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Understanding Anne TANYI TANG's *EWA and other plays*: A Psycholinguistic Analysis

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ABSTRACT
In interpreting human behaviour in terms of unconscious mind (the id), Sigmund Freud (1963) says that man's egoistic tendencies make him aspire for power and self-protection, and desire sex. Because society frowns at these tendencies if they are not controlled, they are submerged in the unconscious. They however do not get completely submerged but rise to the surface in dreams, or manifest themselves in lapses of memory, fear, obsessions and other forms of abnormal behaviors.Tanyi Tang's plays present characters with abnormal behaviour. Since the characters interact in language, the language of abnormal characters cannot in itself be normal. Thus, such language cannot be studied only in terms of its literalness but also in terms of its psycholinguistic substratum.
Key words: egoistic, power, self-protection, unconsciousness, obsession, abnormal behavior.

1. Introduction

A piece of literary creation is a store of values; a meeting point of hearts (philosophies) in time and place. This dichotomizes literature into spacio-temporal segments. As such, anyone who has read the works of Cameroonian foremost playwrights, Bole Butake, Bate Bisong, Victor EpieNgome and novelist, Linus Asongwill develop flatfeet upon reading Tanyi Tang's plays. The plays have diverged from the fiery themes and language protest literature to the sober themes of family life: child-hate/love, child obsession, fertility/infertility, potent/impotence, fidelity/infidelity and such frivolities as human rights. This break away from the contemporary post-independence fertile grounds of creativity should puzzle a Tanyi Tang reader. It is difficult to predict what caused the playwright to go her own way. All one can conjecture is that she thought there were other more pressing concerns than politics. And so, she did not want to sing any mistress' or master's voice. She simply wanted to be her own mistress and she demonstrates this in the way she handles her themes, plots and language. Our concern in this article is language, language in action.

2. Discussions of the relevant plays

2.1. EWA, 1st Play: This play is cast in language that can be described as nonliterary. Apart from the opening lines which rhyme as a result of the repetition of the words pepper and granny, and the use of identical sentence structure, (*Pepper in my eyes and in my ears, Pepper everywhere. Pepper all over my body. Granny, please open the door. Granny, how can I get out of this room?) (1)* There is no catchy word or phrase that propels the reader to the sublimity of literary terseness.This is understandable especially in sociolinguistic terms which (according to Dell H. Hymes 1972:110) stipulate that in a language utterance situation (context of situation) the totality

of meaning is judged from who speaks what language to whom, when, where and about what?

All the characters in the playspeak Standard English on the fringes of post-secondary school education in Cameroon. The playwright insists on correct usage to the point that even in the speech of Granny, only one euphemism, *"I intend to return home to my Everlasting Father"* (11) and one culture-based pattern "*Father of the children are you very busy*?" (17) are found.

In like manner, the chief's speech is devoid of proverbs and other catchy words and phrases that usually characterize rural wisdom and philosophy. The playwright's village may therefore be an evolving village on the blink of losing its cultural identity in the observance of family and village norms of respect to parents and the elderly. As such, the playwright's use of flat language is not accidental. It is a deliberate stylistic device aimed at tasking the audience to investigate and discover the raison d'être of the peculiarities in characterization, theme and message.

The play is based on the story in which a woman (Granny) abandoned her children and went to live a carefree life in town immediately her husband died. The children, especially Nyango, suffer enormously because of theirmother's absence. In order to fend for herself and the other children, Nyangogets pregnant. She gives birth to Ewa, the main character of the play. Because Ewa is an unwanted child, Nyango hates and maltreats her. In due course, Granny returns empty handed from her carefree life, to be taken care by Nyango. And very soon, she discovers the past replaying itself on her – her daughter Nyango displays unimaginable hatred on her daughter Ewa.

Granny's character unfolds in her speech. She prefers unfamiliar words to familiar ones. She uses the word *mum* where any other village woman would have used the word *mother*. In like manner, she uses the words *rush* instead of *run*,*dive* instead of *fall*, *steam* instead of *water*. Her delight in words class is reminiscent of her once carefree life – a life which Thomas Wolf T. (1961:76-77) succinctly captures in his essay, *Man's Youth.*

Man's Youth is a wonderful thing: it is so full of anguish and of magic and he never comes to know it as it is, until it is gone from him forever. It is the thing he cannot bear to lose, it is the thing whose loss he must lament forever, and it is the thing whose loss he really welcomes with a sad and secret joy, a thing he would never willingly re-live again, could it be restored to him by any magic.

The above extract gives an apt picture of Granny's state of mind after her misadventures. It is life wrongly lived that has reduced her to the spited of the earth in her daughter's house. The speech patterns of that life hang in the air – indeterminate, neither up nor down but with aspiration for the unattainable up rather than the attained down.

Nyango's character is also revealed by her language. Her waspish and aggressive nature is reflected in her use of the imperative mood in talking to people. "*Have you peeled the cocoyam? W*hy not? *And how long was that supposed to take? (8-9).* Nyango is particularly aggressive and insolent when it comes to her talking to her mother. This is understandable because it is the reverse of what Dell H. Hyme's (op cit. 110) says about speech habits. He says, "*… speech habits are among the determinants of non-linguistic behaviour*." In these plays we see that it is the nonlinguistic behaviours that are the determinants of linguistic habits. It is Granny's abandonment of her children that conditioned her daughter, Nyango's speech toward her. It is Granny's guilt in abandoning her children and returning to them only when she was of no use to the merry-go-round life that conditioned her speech both to Ewa and Nyango. It is what Nyangowent through when her mother abandoned them and her relationship with her husband,Tikuthat led her into being pregnant of Ewa under doubtful circumstances – circumstances that made both of them disown the girl. Those circumstances conditionedNyango's speech toward Ewa. It is Nyango'sbehaviour toward Ewa that conditioned other children's speech toward Ewa. All through the play we see nonlinguistic behaviours conditioning linguistic habits.

2.1. Unique style

When nonlinguistic behaviours determine linguistic habits, language undergoes some sort of forging to enable it express the new imperatives. The characters in *Ewa* live in a state of tolerance – a state of suppressed tension, a state in which the concerned feign amity, but in fact, a state in which

any little spark can lead to linguistic outburst. In such cases the characters speak in intermittent emotional gusts that produce hiccoughs and inhalations because what is proper to be said and what is improper to be said are thus suppressed, vie for outlets.

> Nyango: And how long was that supposed to take?...Answers the question. Idiot…Fool. No wonder my husband hated you so profoundly. He abandoned me throughout the pregnancy and went out on a merrymaking trip with my mate when I was in labour. I almost died in childbirth. Even in his sick bed, he chased you like a cat chasing a rat, and advised that you should not be given education beyond primary school level. In order to win back his love, I had to send you home to my mother. I hate you. (9)

Hiccoughs and inhalations are characteristics of fits of anger and other features of negative emotional outpouring. They impair the natural flow of thought and make the message patchy, disjointed and illogical because some sentences are lost in the hiccoughs and inhalations. In the above extract, a deliberate concealment of the truth is achieved. We can see here that Nyango has something to hide. As such her thoughts don't flow. There is some jerkiness in her expressions. The message is fragmented and the reader is at a loss because they cannot fill in gaps created by the swallowed or inhaled sentences. All the reader can do is to conjecture that Ewa is in fact Nyango's child but not her husband's. And so in that shame she has to hate Ewa. Her hatred for Ewa influences her language and that of other characters in the play to the point that her spluttering creates literary devices that require special attention.

The first thing one takes note of is the names of the characters. The characters carry ethnic and Christian names. Granny is however not a name but a title – the shortened form of grandmother; but whose grandmother? Ewa's(Nyango's child) grandmother.The title granny is melodious and suggestive of love and harmony. But how comes that the playwright gives a title that signifies peace, love and devotion to a woman considered wicked and negligent? The answer to this question lies in the fact that, in a situation where nonlinguistic behaviourdetermines linguistic habits, there is bound to be some sort of problem between the signifier and the signified because of the fluidity of the signified. For example, here the signified *Granny*wobbles between positive and negative. In other words, Granny is muddled up because it has two incongruous signified – positive and negative. In conventional literary terms, a pleasant word used to disguise an unpleasant word or expression is known as a euphemism. Can we say that in this play, Granny is a euphemism? The answer is yes, and no. Yes, if Granny is used to cover up the dark side of the referent; and no, if Granny is used to showcase the referent. Since in a state of tolerance the status of the referent can change within a split second, to understand the play requires in-depth understanding of the dual referencing. Dual referencing abound in the play and from every indication, it accounts for the dramatic terseness of the play.

> Granny: Did you actually give birth to Ewa? You treat her like an orphan (9).

In conventional literary terms, this question is known as a rhetorical question. But unlike customary rhetorical questions, this one lacks vitality to reflect Granny's weak position in her daughter's house. Even the statement that follows does not have the desired effect because Granny is functioning from a weak position? She dare not use the powerful rhetorical or the imperative mood. If she were in a stronger position, she would have used the powerful rhetorical question; 'Nyango, do you know you gave birth to Ewa? Why do you treat her like an orphan?'

> Nyango*:* Shut up, nonentity. Have you forgotten that you abandoned us immediately our father gave up the ghost? Here I am, looking after you, an ingrate. Ewa is my child and I will do as I like. You, keep out of it.(Granny retires to her small bedroom) Ewa, bastard, come here. (Ewa comes in). Fill these containers with drinking-water. After doing so, prepare ekpang. My children will be hungry soon (10).

The foregoing reveals similitude – likening two things. By condemning her mother's wickedness in abandoning them while she herself (Nyango) is exercising wickedness on her child (Ewa) in words

and deeds, is a way of saying, 'I, (Nyango) am like you (Granny)'. In conventional literary terms this would be taken for a simile. But here it is not a simple straightforward simile. It is a disguised simile – a simile in silhouette. When a figure of speech is in silhouette, it requires special probing. Here lies Tanyi Tang's uniqueness as a playwright. Her figures of speech are not a given. They need special probing in order to understand them and see their vitality.

A simile or any other figure of speech in silhouette is implied. For example, when Nyango says, "*Ewa is my child and I will do as I like",* she actually means to tell Granny that; 'Ewa is my child as I am your child and I shall do to her as (what) you did to me'. There are two implied similes here. Note that the underlined vertexes are swallowed or lost in inhalations. This shows that an implied simile is one with a missing component. This holds true with metaphor. An implied metaphor is one whose vehicle is embedded in the tenor.For example, if Nyango says, "Ewa is maltreated as I was maltreated," the expression is a simile. 'Ewa is me' is a metaphor. 'Ewa' is an implied metaphor becauseit embeds both the tenor Ewa and the vehicle 'me' of the metaphor.
Throughout the play, the playwright's heroine,Ewa and her mother Nyango, are skillfullyinterwoven in implied similes and metaphors aimed at devastating Granny's psyche. In a similar manner, Nyango and her mother Granny are interwoven in such a way that the one reflects the other – Nyango is Granny, and Granny is Nyango in as far as child hatred and torture are concerned. This implied metaphorical use of language is very effective in presenting the main characters of the play as schizophrenics.

2.1.1. Language of the Psychotic

An examination of Nyango'sbehaviour and speech reveals that she is paranoiac; a condition of mental disorder which we can best understand if we view it in terms of Webster's definition. He defines it as, "*A chronic mental disorder characterized by systematized delusions of persecution and of one's own greatness, sometimes with hallucination*."

Henry L. Lennard et al (1972:170) say that paranoiac or psychotic interacting individuals tend to become more alike as time passes. This is true with the spread of Nyango's condition to her husband and the children of the village, Alice, Mary, and Mariam. Their verbal onslaught to Ewais to caricaturize her the same way Nyangodoes. In like manner, Ewa's husband, Ajoh also becomes paranoiac. Lennard (ibid) describes this as, "*psychotic reproducing facsimiles*".

Although Sapir (1921:13) says that "*Language is an acquired cultural function*," we see here that the language of psychotics cannot be described in terms of cultural function for two reasons - first, it is the product of diseased minds and so diverged from customary norms; and second, because it is the language of diseased minds, it is ephemeral; that is, it cannot be handed down from generation togeneration.

Nyango is an extroverted psychotic. Her behaviour and speech are impetuous. This is seen in the way she splutters orders and insults around, answers questions and draws conclusions on issues that require keener reflection.

Nyango:Chief, I was in bed when I heard the girls calling my daughter Morah, Slave.
Chief: Which daughter are you referring to? Ewa?
Nyango: Yes, Ewa.
Chief: So?
Nyango: My daughter is not Morah and she is not a slave.
Chief: Then treat her well and the girls will stop calling her Morah, Slave.
Nyango: You have taken sides.

The speech of Granny, an introverted psychotic is marked by self-resignation and withdrawal. At the time we expect her to assert herself and forcefully challenge Nyango, she withdraws to her room. And in her replay of the past, her helplessness in Nyango's house reaches its peak. She tells Ewa, "*You must learn to live without me. My days are running out. I intend to return home to my Everlasting Father".*

Granny's apologetic response to her demise misses the point. She surrenders where she would have hit back firmly. Her language loses vitality that would have enhanced its literary finesse. This is true with the language of both extroverted and introverted psychotics. Because, spoken discourse to psychotics is not for the beauty of language but the

transfer of aggression or withdrawal from aggression.

2.2. ***My Bundle of Joy*, 2nd *Play*:** One word titles like *Ewa* cause problems of understanding. *My Bundle of Joy* can be considered self-explanatory. But even then, what is the bundle and what is the joy about it? In trying to answer these questions, we discover the playwright's manipulation of language in distinguishing the two types of "mental patients' she handles in the plays *Ewa*and *My Bundle of Joy*. In *Ewa*, we talked of the language of schizophrenics. Schizophrenia is a serious mental disorder that requires prompt and intense medical attention. In *My Bundle of Joy*, only one character (Kechen, the main character) shows signs of a disturbed mind – a mind her husband presupposes is under the influence of obsession (*I am sorry to say this, You have developed the habit of linking everything with the absence of kids. Should I call it an obsession?*) (43)

Webster M. defines obsession as*:-1) "The act of an evil spirit in besetting a person or impelling him to action, from without; …2) Persistent and inescapable preoccupation with an idea or emotion; …"* Kechen is obsessed with the desire to bear a child. But because she cannot be pregnant within her set time, the reminiscences of her schooldays abortions overwhelm her mental processes and condition both her actions and speech toward the situation. Her obsession is therefore not a simple one but one on the fringes of schizophrenia.

The play opens with the scene that shows that she had indirectly undergone psychotherapy (with other women in her situation) in the hands of a pseudo Christ who might have told them to buy baby dresses and keep in their houses as an attraction for babies who (according to village mythology) are believed to hover around at night in spirit forms, looking for suitable mothers to beget them. Thus, we meet her examining baby dresses she had bought for that purpose but whose unfulfilled mission was causing her concern to the point that she could no longer conceal her emotions. She thus burst out:

> I wish the purpose of these tiny beautiful dresses be fulfilled. How long will these dresses continue to remind me of my frustration? **I still remember when the man who claimed to be Christ's disciple asked women to purchase babies' dresses. A large crowd gathered, each woman holding a baby's dress. Even those who already have kids wanted more. I still remember the anxious faces of women. I do not know whether some were successful. They came from far and near**. Why can't God listen to my prayers? (sighs). Why? What have I not done? Haven't I confessed my sins and asked for God's forgiveness? God why are you so hard on me? When shall I also taste the joy of motherhood? When shall friends and relations welcome my baby? I want birth songs to be sung in this house. I love this song.

The print presentation of the outburst is here modified to show how the outburst is structured. The structure is paramount in the understanding of the working of Kechen's mind vis-à-vis what she thinks about herself and her response to what she thinks people think about her.

The outburst is structured like a complex sentence with a subordinate clause embedded in a dislocated main clause, e.g. the house *in which he lives* is my house. What corresponds to the dislocated main clause (the italicized segment of the outburst) is the mainstream flow of Kechen's thought about herself. It is the 'self-pity' segment in which she is apologetic and repentant. The language is characterized by the use of the subjunctive mood – *"I wish the purpose of these tiny dresses…, how long will these dresses…, why can't God listen to my prayers? … I love this song."* Even the rhetorical questions in this segment are subjunctive because they all express a wish. On the other hand, what corresponds to the subordinate clause (the bold type segment) is the 'we-pity' segment – a segment in which she indirectly switches from the first person singular pronoun 'I', to the first person plural pronoun 'we'. The expression "*A large crowd gathered, each woman holding a baby dress.*" is an indirect way of saying, '*We gathered, each of us holding a baby dress*". This is her escapist strategy. For instance, ask your child where he had been the whole day, he will prefer to say, 'We were playing' rather than, 'I was playing'. Another way of saying, 'I

was not alone; we were many'. In switching from *I*to *we*, that is, in globalizing her situation, Kechen sort of responds to what she thinks people think about her. She tells them, *I*am not alone, *we*are many.

1st Woman:(pointing at Kechen who is chatting with her two friends). *Is that the much talked about barren, beautiful, educated wife?*

2nd Woman: *Yes, she is. You see, she does not help in the kitchen…*

> Crowd*:* (In unison. Pointing at Kechen). You are preventing our son from remarrying a productive wife. Perhaps you used herbs to charm our late sister. We can't understand why she loved you. Now, your time is over. (50)

The switch from the first person singular 'I' to the first person plural 'we' is not only aresponse to what Kechen thinks people think about her, it is equally a way of soliciting 'we-pity' from God. As she peers into the mirror of her previous life, she finds herself the main object of blame. But, like most human beings, she does not want to accept the consequences of the blame because she believes she is not alone. According to her, there had been worse cases God had forgiven and she sees no raison why she should not be forgiven and be blessed with a child.

> Ketchen: Yet, I drench my pillows with tears every night. But why should God be too generous to others? **My friend, Mpale had ten abortions. Yet, she had a son ten months after marriage.** (Shouts) God, why are you so unkind to me? Why can't you give each woman a child? Why? (Silence) (53).

We should take note here that Kechen's position and language are shaky. They reflect the working of her mind – a disturbed mind divided between being a heroine in 'we-ness' and therefore advocating the right of every woman (sinner or non-sinner) to have a child, and being a mind submerged in guilt and therefore being repentant and supplicatory. This duality makes the language obligative and inferential – obligative in that, the rhetorical questions are in the quasi imperative mood; and inferential in that, Kechen tends to infer rather than to impose. In her plight, her 'we-pity' takes precedence over her 'self-pity' so long as the quest for forgiveness is concerned. 'We-pity' therefore intrudes into her speech even though it is 'self-pity' which is the subject of discourse, hence the structure (I + We + I) of the outburst. This structure runs through the play to illustrate the contrast between the use of the pronoun 'I' in a state of doubt and subjugation, and its use in a state of victory and self-assertion. In the former, 'I' is used alternatively with 'we' to denote a broken self. In the latter, 'I' is used with no alternate component. This is the chest-striking, success-wielding 'I'. The 'I' thatdifferentiates the 'two' Kechens of the play – the wishful thinking highly obsessed Kechen that ties a pillow round her waist to feign pregnancy and the wish fulfilled Kechen that is actually pregnant and proudly tells her husband:

> Kechen: Darling, God has heard out prayer. Our baby is due in three months. I didn't want to raise false hopes. Now, I am very certain, so, we can rejoice.
> McCkete: Are you pulling my legs?
> Kechen: I am serious. Ask doc.

In defining metaphor, Henle (1965) says, "*Metaphor is a way of using the sense of something familiar or concrete to refer to something remote or unfamiliar*." Kechen uses a pillow as the tenor of her metaphor to concretize her obsession but it is not the pillow that she calls My Bundle of Joy, it is her pregnancy. Here again, we see how the use of the assertive 'I' (inflected to *my*, for the possessive case) in the title of the play reflects Kechen's disturbed mind in particular and human character in general. When we fail, someone or the gods take the blame, but when we succeed, we chest-pound ourselves for the success. The pregnancy is not *our* pregnancy, but *my* pregnancy – My Bundle of Joy.

2.3. *Arrah, 3rd Play*: One thing that thrills someone in Tanyi Tang's plays is the way she weaves controversy into day to day topics through the use of truncated metaphor, irony, sarcasm, compressed proverbs and anticlimax. The title of the play *Arrah*, though a one word title, is the axis round which the meaning of the play evolves. We can liken Arrah(the protagonist) to the moon with four phases. Each phase tells its own story. In the first phase (first quarter) we see her as the epitome of tradition. She is the lovely, intelligent, darling of the village and the

pride of her parents and relatives. They look on her as a communal commodity from which they would reap the benefits of their investments. This, she knows very well. She knows that her parents' demand for heavy bride-price would create ill will on her suitor's side if the suitor's family was unable to pay it, and on her parents' side, if she imposed on them to receive something below their expectation. She therefore tasks herself in helping her suitor assemble the bride-price. Secondly, she accepts to go through the traditional rituals of the fattening room and traditional wedding rites. Through her magnanimity, both parties are happy with the outcome. Throughout this phase, the language of each character is unmarked. The elders speak in customary proverbs and metaphors, and joke according to the norms of in-law-ship.

In the second phase (second quarter or half-moon), Arrah is fully implanted in marriage. She proves her worth by having a son whom her husband, out of joy, names Ettah, after his father (the name he himself had adopted in school); and soon after, she begets a daughter whom she too names Arrah, probably after the woman she herself was named in her kins group. This, we assume is the peak of their happiness. But this phase is rather implied. It is only alluded to in the third quarter – the point that marks the eclipse. At this point, the language changes from unmarked to mark. It is the language of what Henle (1965:180) describes as "…*to speak of hateful thoughts entrapping the soul in gloom*…" Gloom is a pervasive affair in that it influences one's entire mental outlook. This language is "contagious" since according to Lennard et al. (1972:170) psychotics reproduce facsimiles.

Language that is used to express entrapped bitterness can be as marked as that of an extroverted paranoiac. The speakers tend to lose polite usage and resort to spattering words about with little cohesion. Bitterness enshrouds even their simplest utterances.

Arrah: I thought you would join me for a couple of minutes (sigh). There is food on the table.

Ettah: I am not hungry.

Arrah: You are tired and you are not hungry. Is there anything wrong with the food that is prepared in this house? Okay, let's talk for a while.

Ettah: About what?

Arrah: Our marriage, future, children, parents, anything.

Ettah: (Sarcastically).We are husband and wife. You have a good job and we have two beautiful children. Your future is secured. Our parents, particularly yours have a bright future. They are not satisfied with the huge bride-price they received on you.

In the above, we observe that Ettah had been nursing bitter thoughts against his wife and her parents, and just needed an opportunity to vent them out. His bitterness, we can say, started from the time his in-laws demanded a heavy bride-price. To him, bride-price symbolized a sales deed and whether he paid it in its entirety himself or not, its payment terminated the mutual relationship between the sellers and the buyers. His in-laws were the sellers of their daughter and he and his people were the buyers. Two things surprise one here, (a) why he waited till his wife had had two children with him before having the guts to vent out his bitterness, (b) why he chose the time his parents and those of his wife were visiting to air out his bitterness.

We can assume that it was because that gave him the opportunity to talk to the two groups at the same time and thus show his determination to terminate the marriage. But there is much more to that. Ettah is viciously callous. He had been waging a psychological war on his wife and her parents and believing now that he had reduced them to emotional pulp, decided to use the moment when the husband/wife and host/guest dichotomy gave him full advantage over them. To achieve his aim, he selects the most cynical, stabbing, cold-blooded language that destroys even the most hardened nerves. His expression, "*I am not hungry…. About what?....We are husband and wife … Our parents, especially yours have a bright future. They are not satisfied with the huge bride-price they received on you*" can only find their full meaning intensity in the spoken form in which tone and snobbish gestures are the main determinants of meaning. He did not speak only to relieve himself of his feelings; he spoke to

awaken a response in his wife and her parents. And surely the responses came.

Arrah's parents decide to return home shamefaced and on reaching home their language was as bitter as that of Ettah against their daughter whom they thought had betrayed them. They thought Ettah's impudence was as a result of their daughter presenting herself to him as a begging-for-marriage woman. On her part, Arrah responded, "*What huge bride-price? … I contributed half of my bride-price, so stop it. Is that why you are very callous towards my parents*?"Henle (ibid: 83) describes this as, "*…implicit conditioned response …*" In other words, a response conditioned by excruciating internal dialogue – heart-rending, soul destroying internal soliloquy. This outburst came forcefully in the imperative mood thus revealing that Arrah was made of stronger stuff than her husband had imagined. Having been thus caught off guard, he contradicts his earlier impressions:"*Arrah is eating my heart out and I had to do everything to ensure that we marry in December"* (71), with the latter ones, "*Since I met you, it was as though I embraced a sea of trouble*…") (80).

Ettah's heartlessness reaches its peak when in fault-finding he tells Arrah, "*…if you are no longer interested in the marriage, nothing stops you from leaving. You haven't planted a coconut tree in this garden*." This untruth, compounded with his attempt to bury the truth about Arrah's contribution in the bride-price cannot be taken for granted. For sure, Ettah is going through a crisis most probably what Argyle (1969:361) calls ego-diffusion. According to him, "*A person is said to be in a state of ego-diffusion if he does not know who he is, or where he is going, i.e. if he has not chosen between or reconciled the diverse elements of motivation and self-image acquired in childhood; one extreme case of ego-diffusion is schizophrenia, where there is no central identity, and no long-term goals or persistent striving".* Another case, Marcia (1966) suggests, is*,"The playboy*".

Ettah's actions and language confirm the above. It is only a person with a muzzy mind who can contradict himself with such expressions as, "*I still love her very much, **but I can't tolerate her presence**. She is a good judge of people's characters. Why can't she pin-point her parents' fault? Why should she cling to them as though they did nothing wrong*?" (83). Fromthe onset his parents had reacted very strongly against what they considered was their son's inability to assimilate their cultural heritage. They gave him lessons on traditional moral values – "*My son, a father tells his son the truth. Whether she has proof or not, be true to yourself. She loves you and has confidence in you. What devil entered into you? Your mother and I will leave at dawn. We shall not set foot in your house until you and **my mother** settle this matter…*" (82)

We take note that Ettah's father refers to Arrah as his mother. This is because Ettah's son with Arrah is named after *Pa Ettah* who now sees himself in the child through a common name that tradition holds fuses the two into one (Twinity). Pa Ettah therefore calls his grandson's mother, mother. So long as he and Arrah are concerned, bride-price is not a sales deed but a special glue that glues unrelated hearts into a new union – a union that is nurtured by the mutual exchange of gifts and visits, a union in which the joys of childbirth and the sorrows of death are shared by the partners with equal intensity, a union which the church insists is for better or for worse. Yes, a union in which the participants build a unitary self that defies definition. In this play, Arrah and her parents-in-law go to all lengths to protect that unitary self. She does the unthinkable. She sacrifices in assembling her bride-price, and her parents-in-law in their turn outlaw their son by boycotting him until he reconciled with his wife.

Ettah does not share in those values. He has a different mental set and abides by it. So long as he is concerned, bride-price should terminate all forms of cordialities with in-laws because it establishes a buyer/seller dichotomy.

At this point, one would have thought that the focus of the play is the merits and demerits of bride-price, especially very heavy bride-price. But as the play progresses, one finds that the playwright makes Ettah's character the main focus. Ettah wants to divorce not only on grounds of heavy bride-price, but also on grounds of his wife being educated, being a career woman, not being able to cook, not taking care of the children and not dressing properly.

Furthermore, there is the element of woman liberation in Emilie's speech that also encumbers the play with too many themes.

That apart, our concern here is a psycholinguistic analysis of the play. We assume with a good degree of certainty, that the inclusion of the other themes is provoked by Ettah's state of mind and not the playwright's flaw. We agree with Marcia (1966) that Ettah exhibits traits of a playboy in his conversation with Tabi.

> Tabi: Emilie talked about divorce… What is it about?
>
> Ettah: Really! Well, I have been thinking about divorce. You see, Arrah is driving me mad.
>
> Tabi: Oh, no! Don't tell me you have started your old tricks on her. Already bored with her? This is marriage for Christ's sake. Have you found someone else? (9)

Here Tabi castrates him as a manic, a womanizer, and a trickster with delusions of grandeur. Through simple inference we know that Ettah does not in fact know who he is, were he is going and with whom and what he is dealing.

> Tabi:What do you want then?
>
> Ettah: Well, Arrah's style of dressing drives me mad. She can't turn a man on. She is obsessed with courtly love. I want something different. (98)

Tabi realizes that his friend does not make a difference between marriage and womanizing, and warns him, "*Be careful. You may regret*". And very soon, he (Ettah) regrets when Arrah decides to call it quit. He laments, "*How could she do this to me? I was merely joking*". (98). This does not show seriousness on Ettah's part. No right thinking man jokes with his marriage. Any person who does places it on the rocks and of course, Ettah has.

This is the last phase when the moon goes to sleep to rise again someday. Arrah like the moon has receded and so demonstrates that all along, she was simply behaving the loving mother and wife in her, rather than the helpless begging-for-marriage woman we might have taken her for, in (i) her helping Ettah assemble the bride-price and (ii) her constant pleas for reconciliation when things went wrong. Her note to Ettah tells it all. It contrasts the manic play-boy and purposeless adventurousness of Ettah with her well intentioned self-conscious protectionist decision to elope with the children.

> Ettah, I have discovered lately that we have become incompatible and the breakdown of constructive communication put our marriage in jeopardy. Don't hesitate to sue for a divorce when you want. I am psychologically, emotionally and physically prepared for it. The children will be fine.
>
> Yours sincerelyA.A

When marriage was her creed, she helped in assembling the bride-price. When she thought she could protect it from going to the rocks, she went all the way to subjugate herself by pleading for reconciliation. But when she realizes that Ettah was dragging her prestige in mud, she took the bull by the horns and eloped with the children. By so doing she challenged him to initiate a divorce if he so wished. In spite of her outrage, she avoids hurting him by assuring him of the safety of the children. Unlike him, she took her decision when she was composed, when intervention by second and third parties was impossible, and when her action would have the desired effect. This confronted Ettah with the reality of the situation he thought he could handle. But then, is he the braggart, the chest-striking personality he thought he was? Was he ready for the consequences of his actions and speech? No. He crumbles like a paper tiger.

This confirms the fact that he is a patient of ego-diffusion – a presumptuous manic who takes his wife for a toy with taunts like, "*I will make up for everything. She likes dirty weekends. I will arrange for one this weekend*" (98). Ethics requires restraint in disclosing to friends and relatives things relating to one's wife and children. But Ettah is devoid of ethics, and so reveals the most intimate aspects of his wife to a friend. His vulgarity, his impudence and above all, his disregard of human dignity makes every aspect of him obnoxious. But why this? Why does this play present us with two conflicting metaphors? The answer lies in the fact that Arrah and Ettah are both children of peasants from the same tribe, who are presumably conversant with their traditions and both are university graduates. Both are working and have a salary. But though they have the same level of

education, they react differently to their traditional values because education had influenced them differently. Arrah advocates blending traditional and modern philosophies to forge a balance, but Ettah is opposed to any such blending. In the new setup, a setup she believes requires patience and understanding; she exhibits tolerance and extends a helping hand to make things work. As such, her language is apologetic where she thinks her partner considers her wrong, motherly where she thinks she has to lead, but firm and determined when her personality is at stake.

Ettah's language is sarcastic,inconsistent, emotive, and self-contradictory. Although the syntax gives no cause for concern, the sentences are characteristically short to reflect the spluttering of a manic. The play is anticlimactic as it moves from great joy to great sorrow, from love to hate and from hopefulness to imminent divorce**.** It can be compressed into proverbs, e.g. all that glitters is not gold; look before you leap; the sooner hot the sooner cold; a golden ring on a pig's nose, etc. In like manner, it can be condensed into similes, e.g. as unlucky as Arrah; as impudent as Ettah, etc. The play is also ironical. A girl who, for the first time participates in assembling her bride-price, is spited by the very husband she so much admired. Arrah is thus a truncated metaphor of all such situations.

In-as-much as the playwright would have liked the primary message of the play to be drawn from a debate on the merits and demerits of bride-price, the overwhelming emphasis on Ettah's discomposure vis-à-vis his traditional values puts to question his educational achievements; not only him, but all those with 'black skins' and 'white minds'. In this light, Ettah too is a truncated metaphor because the name Ettah is the tenor of the metaphor and his education (white mind) is the vehicle embedded in the tenor. Any young man who behaves in like manner in due course can be called Ettah. E.g. He is as ungrateful as Ettah (simile). He is Ettah (metaphor). Furthermore, because the play can be viewed as an extended metaphor of the educated black African man (especially the leader) who does not know who he is, or where he is going, because he does not have a central identity to guide him on how to handle his 'mulatto' situation makes the secondary message primary.

2.4. ***Honey-Gardens*, 4th Play:** In her innocence, Rozeybelle names their house Honey-Garden to reflect the expected height of their happiness when their father returns from abroad where he was studying. But upon his return, Honey-Garden becomes a nightmare that leads to the death of their mother and the insanity of their father. This psycho-dramatic tragedy can only be fully understood if one delves into Dell H. Hymes' (op. cit) sociolinguistic norms of who speaks what language to whom, where, why, when, and about what?

The play opens with the euphoria of the people of mixed ethnic groups (family and neighbours in Yaounde) congratulating Besong for obtaining a Commonwealth scholarship to do an M.A. in Agriculture in Canada. His enhanced status and the expectation of further enhancement upon his return, make his admirers shower him with love and respect in wishing him well. Each well-wisher uses the occasion to invest in the envisaged communal property Besong would become upon his return.

Di, his wife is probably of primary or secondary school level. As such, she has to attend evening classes in order to do secretariat studies. She is an exquisitely beautiful house-wife and mother of two lovely children. Before she gets employed as secretary, she makes a living from selling food. Her husband, conscious of several things upon his return, sends her money to build their own house, to stop selling food and to return to school. In spite of that she continuous to sell the food and carry on with her evening classes. Before her husband returns, she completes the course and she is employed as secretary.

The children, Smart and Rozeybelle are smart, intelligent and very lively. They are attached to their parents through physical and emotional touch. Before their father's departure, they converse freely with both parents. Their father's departure creates a vacuum which their mother and her sister-in-law, Tanya, try to fill. But after five years of deprivation of their father's physical presence, they exhibit signs of anxiety and depression.

Distance and time create insurmountable barriers between family members and may reduce the degree of intimacy between them. But where distance and time are viewed with prospects of benefits, there is always a deliberate attempt to fight against the consequences. Where the reverse is the case, there is little attempt to fight the consequences. For instance, a woman whose husband goes gold mining is more likely to observe the norms of fidelity than the one whose husband is imprisoned in a distant place for a long time. To fight the consequences of distance and time entails sacrifices at different social and emotional levels. Social and emotional sacrifices affect behaviour and language because the suppressed emotions take possession of the mind. A mind possessed, moves language from the ordinary to the marked.

2.4.1. The children's language: The language of the children can be divided into two parts – the unmarked, when the children are exposed to the presence of both parents, and some way into the absence of their father, when the in-built tension reaches its peak. At this time the children discuss frivolities like gifts, flowers, love, etc. On the other hand, their language becomes marked with emotions when prolonged deprivation of physical paternal love and touch generates explosive tension in them.

Argyle M. (1969:287) stresses the importance of physical presence complemented with touch. He says, "*Touching seems to have a primitive significance of heightened intimacy, and it produces increased emotional arousal*". Children who have been pampered the way the Besong children have been are most affected by prolonged deprivation of touching; hence the near rebellion in Rozeybelle.

> Rozeybelle: Five years! Smart, this is too much. When will **he** return?
> Smart: Who?
> Rozeybelle: Daddy, who else?
> Smart: Don't shout. Do you want mummy to start crying?
> Rozeybelle: But why does mummy always shed tears when we mention daddy's name? Is daddy gone forever? .... I don't want clothes or shoes. I want daddy. (Starts crying) (108).

Note here that Rozeybelle's entrapped emotions get released in an exclamation. This is followed by her use of the pronoun 'he' instead of the noun 'daddy'. The use of 'he' when daddy is an implicit referent shows the intensity of her emotions. It shows rejection. In this case, it is not total rejection but a temporary one, one derived from a sudden outburst of 'insanity' – a type of paranoiac state. Unconsciously the mind comes back to normal, and she uses 'daddy' with an emphatic 'who else' to demonstrate unalloyed reconciliation with herself. But like the speech of all psychotics, there is the unavoidable forward and backward movement characterized by self-contradiction. "*Butwhy does mummy always shed tears when we mention daddy's name? Is daddy gone forever?"* Rozeybelle herself is shedding tears and there is the contradiction.

We should also take note of the reversal of values. "*I don't want clothes or shoes. I want my daddy …. I don't want a car. I want my daddy."* Clothes, shoes and car, money can buy. But money cannot buy a daddy. All that constituted the expected heightened joy upon Besong's return is thrown overboard. The message is clear. It is rendered in short simple but highly emotive sentences, reinforced with crying. In spite of Smart's apparent composure, he too is in the web. He says on the phone, *"Daddy we want to see you*". (110)

Besong phoned that he would be returning. The children and their mother are ready for a number of activities – preparing food, going to the airport, cuddling, caressing, kissing, being carried, rocked, tickled and fondled by papa/hussy.According to Argyle M. (ibid), when an individual is prepared for action, he/she develops an increase in heart-beat, rate of breathing, blood pressure, muscle tension, and skin temperature, all because of anxiety. Considering therefore that there are two parties that are preparing for these actions (Besong on the one hand, and his children and wife on the other), we expect them to experience the same biological changes in their bodies. We expect them to predict and thus maximize each other's wish-fulfillment in speech and action or what Argyle M. (op cit.) calls "accessibility and disclosure". Physical accessibility refers to the physical closeness a person permits others to have with him/her, and disclosure refers to

the secrets a person can reveal about himself to others.

The phone call is not explicit. It casts doubts on the where and the when of the release of tension. Besong's return is not a simple return but one charged with the desire to release tension. Rozeybelle, the most concerned, senses something faulty in the telephone call, faulty to a point that could render the whole affair anticlimactic. In reaction, she says, "*Daddy didn't mention when and where the plane will land, why*?" Her mother replies, "*Daddy was too brief and forgot to mention the precise airport*." The phone rings again and Besong further confuses the issue. "*Hi, Di, I will not reach Honey-Garden today. The plane will be stopping in France. I will see you tomorrow at 10 a.m*…."

This strikes an ominous note which suggests that Besong does not share in the family's emotional experience and would render his homecoming anticlimactic. For one thing, he appears not to want an airport welcome since he refuses to mention the airport in which he will land; or an open welcome since he does not indicate how he would get to Honey-Garden. Presumably he wants to surprise his family by just strolling into Honey-Garden and having a few casual hugs. This strategy cannot be dismissed as irrelevant. It is pregnant with speculative meaning because it increases anxiety-based tension in his wife and children.

2.4.2. Di's language: Di's language can be divided into three parts – the unmarked, when Besong's success in obtaining the scholarship and going abroad does not go beyond the ordinary. At the time, her language is natural;but when Besong's stay is prolonged beyond expectation, her actions and language start being marked. She, like the children, rejects property in favour of the physical presence of her husband. In her letter to him she says, "*Bi, the children miss you a lot. We don't want cars and property. We have a small beautiful house. Will you come? I am the governor's private secretary. We love you very much. It's your Di, Smart and Rozeybelle*." (109).

We note here that her language is jerky. It is not coherent because it reflects her state of mind – a mind divided between hope and no hope. This makes her develop a consoling mechanism, a sort of self-delusive mechanism that helps her adjust herself (in action and language) with every bar of frustration.

> DI: We won't see him today.
> Rozeybelle: When?
> Di: Tomorrow. It's not his fault. The plane will stop in France for a couple of hours. (Rozeybelle sighs and leave). (Di clings to the phone and kisses it several times. She goes to her bedroom and lies on her bed). I spend the entire day cleaning-up and making sure that everything was in order. What a shame! (Picks up Bi's T-shirt and puts it on). It smells like him. I will wear this T-shirt until I set eyes on him. I will chant the song he likes most. (She falls asleep while chanting the song) (111).

The utterance above is marked by defense/counter-defense, blame/counter-blame to reflect the pathetic hope/no-hope situation. But actions speak louder than words. Di's obsession reaches a manic state and she begins to see and feel Besong in objects – telephone and T-shirt. A T-shirt that Besong has not worn for five years cannot retain his scent. But, under the manic spell, she believes it does, and so wears it; not as a dress but as a replacement of Besong's touch. This gives her a psychological degree of arousal, which, being further re-enforced with a song sends her to sleep exactly as cuddling and rocking (touch) send a child to sleep.

If we term the wearing of the T-shirt 'touch by indirectness' and consider her determination to wear it until it is replaced by the real Besong's touch ("*I will wear this T-shirt until I set eyes on him*") then we can predict the furnace in her. Di is a living emotional volcano completely at the mercy of Besong. In uttering the words above and wearing the T-shirt, she blends utterance and action. Her language moves from the constrative to the performative – a doing and saying or a saying and doing situation (Austin: 1955). Although Besong surprises the family by stealthily entering Honey-Garden, upon his return, Di expects the performative.

> Di: Why don't you kiss me? I have been waiting for this moment.
> Besong: I know, but you look like an angel and I am afraid to…

Di: Afraid of what? Come on, don't be ridiculous.

Besong: No Di, you look too good to be touched, to be contaminated.

Di: But it's all for you. For you. (112).

We take note of Di's use of the imperative mood to urge Besong to act instead of staring at her. Her question, "*Why don't you kiss me*?" is as emphatic as, "*Kiss me*" – a command for action. The rest of her utterances are equally emphatic – "*Afraid of what? Come on, don't be ridiculous*". Here Di prefers action to words. And when Besong belatedly sweeps her off the ground to hug her, she buries her head in his chest. Upon the arrival of the children, she commands him once more on what to do, "*Say nothing, do nothing, just continue holding us*". The slip of the tongue (do nothing) is very significant because it shows that Di's speech is influenced by her state of mind.

According to Elinor Keenan, there are three types of imperative mood – active imperative, passive imperative and circumstantial imperative. We see here that when Di is expecting Besong's action, she uses the active imperative. But when he delays the action and probably comes on lamely, she unconsciously switches from the active imperative to the circumstantial imperative. She sounds apologetic, self-accusing, and thus betrays a complex. "*What shall I do? This night I will wear a short transparent night dress. I will attach a rose on my hair. What shall I do? … My world is wrecked*" (112).

In reproaching her appearance and her love-making capabilities as the causes of Besong's non-arousal, Di compares herself with imaginary Besong's white girlfriends, and develops an inferiority complex which further complicates her situation and affects her language. This aspect of inferiority complex is implicitly introduced right at the beginning of the play. In the shadows of the mind is a superior husband (awarded a highly esteemed scholarship to study in a superior country where he would meet superior white women with whom he could relate without qualms) leaving an inferior wife behind (in an inferior country where she had no right to relate with inferior black men; where, to earn a living she had to do the inferior job of selling food and doing inferior evening studies to attain the inferior post of Governor's secretary – a post that would make her remain an inferior black woman expecting a superior husband – transfigured from black to white by education in the white man's country).

The bedrock of all this is Di's marriage at the age of thirteen. Marriage at that tender age (an age Hughes A.G. et al (1962) call the formative years of character and personality or what we may call the foundation years of self-identity), can be described as a rape on her mind. From the time she gets married, she loses the possibility of developing her selfhood. She becomes the double of Besong and lives explicitly and implicitly as Besong. In order words, Besong becomes the mirror through which she evaluates her being.

The substratum determines her attitude toward him. She dreads offending him. Instead of being angry and reactionary for being deprived of the right to sexual satisfaction, she pleads with her tormentor:

Di:Please accompany me to the office… I will be alone in the office (sighs).

Besong: Don't sigh. Eat something before we leave.

Di:I am not hungry. Perhaps we should … purchase fruits.

Besong: Alright, let's go.

Di:Darling, I want you to know that I still love you very much and I envy the girl who has stolen you from me. I am contemplating becoming a nun (p. 116).

Di's language is marked by the niceties please, perhaps, darling, to soften the harshness of the situation and to reveal her helplessness. She loses appetite and contemplates abandoning her sex life because of the loss of Bi. Her sex life is Bi, and nobody else. She goes on to tell her sister-in-law, "*Sis, Bi hasn't touched me since he returned from overseas. Perhaps, I have offended him…. Please help*."

We should take note that Di is suffering from two complicated mental processes Sigmund Freud (ibid: 111) calls de-realization and depersonalization. De-realization is, according to him, the rejection of reality – refusing to accept a fact because a current happening does not reflect previous experience. Depersonalization he says is,

when the sufferer considers that a piece of his or her own self is strange to him/her. Di cannot reconcile the past and the present in her relating with Besong with whom she had had two children and so refuses to admit the truth about the present with, "*Darling I want you to know that I still love you… I envy the girl who has stolen you from me*". She is strange to herself and so resorts to escapism, "*I am contemplating becoming a nun*" (116).

Di is not snubbing Besong in saying, "*I am not hungry… I am contemplating becoming a nun*". She is simply expressing untruths because of the influence of de-realization and depersonalization. The Bible says, "… *For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks*". (Matthew 12:34). The abundance of Di's heart is untruth – the by-product of de-realization and depersonalization. And when the truth of Tanya's words strikes the untruth, Di collapses.

> Tanya: Bi was determined to remain faithful to you. His lovers and bedmates were pornographic films, whisky and champagne.
> Di: So?
> Tanya: They cost him his manhood….
> Di: What! Tell me that you are joking. Tell me that it's not true. Tell me that it is a dream. No, it can't be true; it can't be (collapses) (121).

Di's collapse is a sign of intense disbelief (de-realization) and mourning for the loss of the sexual prowess of someone she loves. Freud (op cit.) says man possesses the capacity to love – the libido, "*which in the earliest stages of development is directed toward our ego. Later …this libido is diverted from the ego on to objects (person)… which are taken into our ego. If the objects are destroyed… our capacity for love is once more liberated; and it can then either take other objects instead or can temporarily return to the ego*". Di's case is a sad one inthis respect. Although her libido, bereft of Bi's sexuality still clings to him with great intensity, it takes another object (person) thereby having split loyalty.

> Di: I find myself trapped in my little world …
> Bi: Said condoms are not the best. But I have been relying on them. What if they disappoint me? … Should I end this relationship? I have been very discreet. But for how long shall I continue to keep the secret? He is too nice, and what he gives me is sweeter that what Honey-Garden offers. It is the greatest thing that God created…(125)

Di's language here is that of a depersonalized victim. Sigmund Freud (ibid: 111) says, "*Depersonalization leads us to the extraordinary condition of 'double conscience' which is more correctly described as 'split' personality*". Di is suffering from double conscience. She is split between being the double of Besong and suffering the consequences of his impotence; and being herself and enjoying the full rights of her sexuality. She chooses the middle way, and becomes unfaithful to both Besong and herself. Her split personality ushers in her doom. Unable to serve two masters openly she resorts to secrecy and sacrifices herself. She dies in an attempt to commit abortion.

2.4.3. Besong's Language: When we meet Besong for the first time in the play, we find a reticent, loving father being congratulated for having won a scholarship to study abroad. He reacts by promising to send his children beautiful clothes; and confiding in his sister, his concern for his young wife he is about to leave behind. We see a well-intentioned gentleman leave his family because of the desire to further his studies for the purpose of improving their lot. And once he has the opportunity, he sends money to his wife to buy a piece of land, to build a house and to abandon her degrading job of selling food, so as for her to go to school to improve her personality. All through this stage of the play, Besong's language is unmarked. It is the language for the expression of shared values of love, sincerity and truth and the expectation of desired responses from his family members. For example, on page 105-106, Smart reads the letter he has sent. It reads, "*Di, how are you and our kids? … I am very lonely… I miss all of you. Kiss the kids for me. With all my love.Yours Bi.*"

Here we have a situation in which we can draw inferences about the truth of the words *lonely, miss, kiss, love* and *your* vis-à-visBesong and his family members. So long as this particular situation is concerned, the words have favoured inferential

connotations. The words *lonely* and *miss* inspire pity for the sufferer and a longing for reunification. The words *kiss* and *love* inspire a desire for tender touch. The word *your,*denotes possession. Any addressor, who uses these words to communicate his state to an addressee, believes or wishes his addressee to share in his state. If his addressee shares in his state, the words automatically evoke a sense of action to end the undesired situation. This is the natural and logical reaction the Besong family exhibits upon their reception of the letter. Although at first the joy of having their own house overshadowed the desire for Besong's return, the desire is still primary. It is temporarily shelved as a sacrifice for the expected bliss.

But the sacrifice cannot go on indefinitely. The children's agitation forces their mother to write to Besong, and in response he phones:

Smart*Daddy, it's Smart. How are you? We want to see you.*

Voice:*I am longing to see you too…*

Di: (To Smart) Can I talk to him?

Smart: Yes, mummy.

Di: Hi, darling, how are you?

Voice:Fine. I received your letter but I was extremely busy. My flight is on Saturday.I will be there at 7 p.m. Look after yourself and the children until then, bye.

Di: Which Saturday? Tomorrow?

Voice: Yes, tomorrow. I love you (110)

The tone and wording of the phone conversation differ from those of the letter. They show that Besong and Di are now functioning at different emotional frequencies. Lewis J. (1969:197) says, "*One theory of the origin of speech maintains that speech came into existence in conjunction with the aid of implements… The tool creates speech, and speech, beca*use *word symbols have a meaning, produced the forming of clear conceptions and logical thought".* If we can formulate our reasoning on the basis of this, we may approach the problem between Besong and Di with a better understanding. We can say a healthy body creates affective speech, because affective word symbols produce clear conceptions and logical demands of the body. Besong's body is not healthy and therefore it cannot create affective speech – hence his failure to reciprocate Di's "*darling"* with another endearing word. This makes his speech rather flat, telegram-like, and marked with lapses in thought. He soon realizes a defect in his language, and so tries to amend with a belated nicety – "*I love you".* These are after-thought interjections which characterize the speech of a victim of depersonalization.

Besong's education and personality have submerged in his loss of manhood. His wife sees him in the light he doesn't see himself (superior being versus husk respectively); and he sees his wife in the light she doesn't see herself (angel versus inferior being respectively). Di describes him as: "*My energetic, challenging and debonair husband; second to none…" (110).* And Besong hails her: "*No, Di, you look too good to be touched, to be contaminated" (*112). So long as each of them has that high positive impression about the other, none can take the bold step of telling the other the truth and calling it quit. Each of them is therefore a prisoner of their conscience. Tanya tells Besong, "*…She (Di) ought to know the truth".* And Besong responds, "*Know the truth? You must be joking. She will abandon me". (*123) And Di reacts to a phone call from her boyfriend, "*…It must be him. What does he want? He is not supposed to phone Honey-Gardens".* (126).

Besong and Di are therefore living in two worlds contrary to what the Bible says about marriage. It says, "*…Have you not read that he who made them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall be one'…?"* (Mathew 19:4-5).Besong and Di are not one, emotionally, physically and mentally. They don't share in each other's intimacy and this, of course, is their undoing. Although Besong knows that he is impotent, he still wants to hold his wife hostage by expecting fidelity from her. And although his wife knows that she has become unfaithful, she impresses on him that she is faithful.

Language expressing falsehood cannot be logical. And so, when Di says, "*Bi, please phone the doctor. I am dying"* (127), the words *Bi* and *please* function out of place. They give the wrong signals or meaning to the interpreter. Bi is the abbreviation form of Besong. Bi is more melodious and has high suggestive power of sex-love. Di prefers to use it

because it is more romantic and pleasing than Besong. But what sex-love does it suggest here at this given time in the life of the couple? *Please* is a nicety (of politeness) mostly used in agreeable situations. Here it is used in an un-agreeable situation so, what does it signify? In like manner, Besong asks in the hospital, "*What is wrong with my wife?...*and later exclaims*, "My Di was pregnant?"*. In this case too, the words *my, wife* and *Di* lose their affective significance because they don't signify what they are supposed to signify. *My,* is a possessive pronoun. *Wife* is one's better half. But can Besong claim possession of a wife with whom he does not have shared emotional, sexual and mental intimacy? Di is the abbreviation form of either darling, Debora or any other name beginning with letter D. Di should be more melodious and more romantic than any of the names and so at the beginning of the play it is more preferred. But towards the end of the play and at the end, does it still signify what it was supposed to signify?

Conclusion

For sure, both Bi and Di are expressing untruth in using false significatum. A couple that expresses untruths about themselves cannot be considered normal because, 'out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks'. Besong and Di are patients – each of them goes through different stages of mental disorder – depression, manic states, obsession, anxiety, neurosis, traumatic stress, paranoia and schizophrenia. Each of these states influences the language of the patient phonologically, grammatically, semantically and structurally.

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