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A COGNITIVE STYLISTIC STUDY OF MIND STYLE IN SELECTED SHORT STORIES IN DUL JOHNSON'S *SHADOWS AND ASHES*

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<https://orcid.org/0009-0002-5226-6180>

ISAIAH ALUYA

Department of English and Literary Studies
Bingham University Karu, Nasarawa State, Nigeria.

isaiah.aluya@binghamuni.edu.ng

ABRAHAM UDUMA

Department of English and Literary Studies
Bingham University Karu, Nasarawa State, Nigeria.

uduma.abraham@binghamuni.edu.ng

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ABSTRACT

This article, from a cognitive stylistic perspective, examines mind style in selected short stories in Dul Johnson's Shadows and Ashes. The objective is to provide insight into how the narrator's mind style is stylistically built and possibly formed inside the reader's mind. Excerpts from four short stories titled "Living with Shadows", "Ghosts of War", "Love Pangs" and "Bond of Love" from the collection were purposively sampled and analysed using the Text World and Schema theories. The data analysis highlights a variety of linguistic qualities into text-building components and connects them to the various ways in which they interact with readers' prior knowledge to arrive at a construal of the narrator's remarkable mind style. It also illustrates semantic distinction between the narrator's external and internal worlds, demonstrating how he achieved inner wealth and liberty despite the different consequences of the Nigeria Civil War events. The portrayal of characters in the collection studied invites readers to connect on a profound level with the characters, their struggles, death and the emotional torture that accompany the characters that emerged from the war, making the stories examined a compelling and evocative work of art. The article not only offers light on the psychological trauma conveyed by the writer's mind style, but it also adds to the prospects of cognitive stylistic perspective to mind style.

KEYWORDS: Cognitive stylistics, mind style, text world theory, schema theory, short stories

Introduction

Mind style is a concept coined by Roger Fowler (1977: 103) to describe "any distinctive linguistic presentation of an individual mental self". The term was developed and clarified by Fowler (1996: 21) in a later work as "The worldview of an author, a narrator, or character, constituted by the ideational structure of the text". Adhering to Fowler's interpretation of the term, Semino (2020) defines it as "those aspects of world views that are primarily personal and

cognitive in origin, and which are peculiar to a particular individual or common to people who have the same characteristics." According to Stockwell (2009), it is "the combined experiential quality of the reader's feelings occasioned by the patterning in the text itself." Finally, Nuttall (2018) believes that the idea of mind style encompasses both the reader's imaginary mental construct and the language patterns in the text. The key ideas to note in the aforementioned definitions and assertions are that mind style refers to the

manner in which a writer's language choices express his worldview or distinctive method of conceptualizing the universe. It can therefore be seen as a part of the dialogue that takes place between textuality and the reader.

Since the focus of stylistics is the systematic study of style in language (Wales, 2011: 271), mind style is understood as the unique authorial interpretation of events, regardless of how marked or seemingly neutral they may appear (Jefferies and McIntyre, 2010: 1). Thus, the study of mind style is a component of the relationship between textuality and reader (Nuttall, 2018). With this interplay, it should come as no amazement that a key method of understanding mind style is cognitive stylistics, which considers both the language elements of texts and the reader's mental construction of meanings (Sirinarang and Wijitsopon, 2021). Mind style offers a mental transition that supports linguistic stylistic inclination to identify the psychological impacts of a character's experience in fiction as well as its meaning. It is an effective method for determining how the world of a fictional character is portrayed in a story. It is based on this premise that this article explores mind style in a few short stories from Dul Johnson's *Shadows and Ashes* to determine how the reader's mind is able to enact and interpret the narrator's mental style through textual construction. To achieve this aim, the study seeks to determine how the narrator's mind style in short stories effectively is enacted in the reader's mind, and how the mind style of characters is formed textually in the short stories. The rationale behind using Dul's *Shadows and Ashes* for this study is hinged on the fact that no critical analysis on the text has addressed the concept of mind style from a cognitive stylistics standpoint specifically to clarify each character's psychological anguish. The emotional trauma that both the author and the narrator experience can thus be seen by examining the mind style of the text from the standpoint of cognitive stylistics.

Cognitive Stylistics Approaches to Mind Style

Cognitive stylistics is a growing subfield within applied linguistics that is heavily influenced by cognitive science, psychology, computing, and artificial intelligence. It primarily concentrates on speculating about what transpires during the reading process and how this impacts readers' views of the texts they are reading (Jefferies and McIntyre, 2010). Semino and Culpeper (2002) argue that the Cognitive stylistics approach is effective because it integrates precise and thorough scrutiny of a literary text with a methodical and theory-driven investigation of the cognitive process of language usage. According to Simpson (2004), the core of cognitive stylistics is to enhance rather than replace conventional stylistics, with the goal of shifting the attention away from text and composition models and toward models that make apparent the links between the human mind and the reading experience. Cognitive stylistics is based on the idea that readers actively participate in the act of meaning-making. This suggests that meaning does not only reside in the text's formal structures, but is also negotiated as an outcome of readers applying components of their prior knowledge of the real world while they read (Jefferies and McIntyre, 2010). Cognitive stylistics can be approached through the schema theory, text world theory, conceptual metaphor theory, and mental space theory. Among these approaches, the schema and text world theories used in the current study will be discussed in the section that follows.

Schema Theory

Schema theory is a cognitive linguistic theory that asserts that people derive meaning from mental representations built from experiences that are connected to previous experiences (Jefferies and McIntyre, 2010). The theory, which was developed in the 1970s by AI research and cognitive psychology, became prominent in cognitive linguistics and cognitive approaches to literature and text comprehension (Wales, 2011). The theory relates to the appropriate bundles of prior information and experience that we have stored in our memories and can access during the

comprehension process (Usó-Juan and Martnez-Flor, 2006: 93).

According to Rumelhart (1980), schema theory are data structures for capturing general or archetypal information about all concepts and are the building blocks of cognition. Understanding a text, according to the theory, is an interactive process between the text and the reader's learned background information, which is arranged in abstract structures or "schemata." The idea that every new piece of information is sampled against a prior schema serves as a guide for the interpretation process inside the schema-theoretic framework. In the process, changes are made to the prior knowledge structure to include previous information that could not be accounted for. The two processing modalities that arise from this approach are referred to as top-down (or knowledge-based) and bottom-up (or text-based). Readers are considered to have understood the material if there is compatibility between the conceptual predictions made by top-down processing and the incoming input that is acknowledged through bottom-up processing.

Cook (1994) enumerates four ways that schema and text communicate. These include schema addition, refreshment, reinforcement, and disrupting. Texts give additional information within existing schemata in schema addition. Texts result in schema modification in schema refreshment, which refreshes our previous knowledge regarding certain scenarios. Schema reinforcement is concerned with texts that confirm current schemata, whereas schema disrupting is concerned with novel information or diverging concepts that test the reader's schemata. In this study, these four components of text-schema interaction give a framework for explaining the probable impacts of textual clues from the text-world analysis on the reader's cognition. It should be clear from the aforementioned discourse that schemas are dynamic in the sense that they emerge as a result of experience (Jefferies and McIntyre, 2010). Schemata assists us in making sense of the

natural world by allowing us to retrieve the precise type of stored knowledge relevant to each specific situation (Norgaard, Busse, and Montoro, 2010).

Text World Theory

Text World Theory is a cognitive-linguistic framework of how people process speech. Its theoretical foundations can be linked to many academic fields such as stylistics, possible world theory, cognitive psychology and cognitive linguistics. The fundamental idea behind Text World Theory is that people analyze and comprehend all conversation by creating mental representations of it in their minds (Werth, 1994). The goal of text world theory is to offer the analytical instruments required for a thorough investigation and discussion of these mental representations, or text-worlds. The theory employs a three-layered paradigm to organize the many worlds, including the discourse world, the text world, and the sub-worlds (Werth, 1999).

The discourse world is situated at the pinnacle of the model and pertains to the instantaneous circumstances encompassing the linguistic event, both the participants and the text. Put differently, it refers to the immediate real-world context in which a writer engages in communication with a reader. The context of the conversation is formed by the physical objects and entities in the immediate vicinity as well as the schematic knowledge of all discourse participants. The contribution of the participants in the process is critical since their prior information, memories, attitudes, feelings, and emotions all play a role in the formation of mental worlds. Obviously, the participants will differ based on the type of communicative event, such as writer and reader in the case of written communication, speaker and hearer in the case of spoken communication, and so on.

The text world is the second level of text comprehension, and it relates to the mental images that humans can generate when processing various types of discourse. The text world is what the reader creates in order to make sense of the communicative event. It is comprised of world-

building elements and function-advancing propositions retrieved from the text. The configuration of the world building elements includes time (represented by the tense and aspect of a verb phrase), location (represented by adverbs and noun phrases indicating place), and characters (represented by nouns and pronouns). Function-advancing propositions are realized in verb phrases that function to build and advance event within the text world. It is important to note that function-advancing propositions may assume the shape of material processes (intentional, superventional, or event processes), relational processes (intensive, possessive, or circumstantial), mental processes, or verbal processes. Material processes are represented by vertical arrows in text world theory, whereas relational and mental processes are represented by horizontal arrows. One notable example of text world theory's comprehensiveness is its emphasis on both the top-down and bottom-up aspects of discourse comprehension. Text worlds are generated when human cognitive power is joined with written communication, which is often supplied through the text's linguistic cues.

The sub-world is the third level. The sub-world is defined by some type of temporal and/or spatial movement away from the primary text world. Character attitudes articulated through modalized constructions, such as bouletic modal worlds (stressing desire), deontic modal worlds (stressing obligation), and epistemic modal worlds (stressing belief or degrees of certainty), also contribute to the formation of the sub-world. Furthermore, world-builders like speech tense, pronouns, and locatives can also create sub-worlds (Jefferies and McIntyre, 2010, Norgaard, Busse and Montoro, 2010).

Contextualizing *Shadows and Ashes*

Shadows and Ashes is a collection of eight short stories that revolve around three themes: the repercussions of the Nigerian Civil War, the Trauma of Rape, and General Philosophy of Life. There are two books in the collection. The first book, *Hunting Shadows*, has four short stories: "Living with Shadows", "Ghosts of War", "Love

Pangs", and "Bond of Love". The second book, *Pawns on a Chessboard*, also includes four short stories titled "The Rape of Regina Afang", "Cinders of the Volcano", "Hand of Destiny", and "The Shadow of Truth". What stands out throughout the anthology is Dul Johnson's vibrant and vivid depictions of actions and events. Throughout the novel, a steady infusion of dialogues draws readers' attention into the emotions and strong repercussions of the characters' ordeals. There is also a psychological angle to Dul's depictions throughout the work. This can be regarded to be the author's mind depictions of the repercussions of the civil war events on him, and its encapsulation in the collection acts as a purgatory way to heal his mind of the sad effects of the war on him, even as he struggles with life.

The majority of the characters in *Shadows and Ashes* are not simply depicted as characters who appear to function as a vehicle to reach the end goal of conveying a story. The characters are given true human emotions and, more significantly, a strong intelligence, allowing readers to think and form their own opinions. The text also suggests gloominess, which closely resembles the mood of sadness that pervades a war situation. For example, the narrator's final lines in "Living with Shadows" are reflected in the expression "God forgive me. But I'm going to kill two people before I die. I will kill two Ibos. God help me" moves the narrative from the textual world to the real world, connecting the reader to the characters into a discourse and search for meaning. Furthermore, the majority of the main characters in the book have compelling representations of real-life feelings and decisions that compel the reader to take an active role in the story by either agreeing with the characters' decisions or disagreeing with them. Most of the time, the characters are portrayed to deliberate carefully before acting. The characters' previously concealed qualities are revealed by the in-depth reflection, which also enhances the character(s) and story development as a whole.

Data and Methods

This study used the Text World and Schema theories in a qualitative textual analytical manner to investigate the narrator's mind style in *Shadows and Ashes*. The dataset used in the study consists of four extracts selected from four distinct short stories using a purposive selection technique. The four extracts were chosen from each of the stories in the first book, *The Hunting Shadows*. Due to time and space constraints, this study concentrates on the first book in the collection in order to accommodate the key components of Text World and the Schema theoretical aspects that are readily apparent in the text and where readers begin to form mental representations of the text. The extracts portray the characters' external environments, illuminating the settings in which the narrators lived.

The study also examines the stories' main setting, where readers will begin to comprehend the narrators' mind style through descriptions of their inner selves that contrast with how the outside world is portrayed. The fourth excerpt contains a mix of external and internal worlds, highlighting an extraordinary quality of the narrator's mind. Although it might seem that the study's data only includes a few text extracts, Semino (2014: 154) makes the argument that, in situations where a specific (linguistic) behavior is highlighted through "deviation" from default or conventional expectations, "just a few salient examples across a text may be sufficient to create a mind style." A few instances of that conduct may be adequate to attribute a mental quality to a character, even if that character does not constantly display such conduct. The text chosen for study, as indicated in the analysis below, has certain "deviation" that point to distinguishing traits of the narrator's mind style.

Result and Discussion

The findings of the text-world analysis are applied to the first research question in this section. The data are then studied and discussed in light of schema theory to address the second research question, which is to elucidate how textual features connect with the reader's schema

to develop a comprehension of Dul's mind style. It should be noted that the examination of the four extracts is presented in the order in which they appear in the text. This is done to reflect on and discuss possible processing of these texts during actual reading, which is related to how they function on the reader's schemata during reading.

Extract 1

December 25, 1967. My brother announces this morning that he is going to join army. Oh my God, there is a war going on. Has been on for six months so they say. I hear there is a lot of killing going on where they are doing the fighting. They say the Ibos are killing our people in the army. He is too strong willed, my brother. My father called it stubbornness. I wish we were at home, where father could talk to him. Now, grandma can't say anything, she even seems afraid of my brother (Dul, 1998, p.3).

July 21, 1969. Yes, my brother's wife has been having worst dreams than any one of us. Her husband visits her every night, sometimes, even her waking moments, all covered up in blood. Something must have gone wrong, something terrible must have happened to my brother (Dul, 1998, p.6).

December 22, 1969. The worst has happened. We received news of the death of my brother, unofficial news. But there is eyewitness account of exactly how it happened. The enemy troops had dealt a devastating blow. All that, that someone could remember is that my brother gets shot in the back by the enemies. He falls, tumbling down like a giant tree. He cries for water, and someone out of pity, gives a cup. He drinks in great droughts. The cup slips

*out of his hand as the soul slips out of
him (Dul, 1998, p.7)*

Based on the preceding paragraphs, the reader begins to form a mental representation of the text "Living with Shadows." The text world of these paragraphs is captured in the world-building elements and function-advancing propositions. The world-building elements comprises time (progressive present), location (family residence), objects (giant tree, cup and water), and enactors (the narrator, his brother and the wife, father, grandma, army, enemy and messengers). The function-advancing proposition comprises relevant information about the text's events which include the announcement of the narrator's brother to enlist in the army, the ongoing war, the destruction of lives as a result of the war, the nightmares of the brother's wife and the entire family, and the news of the brother's death.

The first extract provides an overview of the text's temporal, spatial, and social deictic for the text in question. The reader is provided with a brief explanation of the main time zone, place, items, and actors in the text world, allowing them to get a sense of what the narrator and other characters are experiencing. Various characteristics of the settings, objects, and enactors are offered to portray a mood of dread and hopelessness as a result of the ongoing conflict. The narrator alludes to the events in the text world through material, mental, verbal, and relational processes. For example, the reader is informed of the brother's decision to enlist in the army by the use of the material verb "announces." This is followed by the relational processes "there is" and "has been" to establish the ongoing war as well as the material verb "killing" to depict the destruction of lives. As one whose experience to life's occurrences is limited, most of his reports in the text world are based on rumour as captured using the verbal process "hear-say". While the verbal process "say" relates the helplessness of their grandma to change the brother's decision, the mental verb "wish" expresses a hypothetical

situation where the narrator had wished that they all were at home to dissuade their brother from enlisting in the army. The decision to serve in the army has instilled anxiety and nightmares in the entire family in the text world. The fact that the narrator refers to one of the fighters in the war as his brother, despite the fact that the bond and affection expected from such a relationship have been shattered by the emergence of the war, utters his true self and dreams, as all the enactors of the scenes live in hunted dreams of death; this also connotes the death of dreams, life's expectations, and family bond as a result of the war. Unfortunately, the nightmares have turned out to be foreshadows of reality, as unofficial messengers deliver news of the brother's death, along with an eyewitness account of how he was killed. Here, the narrator depicts the death of his brother in an emotive manner. The messengers act as emissaries of war, interacting with the events of war and the characters who are not directly involved in order to bridge the information gap between the unfolding of events of war and the emotional involvement of those who are not directly involved in the fight in order to prove that both are victims of war, as they too die as a result of emotional torture. The dates in the text (December 25, 1967; July 21, 1967; and December 22, 1969) demonstrate how events in the text world are portrayed.

In this story, Dul shadows human existence, which is sometimes viewed as contradictory but is actually complementary to each other. The author portrays the individual characters as having a divided personality caused by war. Furthermore, his mental disorder as a consequence for the loss of his brother in the war depicts the arid effect of the trauma he suffered, which thus becomes a textual cue that particularly appeals to the readers' minds and allows them to make sense schematically on the effect of war on those who experience it. In addition, the reader gets a peek of the narrator's condition of mind as he expresses his psychological effect through soliloquy. The wife's succession of hunting nightmares and awful dreams concerning

her husband reveal the same mental glimpse. The paragraphs in the first passage above are marked by killings, death, enemy, troops, and an army, all of which establish the reality of a situation of warfare. The psychological anguish that the characters endure, as well as the overall pandemonium depicted by the writer in the preceding scenes, are real-life experiences that accompany war participants.

Drawing from this text world representation, we can schematically state that the text's initial text world representation primarily functions to awaken the reader's fear schema. The use of terms like "killings," "blood," "death," and "shot" also triggers our war schema. From the outset of the story, there is a connection between the two schemata pertaining to the narrator and characters. This in turn leads us to construct meanings about the concept of war and its calamitous effects. Such construction allows the reader to arrive at a conclusion that war indeed should be discouraged by all means by reason of the aftermath effects, loss of life and properties.

Extract 2

He would spend the whole day indoors and drink himself stupid. He would order a whole deri of about twenty liters of nche and, alone in his room, would drink for the whole day. If he gave any out, it would be very little, and to his father. Dapyen had attempted to talk to him a couple of times from the beginning. Then he realized that he was wasting his time. His son was hopeless even before He went into the army, he knew that. But this army, this war, had turned him into animal; a real rebel. Once Dukven had snapped at his father, as if they had reversed roles in life. Dapyen has made few other attempts to talk to Dukven, believing that he had misbehaved the way he did because he was under the influence of alcohol. Now he knew that

it was either that Dukven was permanently under the influence of alcohol or something must have gone seriously wrong with him. Dapyen had hoped, in fact, imagined that the briefcase Dukven brought must be full of money, since he didn't bring anything. But he was afraid to ask. After one week of reckless spending, Dapyen couldn't control his urge. He had asked Dukven to give him the money he brought for him at which Dukven had laughed and said he didn't bring any money at all. Of course, Dapyen wouldn't believe such a story. But he was too embarrassed to utter even one word (Dul, 1998, p.16).

The second extract is culled from a short story titled "Ghosts of War." The text-word information in this piece depicts Dukven's worsening lifestyle after the war and Dapyen's efforts to fix it. This is realized textually through world-building components such as attempted to communicate, squandering his time, forlorn, misbehaved, transformed him into an animal, a real rebel, under the influence of alcohol, and something must have gone wrong with him. It should be observed that the extract's time and place world-building elements are portrayed as a succession of adverbial phrases: "the whole day indoors, alone in his room and for the whole day" that modifies Dukven's material process "spend" and "drink" given in the opening sentence. These phrases emphasize what Duvken's life had become after his return from the war, which had engineered his strained connection with his father. Their quarrel over Dukven's misbehavior is further enhanced with the material process of Dapyen "had attempted to talk to him a couple of times from the beginning" in an effort to correct his lifestyle of drinking, smoking and womanizing. In terms of function-advancing elements in the extract, the representation of this text world involves three key

processes: material, mental, and verbal. The material processes are expressed in phrases such as “attempted to talk to him,” “would spend,” “drink all day,” “misbehaved,” “went into the army,” and “turned him into an animal.” The mental processes are conveyed in phrases like “realized,” “knew,” “hoped,” “imagined,” and “believed,” while the verbal processes are articulated in phrases like “He had asked Dukven,” “Dukven had said,” and “He was too embarrassed to utter.”

These three processes are crucial in depicting Dukven’s erratic lifestyle during and after the war, particularly through the contrast between his acts and those of his father. While Dukven’s material processes are aimed at his misdeed, his father’s are aimed at Dukven in order to mend his negative behavior, which had worsened as a result of the war. Dukven, who had enlisted in the army to fight in the war, had just returned alive, but a shadow of himself, as the war had stolen his self-identity and essence. The war’s negative impact on Dukven prompted Daypen’s remark: “This war had turned him into an animal; a real rebel.” Daypen’s attempts to rectify Dukven’s indolence, drinking, smoking, and womanizing lifestyle were futile, prompting him to remark that “he was wasting his time.” Again, Dukven’s act of shamelessness is further exemplified in his inability to fulfill the promise he made to his family members (father and sisters) to bring back war loots. Most soldiers who fought during the war and survived returned with loots ranging from wives, children, properties and money to herald their victory to their people. However, this is not the case with Dukven who returned empty handed. The further inquisitive conversation between father and son towards the latter part of the excerpt, affirms the above submission. Apart from the material processes, the verbal processes further depict the controversy between father and son. While Dapyen’s verbal processes display a powerful verbal act through “talk,” “asked” and “utter” which point to his effort to positively impact the life of his son, the only verbal process successfully performed by Dukven

in this excerpt is “said” which indicates an active verbal action. Moreover, it must be noted that the clause in which this verbal process is embedded: “Dukven had laughed and said he didn’t bring any money at all” foregrounds Dukven’s deployment of the verbal process to make jest of his father’s request when he was asked what he brought back from the war. As regard the mental processes in the text, they are deployed only by Dapyen for various purposes. These mental processes are classified into two cognitive mental processes as exemplified in “realized, knew, imagine and believe” and desirative mental process as represented in “hoped.” Whereas the cognitive mental verbs showcase Daypen’s grasped of his son’s problem, the desirative mental verb expresses his expectation from his son. Furthermore, in extract two, the text-word indicates a character’s mentality acquired on the battlefield, which turns out to degrade him to a shadow.

The author employs the character of Dukven to highlight eyewitnesses of the civil war (whether victims or soldiers) who, despite surviving the bullet, had only returned as ghosts, their true identity having been lost on the battlefield. The author demonstrates how the choice of a deviant lifestyle, contrary to his cultural norms and standards, reduces Dukven to a mere shadow who cannot be accepted within the main stream of society.

In a schematic sense, extract two adds more details about the activities of Dukven, whose life was adversely affected by the war, and it also confirms the reader’s war schema that was initially explored in excerpt one. The aforementioned list of objects, locations, and function-advancing propositions helps achieve this. More significantly, this triggers the war schema along with the frustration and hopelessness schema, setting the reader up for a key projection of Dul’s distinct mind style that will be discussed in the next excerpt.

Extract 3

If only she knew what I went through for her...if only I had the opportunity for just one day to prove to her that she was the war I was fighting she wouldn't have betrayed me. She still feels that I mistreated her, especially because from the day I left until the day I returned there was no word from me to her. But she should have known that there was no word from me to anybody else. I will explain to her. But that will have to be later; when we are out of here. I need time to prove to her first, before I can explain to her. I hope she will give me the opportunity. I believe she will, since she has chosen to live with me, to be my wife. I know it wasn't an easy decision. In fact, it wasn't really her decision though she was free to reject it and face the consequences, which was to lose both of us, my brother and I. She elected to be my wife. I'm grateful to her and God (Dul, 1998, p.33).

Extract three is culled from the third story in the collection. It is titled "Love Pangs". The world-building elements comprises time (past), location (home, compound), objects (a pass, knapsack), and enactors (the narrator, Nimram, she (Konkat), brother (Mambut), and God). The function-advancing proposition includes Nimram's memories of everything that has happened in his life, including his separation from Konkat as a result of his protracted absence from home and communication breakdown, his love for Konkat in spite of the tragic event that involved her and his brother (Mambut), and his search for a way to express his appreciation to her and God.

It is apparent from the text world of this extract that the function-advancing components are mostly mental processes, which are symbolized by cognitive verbs like "know," "feels," "believes," "hope," and "knew." This implies a change of perspective from the outside to the inside world. It

is significant that the first sentence of the paragraph begins with, "if only she knew," projecting "if only she knew" as an effective agent and acting as an actor performing the material process of "went through" by the narrator. This implies the essential importance of the narrator's internal world (which is one of the reasons we chose this story as one of the stories for the examination of Dul's mind style). His sub-world about "Konkat" is loaded with abstract nouns relating to duty, realization, love, and forgiveness that are portrayed as life philosophy. In contrast, the narrator's outside text world consists of worlds like drink, animal, rebel, and misbehaved, which depict his helplessness and frustration (See extract 2). Dul's language in this extract can be considered as an accurate representation of his mind style, which is characterized by the conceptual frames held in his long-term as a writer (novelist), and is comprised of the lexicon related to the physical and psychological factors outlined above.

Dul employs the character of Nimram in this narrative to illustrate another aspect of the devastating influence of war on human existence. This component relates to the loneliness and separation it produces among people, which frequently causes problems in relationships. Nimram, who had recently married, found himself in great psychological turmoil as he struggled between comfort and duty. He resolves to join the Nigerian army and fight for his country's survival. This decision caused a temporary separation between him and his wife, Konkat. However, after a few years, a report of Nimram's death began to circulate throughout the community. Mambut comes to the village to discover that his brother was killed in the battle. He is implored to continue his brother's bloodline. This decision leads to his having a child with Konkat, his brother's wife. Two years later, Nimram returns to discover that his wife was with a child. This sad incidence generated a controversy between both brothers as to who becomes the husband of Konkat. Despite the sad occurrence, Nimram prefers to maintain his

relationship with his Konkat because of his love for her.

Based on the theory of schema, it may be concluded that the reader's mind is activated by this text to form new schemas related to duty, realization, and love, particularly the recurrent schema of love. It may be argued that the reader's mind undergoes schema refreshment as a result of these schemata being activated. According to extracts one and two, the war, fear, and frustration schemas have been activated, established, and reinforced. This specific excerpt, however, activates the schemata that diverge from the prevalent war schema and "connects normally separate schemata in unusual ways" (Cook, 1994; Semino, 1997).

Our claim is confirmed by the corpus information from the dictionary, which shows that the term 'war' substantially collocates with words like enemy, kill, army, fight, and troops. These collocations demonstrate widespread war association patterns, which can be interpreted as a reflection of notions commonly associated with war. Some of the above collocations appear in the descriptions of Dul's experience in extracts one and two. Regarding extract three, Dul's inner world comprises terms that, although generally adhering to the war schema, also touch on realization, love, and duty. In this way, his inner world emerges to the fore and helps the reader draw a meaningful link between a positive schema of duty and love and a negative schema of war and fear, thus refreshing the reader's schemata of these concepts. This gives the readers fresh insights into life and contributes to the story's captivating quality. This brings us to the final extract which is presented below.

Extract 4

In the last couple of days Ndubuisi has been in deep pensive moods. But that wasn't strange. It happens to everybody every once in a while. That was why nobody worried about it. And now the boy has shifted this whole

burden onto his shoulders: this unbearable burden of proof of the existence of his parents and his brother and sister! People he had seen brutally clubbed and hacked to death in blood daylight! How could he dare talk about them, let alone explain their whereabouts to this lad? How could he? (Dul, 1998, p. 46).

The text world of the above extract comprises the world-building elements and function-advancing proposition. The world-building elements comprises time (present perfect and past), location (inside), objects (none), and enactors (the narrator, Ndubuisi, the boy, parents, brother, sister and people). The function-advancing proposition include relevant details about the events in the text. These details include Ndubuisi's reflective moods, the weight that has been placed on his shoulders, his knowledge of the brutal murder of his loved ones—who also happen to be the boy's family members—and his unwillingness to share such information with the boy.

The fourth extract, which comes just after the third, paints a stronger picture of how the narrator is able to go from the outside world to his inner the world of memories, where he muses about the horrific murder of a family he once loved. This slight shift allows readers to gain a deeper comprehension of his unusual mind style. Among the turmoil, depicted by the material process, "And now the boy has shifted this whole burden onto his shoulders" reflected in the text world, the narrator was able to switch from the external world to his sub-world, represented by his mental process "people he had seen." It should be observed that the narrator uses the expression "people he had seen" to reflect on how a treasured family was assassinated in daylight, thus enabling the presentation of his mind sound forceful.

Significantly, in contrast to extract three, which is replete with mental processes, his mind style as depicted in this extract is further defined by verbal

processes, such as “talk” and “explain,” indicating his communicative acts and his unwillingness to relate to the boy about his family’s tragic death. This, in turn, suggests that it will be difficult for him to relate the harrowing tale behind the murder of the boy’s family to him in his sub-world, as evidenced by the use of the verbal processes “How could he dare talk about them” and “let alone explain their whereabouts to this lad?”

According to schema theory, the text world in this extract not only strengthens the reader’s preconceived notions about the relationship between love and murder concealment as well as the narrator’s experience as a witness to the Nigerian Civil War, but it also intensifies the reader’s preconceived notions about Dul’s mind style through the use of language in this passage. Thus, the schema reinforcement highlights the unique aspect of Dul’s mind style.

Conclusion

The current study provides insights on how language plays a significant part in the text’s meaning-making capacity by focusing on mind style as an important stylistic component in Dul’s *Shadows and Ashes*. The analysis has demonstrated how language is used to project the text world, where the characters, despite all the physical trauma inflicted, were able to find comfort from their inner minds in order to survive the psychological trauma they were plunged into as a result of the effects of the civil war through their sub-world or inner world thoughts. Stated differently, after facing significant challenges in life, his linguistic choices nonetheless convey a mindset preoccupied with fear, war, love, forgiveness, duty, frustration, and realization. For example, among these mind styles, love and forgiveness are conceived in the context of Nimram’s wife bringing a child into this world with the help of a man other than her husband, whereas war and fear are conceived in the context of the narrator’s brother joining the army to fight in a war and abandoning his family to leave in fear. Both conceptualizations emphasize that the meaning of love is forgiveness and the meaning of war is fear.

In this manner, love is philosophically interwoven with forgiveness and war with fear. What readers encounter in these excerpts may be the feeling of knowledge of this narrator that we lack and must invent in order to understand the text. The analysis of these sample passages from the text gives insight on the depth of the conception of Dul’s experiences and his unique mind through textual projection and reader’s building of Dul’s mind style. The study adds significantly to not only the text’s value but also to cognitive stylistics. It broadens the scope of mind style, applications of cognitive stylistic theories and concepts, and conceptions by examining the mind style of a real person as portrayed in the collection of short stories. Text World and Schema theories enable an approach to Dul’s mind style that is both constructive and interpretive.

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