

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

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## 6.0. SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

Language is a complex social phenomenon. It is an instrument of communication and a medium for expressing individual ideas. It is also a means of establishing and maintaining social relationship. As a social convention, language pre-supposes a community. It gives a sense of collective identity to its speakers and thereby holds them together as the members of the same community. Language is rule-governed; it is constructed from a limited number of elements, though there are infinite number of sentences. Furthermore, a language is extremely adaptable. It is organic in the sense that it undergoes constant change to meet the needs of the situation. A language changes mainly in three different ways. First, it changes over a period of time in the process of its transmission from one period of time to another. Second, language changes over geographical boundaries when it is transplanted from the place of its origin to a different country. Such changes give rise to different varieties. Third, language also changes across social classes. Such changes, introduced by class-distinction, distinguish between the upper-class and the lower-class languages. Moreover, they differentiate one register or occupational

variety from another. In a language contact situation or in a multi-lingual nation, an individual learns a language or languages other than his mother tongue. An individual is bilingual if he uses two languages; he is multi-lingual if he uses more than two languages. A bilingual or multi-lingual uses different languages in different specific situations.

Language is intrinsically multi-functional. It is used to serve a variety of different activities. One such language activity is creative writing. In literature, language is used as a medium of creative self-expression. Whatever a literary artist does, he does in and through language. Literature, thus, demands a distinctive use of language. It involves many shades of language complexity and sophistication. Accordingly, a great work of literature is often produced in the writer's native language — a medium in which he is most at ease. But in some special situations, attempts have been made to use a non-native language for creative purposes. There are three broad categories of non-native variety of creative writing. These are: creative writing in a non-native but common cultural language, such as the works of Chaucer and Bacon in Latin; creative writing in the adopted non-native language, for instance, the work of immigrants like Conrad (in English) and Ionesco (in French); and finally, the group creative writing in a non-native colonial language, such as in English or

French by the non-native users of the language from the erstwhile colonies. It is this last category of creative writing which is termed 'contact literature' for its sociolinguistic importance. Indian writing in English and Nigerian writing in English are two major constituents of non-native variety of creative writing in English.

The two countries — India and Nigeria are similar in some respects and dissimilar in others. Both the countries have passed through similar stages in their processes of being colonized. In both the countries creative writings in English are legacies of English education introduced during the British rule. Both are multi-lingual countries where English plays important roles as a link-language.

Creative writers in English in India as well as in Nigeria face a somewhat similar situation. They use English as a means of expressing their own ways of life and experience. They try to convey their own spirit in a language which is not their own. In such attempts, they face some peculiar problems in handling the non-native language. To overcome the problems, they have to discover and exploit new resources in the adopted medium. In other words, they are to remake the borrowed language into a fit medium of their creative imagination.

The way these non-native writers exploit the adopted

medium for their peculiar needs and purposes seems to be an interesting area of investigation. The present study is an attempt at examining the ways in which two non-native writers — one from India and the other from Nigeria — have used English in their novels and short stories. The writers are Raja Rao from India and Chinua Achebe from Nigeria.

It thus appears that it is a comparative stylistic analysis of the two writers' English. What now remains to be said is, in what sense the term style has been used here.

Style is an elusive concept. There are many different uses of the term. As a critical concept, it has been the focus of attention since the days of Aristotle. Over the centuries, critics, belonging to different schools of thought, have tried to interpret style from various perspectives. The dualists, for instance, view style as the dress of thought. To them, style is the form which is separable from the content or subject-matter. The monists, on the contrary, hold that form and content are inseparable. To them, style is the meaning itself. Apart from these two rivalling concepts, there are some other views of style. The different approaches to style may be placed under seven broad categories. These are: (i) style as the dress of thought; (ii) style as the meaning itself, (iii) style as a reflection of the personality; (iv) style as the choice between alternative expressions; (v) style as deviations from the norm;

(vi) style as inter-sentence cohesion and (vii) style as a set of collective characteristics.

In the present study, style has been viewed as a writer's creative exploitation of the linguistic resources; his use of linguistic competence in actual verbal performance. It is, in fact, the realization of language in a text.

Traditional study of style has been impressionistic and evaluative. In their description of styles, literary critics have used aesthetic terms, such as 'curt', 'urbane', 'lucid', 'exuberant', and 'grand' which are not directly relatable to linguistic facts. In this tradition, style has been viewed as subservient to wider aesthetic purposes. Literary scholars' impressions of style are largely intuitive. Such impressions, often, lack an objective base, a quantitative confirmation. As a reaction to this subjective approach, gradually there has emerged a tendency towards studying style more objectively. The development of linguistics as a distinct discipline has facilitated such an objective study of style which has come to be known as 'stylistics'. Stylistics, thus, is a linguistic study of style based on a relatively objective approach. It provides observable facts to varify statements made about style and thereby restrains a literary critic from hurrying to subjective judgements.

Early attempts in the field of stylistic analysis mainly concern poetry. The language of fiction seems to have received comparatively little attention. The main consideration for this is perhaps the assumption that fiction is more a matter of plot, structure and character than of words and sentences. However, some critics have stressed the linguistic study of fiction. According to them, fiction too, like poetry, is essentially a language act. So fiction also deserves the same kind of rigorous analysis which is normally reserved for poetry. On the basis of such theoretical discussion, a few serious attempts have already been made to study fictional language. By now, it has of course become an established fact that the language of fiction, like that of poetry, certainly rewards critical attention.

The present study has been an attempt at analysing fictional language. It is an empirical study. The primary aim of the study has been to find out in what respects, the two writers of fiction differ from each other and in what respects they are similar in their use of English. A secondary aim has been to see which of the two writers displays a greater variation in the use of English within his own works and at what levels of analysis. The study was undertaken with the assumption that the two writers, hailing from two different literary traditions, would differ

significantly from each other in certain respects in their use of English and would also display similar tendencies in others.

The selection of the two writers was dictated mainly by their representativeness and stylistic innovativeness. Raja Rao is regarded as the most significant Indian novelist writing in the English language today. Achebe is considered to be Nigeria's best-known writer of fiction in English. Both are committed writers. While Raja Rao is deeply rooted in India, Achebe is preoccupied in his writing with Nigeria. Both are fully aware of the intrinsic problems encountered in the process of creative writing in a non-native language. They have manipulated the resources of the adopted language in their own way to make it an effective means of their creative self-expression. Both are conscious artists having their own views about style. Raja Rao believes in the dictum that style is the man himself. A serious craftsman, Achebe also believes in the integrity of words, and disciplines himself not only to write regularly but to write well.

The present study has been confined to five books each by Raja Rao and Chinua Achebe. The five books comprise four novels and one collection of short stories. Ten per cent pages from these books were then randomly selected for linguistic description. The size of Raja Rao's

sample thus came to 1970 sentences and that of Achebe's came to 1891 sentences.

From the samples of the two writers, only those linguistic features were examined which were found to be stylistically significant. In the absence of any commonly agreed framework, a subjective method known as the heuristic notions of style-markers, was followed in selecting the linguistic features. The different linguistic aspects considered are: sentence length, sentence types, clause length, clause types, structure of nominal groups, verb-verbal ratio, type-token ratio, lexical contextualization, inter-sentence cohesion and some other aspects of style. The grammatical framework followed does not wholly conform to any particular model. Instead, an eclectic model has been formulated incorporating elements from traditional grammar, transformational grammar, and Halliday's — Scale and Category Grammar. Such an eclectic model has provided descriptive adequacy for the study of the selected linguistic features.

The observations made from the description of Raja Rao's and Achebe's English have been presented with their percentages in tables. Percentages have also been represented with the help of graphs. The observations have been further analysed using relevant statistical techniques, such as mean, standard deviation and Chi-square tests.

### 6.1. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

It has been observed that though one can find similarities, one can also find essential differences between the two writers' use of English. The findings of the present study sustain some of the assumptions and refute others. From the analysis of the two writers' English, the following tentative conclusions can be reached.

Raja Rao's English is significantly different from Achebe's English in respect of sentence length. The average sentence length in Raja Rao's English is longer than that in Achebe's English. Moreover, Raja Rao's English, compared to Achebe's, is more varied in sentence length.

The two writers' English also differ with regard to sentence typology. Raja Rao's English, compared to Achebe's, is characterized by a higher percentage of compound-complex sentences, whereas Achebe's English, compared to Raja Rao's, is characterized by a higher percentage of complex sentences. Overall, Raja Rao's English exhibits a greater variation than Achebe's in respect of sentence typology.

The average clause in Achebe's English is longer than that in Raja Rao's English. The two writers' English are similar in respect of percentage distribution of independent

and dependent clauses. They, however, differ with regard to different types of dependent clauses. Further, Achebe's English, compared to Raja Rao's, is characterized by a higher percentage of nominalized clauses. The two writers' English are also different in respect of level of subordination. Overall, with regard to different types of dependent clauses, the English of Raja Rao is more varied than that of Achebe.

The English of Raja Rao differs from that of Achebe in respect of the structure of nominal group. Raja Rao's English, compared to Achebe's, contains a higher percentage of simple nominal group. Overall, Raja Rao's English exhibits a greater variation than Achebe's as regards the structure of nominal group. Furthermore, the English of Raja Rao, compared to that of Achebe, is characterized by a higher verb-verbal ratio.

Again, Raja Rao's English differs from Achebe's with regard to the choices of vocabulary. While Raja Rao's English shows greater varieties in the choices of adjectives and prepositions, Achebe's English exhibits greater varieties in the choices of nouns, verbs, adverbs and conjunctions. Besides, the English of Raja Rao contains a higher proportion of contextual lexical items than that of Achebe.

The two writers' English contain almost equal number of sentences with connectives. Nevertheless, they differ with

regard to different types of connectives. The English of Raja Rao, compared to that of Achebe, is characterized by the use of more conjunctive and lexical connectives. On the other hand, Achebe's English, compared to Raja Rao's, contains a higher percentage of referential connectives.

Raja Rao's English is further distinctive in the use of devices, such as parenthesis, parallelism, repetition and inversion. On the other hand, Achebe's English, unlike Raja Rao's, is characterized by the use of cleft construction.

## 6.2. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

It is to be mentioned here that any empirical study can hardly claim to be exhaustive. No study can pretend to say the last word about the problem investigated. The present study also is not an exception. It is only a sample study and certainly it has not exhausted the possibilities of discovering the similarities and differences between Raja Rao's and Chinua Achebe's English. Nothing, for instance, has been said about phonetic aspect, symbolic dimension and other para-linguistic affective devices.

It is primarily a study of syntax. Although inter-sentence cohesion has been discussed, in brief, the samples have not been analysed from the point of view of discourse analysis. Moreover, it is an analysis of the English of only two writers, one each from India and Nigeria. So on

the basis of the findings of this study, it is difficult to draw some generalized conclusions about the language of Indian writing in English and Nigerian writing in English.

### 6.3. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

It is hoped that, inspite of its limitations, the present study will encourage and stimulate further researches in this area of comparative stylistic analysis of fiction. Based on the present study, a few suggestions could be made here.

The present study is an exercise in stylistics. It shows that it is possible to approach style objectively and to analyse literary texts with the help of linguistic theories. The study, thus, points to the fact that linguistics can make positive contribution to the study of literature. This study also suggests that computer and Statistics can be successfully used in the quantitative analysis of style.

This sample study can be replicated with more broad-based samples in order to widen the scope. The study may be supplemented by undertaking further researches in this area. Such researches would cover aspects which have not been explored here. For instance, studies may be undertaken to examine nominal-verbal ratio, adjective-verb quotients, and different types of transformations.

Further, studies may be undertaken to find out stylistic differences between the native and the non-native varieties of creative writing in English. Winters (1981) has conducted one such study taking Nigerian and Western controls. Similar studies may be conducted taking Indian controls on one side and Western controls (including British and American novelists), on the other.

Stylistic studies of different non-native varieties of English may also be conducted taking specimens from various sources, such as creative writing, science reports, newspaper features and editorials, biographies and textbooks. Such studies would reveal the characteristic features of different non-native varieties of English.

Studies may also be undertaken to analyse styles of a group of non-native writers in English from different South-Asian and African countries. Such studies would show the peculiarities of different non-native varieties of English.

Further studies may be undertaken to examine the use of the English language by different Indian writers in English. Such studies would be useful in finding out the linguistic features that characterize Indian English.