaving like a baby? Now you are a mother and you must decide to grow up . . . where are you getting up to go? Listen to me telling you this. Issa is gone. He went last night because he wanted to catch the government bus that leaves Tamale very early in the morning. So . . .

Hawa, ah-ah, are you crying? Why are you crying? That your husband has left you to go and work? Go on weeping, for he will bring the money to look after me and not you. . . I do not understand, you say? May be I do not. . . . See, now you have woken up Fuseni. Sit down and feed him and listen to me . . .

Listen to me and I will tell you of another man who left his newborn child and went away.

Did he come back? No, he did not come back. But do not ask me any more questions for I will tell you all.

He used to go and come, then one day he went away and never came back. Not that he had had to go like the rest of them . . .

Oh, they were soldiers. I am talking of a soldier. He need not have gone to be a soldier. After all, his father was one of the richest men of this land. He was not the eldest son, that is true,

*Ama Ata Aidoo — No Sweetness Here and other Stories*

but still, there were so many things he could have done to look after himself and his wife when he came to marry. But he would not listen to anybody. How could he sit by and have other boys out-do him in smartness?

Their clothes that shone and shone with pressing. . . . I say, you could have looked into any of them and put khole under your eyes. And their shoes, how they roared! You know soldiers for yourself. Oh, the stir on the land when they came in from the South! Mothers spoke hard and long to daughters about the excellencies of proper marriages, while fathers hurried through with betrothals. Most of them were afraid of getting a case like that of Memunat on their hands. Her father had taken the cattle and everything and then Memunat goes and plays with a soldier. Oh, the scandal she caused herself then!

Who was this Memunat? No, she is not your friend's mother. No, this Memunat in the end ran away South herself. We hear she became a bad woman in the city and made a lot of money. No, we do not hear of her now - she is not dead either, for we hear such women usually go to their homes to die, and she has not come back here yet.

But us, we were different. I had not been betrothed.

Do you ask me why I say we? Because this man was your father. . . . Ah-ah, you open your mouth and eyes wide? Yes my child, it is of your father I am speaking.

No, I was not lying when I told you that he died. But keep quiet and listen. . . .

He was going South to get himself a house for married soldiers.

No, it was not that time he did not come back. He came here, but not to fetch me.

*Certain Winds from the South*

He asked us if we had heard of the war.

Had we not heard of the war? Was it not difficult to get things like tinned fish, kerosene and cloth?

Yes, we said, but we thought it was only because the traders were not bringing them in.

Well yes, he said, but the traders do not get them even in the South.

And why, we asked.

O you people, have you not heard of the German-people? He had no patience with us. He told us that in the South they were singing dirty songs with their name.

But when are we going, I asked him.

What he told me was that that was why he had come. He could not take me along with him. You see, he said, since we were under the Anglis-people's rule and they were fighting with the German-people . . .

Ask me, my child, for that was exactly what I asked him, what has all that got to do with you and me? Why can I not come South with you?

Because I have to travel to the lands beyond the sea and fight. . .

In other people's war? My child, it is as if you were there. That is what I asked him.

But it is not as simple as that, he said.

We could not understand him. You shall not go, said his father. You shall not go, for it is not us fighting with the Grunshies or the Gonjas. ... I know about the Anglis-people but not about any German-people, but anyway they are in their land.

Of course his father was playing, and so was I.

*Ama Ata Aidoo — No Sweetness Here and other Stories*

A soldier must obey at all times, he said.

I wanted to give him so many things to take with him but he said he could only take cola.

Then the news came. It did not enter my head, for there all was empty. Everything went into my womb. You were just three days old.

The news was like fire which settled in the pit of my belly. And from time to time, some would shoot up, searing my womb, frying my intestines and burning up and up and up until I screamed with madness when it got into my head.

I had told myself when you were born that it did not matter you were a girl, all gifts from Allah are good and anyway he was coming back and we were going to have many more children, lots of sons.

But Hawa, you had a lot of strength, for how you managed to live I do not know. Three days you were and suddenly like a stream that is hit by an early harmattan, my breasts went dry. . . . Hawa, you have a lot of strength.

Later, they told me that if I could go South and prove to the government's people that I was his wife, I would get a lot of money.

But I did not go. It was him I wanted, not his body turned into gold.

I never saw the South.

Do you say oh? My child I am always telling you that the world was created a long while ago and it is old-age one has not seen but not youth. So do not say oh.

Those people, the government's people, who come and go, tell us trade is bad now, and once again there is no tinned fish

*Certain Winds from the South*

and no cloth. But this time they say, this is because our children are going to get them in abundance one day.

Issa has gone South now because he cannot afford even goat flesh for his wife in maternity. This has to be, so that Fuseni can stay with his wife and eat cow-meat with her? Hmm. And he will come back alive . . . perhaps not next Ramaddan but the next. Now, my daughter, you know of another man who went to fight. And he went to fight in other people's war and he never came back.

I am going to the market now. Get up early to wash Fuseni. I hope to get something for those miserable colas. There is enough rice to make *tuo*, is there not? Good. Today even if it takes all the money, I hope to get us some smoked fish, the biggest I can find, to make us a real good sauce. . . .'

