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- Casali, R. 2008. ATR harmony in African languages. *Language and Linguistics Compass* 2/3: 496–549.
- De Korne, H. 2007. The pedagogical potential of multimedia dictionaries. Lessons from a community dictionary project. The 14th annual stabilizing indigenous language symposium in Michigan on 1-3 June 2007. Accessed on 1 February 2012. Consultable à <http://jan.ucc.nau.edu/~jar/ILR/ILR-II.pdf>.

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LANGUES, LETTRES

A Study Of Semantic Roles in two Excerpts From Amma Darko's *Faceless*

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Abstract

The paper closely examines semantic roles in two extracts taken from Amma Darko's Faceless to uncover both the writer's ideological perspectives and the different underlying meanings hidden between lines in the selected passages. To reach this aim, the selection of the extracts has been based on the criterion that they yield to the study in hand. Moreover, the research has appealed to both the quantitative and the qualitative methods. To be more specific, practical statistics of the technical analysis data carried out have been drawn up and findings have been interpreted as well, following both above mentioned methods respectively. The results of the findings have, among others, revealed that semantic roles also referred to as thematic roles are unquestionable linguistic tools for deep meanings making in written language. A glance at the interpretation section tells more about this. Furthermore the study has uncovered that Amma Darko's, Faceless is, for one, directed at raising African families' consciousness for better social, material and financial living condition. Ultimately, the scholarship opens up to such further research horizons as discourse-semantic analysis, lexico-grammatical analysis, and register analysis.

Key-words: *semantic-roles; participant, thematic grid, prototype*

Résumé

Cet article examine de près les rôles sémantiques dans deux extraits de textes tirés du roman Faceless d'Amma Darko, dans le but de révéler les perspectives idéologiques de la romancière et les différentes significations sous-jacentes cachées entre les lignes des passages sélectionnés. Pour atteindre cet objectif, la sélection des extraits de textes a été basée sur le critère qu'ils cèdent à l'étude en cours. De plus, la recherche a fait appel à la fois aux méthodes quantitatives et qualitatives. Pour être plus précis, des statistiques pratiques des données d'analyses techniques effectuées ont été établies et les résultats ont également été interprétés, en suivant les deux méthodes susmentionnées respectivement. Les résultats des recherches faites ont, entre autres, révélé que les rôles sémantiques, aussi appelés rôles thématiques, sont des outils linguistiques indiscutables pour donner des significations profondes à la langue écrite. Un coup d'œil à la section consacrée à l'interprétation en dit plus à ce sujet. En outre, l'étude a révélé que le roman Faceless, d'Amma Darko, a avant tout pour objectif de sensibiliser les familles africaines pour de meilleures conditions de vie sur les plans social,

matériel et financier. En fin, l'étude s'ouvre sur d'autres horizons de recherche tels que l'analyse sémantique

du discours, l'analyse lexicogrammaticale et l'analyse des registres.

Mots-clés: *rôles sémantiques; participant, grille thématique, prototype*

Introduction

This research work is basically aimed at revealing the importance of semantic roles in the construction of meanings through texts analysis. More specifically, the study aims at applying the theory of semantic roles to texts in order to dig out deep structure meanings for their better understanding. Moreover, the research work is oriented towards systemic linguistics simply because just as it does, the scholarship focuses on the analysis of samples of text in relation to the cultural and social contexts in which they are produced in order to understand both their quality and why they mean what they do and why they are valued as they are within the framework of this work (Halliday, 1985a: xxx). In fact, the study is not going to take into account all the dimensions of the existing theory on Semantic Roles Labeling (SRL) (Gildea & Jurafsky, 2000/2002) such as the FrameNet (Baker et al., 1998), the PropBank (Palmer et al., 2005) using soft-wares to label elements of the sentence with knowledge taken from a semantic source, and the NoamBank (Meyers et al. 2005) that describes predicate structures. It is rather going to take into account all the aspects of the theory on semantic roles as elaborated on by Berk (1999), and Fillmore (1976). As a consequence, the whole labeling of semantic roles, in this paper, is going to be done manually. Statistical tables have been drawn up to synthesize findings and from this, interpretations have been carried out. Despite the great deal of theories existing on semantic roles, there is barely any research work that has ever dealt with semantic roles from the angle it is dealt with here. As a result, this study is of utmost importance to both students who have interest in linguistics, researchers and scholars in applied linguistics. In addition to the front and back matters as well as the introduction, this paper goes round the cruxes as subsequently presented below.

I. Literature Review

Theories on semantic roles have for a long time now attracted scholarly attention within the areas of investigation relating to semantics on the one hand, and within those in relation to applied linguistics on the other. Indeed, they have lately gained their way into natural language analysis systems (Surdeanu et al., 2003). As a matter of fact, semantic roles were re-introduced into modern linguistics by Gruber (1965) and Fillmore (1966/1968). From then forward, the theory has evolved from hand written rules to those supervised by machines enabled by large and consistent databases. Many popular features used for role labeling are defined in Gildea and Jurafsky (2002), Surdeanu et al. (2003), Xue and Palmer (2004), Pradhan et al. (2005), Che et al. (2009), and Zhao et al. (2009).

Within the framework of semantic roles labeling, many research works have already been carried out by linguistic scholars using such computational parsing databases as the PropBank, FrameNet, NoamBank to name just a few of them. For instance, Martin (2015) carried out a research work on: *Implicit Semantic Roles in Discourse*. Indeed, Martin (2015) contends that natural language understanding demands deep semantic and pragmatic analysis to infer the ambiguous and inherent knowledge that remains inside the explicit realizations of the elements of the discourse. He went on to assert that the correct interpretation of a written text is the correct labeling of the actions and the actors, and capturing the relations that connect all of them (p.5). As a consequence, drawing his inspiration from the PropBank, NomBank, VerbNet and FrameNet based annotations, he described some approaches that combine techniques of Semantic Roles Labeling (SRL) with different types of Co-reference Resolution (CR) proving that Implicit Semantic Roles Labeling depends on complex relations between the elements of the discourse. In a nutshell, Martin (2015) studied Implicit Semantic Role Labeling with respect to three different types of co-referent relations in the discourse, solving implicit roles as anaphora resolution, taking into account event co-reference and finally, including some entailment relations between roles and predicates. He also developed new methods that overcome the lack of training data: lexically independent features, deterministic algorithms that do not require any training data and wide coverage knowledge bases to obtain rules between the events. His empirical evaluations have proved that his approaches obtain similar or better performances than supervised systems.

In other respects, Christopherson (1981) has carried out an investigation into the usefulness of semantic roles in summaries generation and has found them really useful. Likewise, and of late, Suanmali et al. (2010) used semantic roles and WordNet (Fellbaum, 1998) to compute the semantic similarity of two sentences in order to decide if the sentences are to be kept or not in the summary. Additionally, Trandabat (2010) has also carried out a research work on: *Using Semantic Roles to Improve summaries*. The method she proposed is a further step to Suanmali's (2010) proposal. Trandabat (2010) concludes that knowing the semantic roles of entities and guiding the summary on it makes the summary generation task easier.

In the last decades, hand-tagged corpora that encode information for the English language like Verbnet (Levin and Rappaport, 2005), FrameNet (Baker et al., 1998) and PropBank (Palmer et al., 2005) have been developed. Semantic roles resources are being developed for such languages as German, Spanish, and Japanese. For Romanian, Trandabat and Husarciuc (2008) are working on building such a resource.

As it can be noticed, there is an ongoing growing interest in the field of semantic roles whether in the development of application soft-wares or in the field of texts studies. As regards Amma Darko's *Faceless*, though many theories of Systemic Functional Linguistics have already been applied to it, [see Ofori J. D. (2013); Koussouhon, L., Koutchade, I., & Amoussou, F. (2014); Koussouhon, L., Akogbeto, P., & Allagbe, A.

(2015); Koussouhon, L., Akogbeto, P., Koutchade, I., & Allagbe, A. (2015)] barely no theories of the semantic roles has been, so far, applied to it leaving then a gap to fill. This research work aims at filling that gap while making a substantial contribution to the existing knowledge on the novel.

2. Theoretical framework

Under this section, the theory applied in this article is going to be summarized. As a matter of fact, knowledge about the events and the participants around which a language, be it oral or written, is centered, is extremely important for its understanding. More to the point, knowing about the events and participants means being able to answer the question: who does what to whom? When, where, why, how etc.? In fact what are semantic roles all about? Introduced in generative grammar in mid-1960s and early 70s by Fillmore (1968), Gruber (1965) and Jackendoff (1972), semantic roles (SRs) also referred to as thematic roles are roles that participants play in events and situations. They are part of the content of linguistic communication consequently, they are defined in terms of prototypes and the labels we give them are convenient approximations. In addition, they are representations that express the abstract role that arguments of a predicate can take in an event. Indeed, they describe who does what to whom, when, where, why, how for a given situation and contribute to the construction of meaning. Moreover, the arguments of predicates can be classified into a set of participant types and describe the semantic relation between the arguments of the verb and the situation described by the verb. For example in: The little girl threw the eraser to her classmate, The little girl is the participant responsible for the action, the “doer”, the eraser the affected entity, the “undergoer” and her classmate the endpoint in a change of location. There are different types of semantic roles. The ones this article is concerned with are largely taken from Berk (1999) with some modifications and extension to other semantic roles by other scholars within the field like Fillmore (1976). I have used the convention of indicating them in capital letters. Hereafter is the exhaustive list of the semantic roles that the ongoing article looks into:

AGENT: the typically animate perceived instigator of an action (Berk, 1999, p.15) viz. the volitional causer of an event, the participant that initiates the action, capable of acting with volition. The **AGENT** tends to be the subject of an active sentence. “**Pat**” in the following examples expresses the **AGENT**:

Pat took the smart phone. The smart phone was taken by **Pat**. It was **Pat** who took the smart phone. Why did **Pat** take the smart phone?

FORCE also called **INVOLUNTARY CAUSER** or simply **CAUSER** (Berk, 1999, p.16): the non-volitional causer of an event i. e. the participant who causes an event without doing so with intention/on purpose. In the following examples, “**weeds**” refers to **FORCE/CAUSER**.

The **weeds** spoil the garden. The garden was spoiled by the **weeds**

EXPERIENCER: the experiencer of an event; the entity which is aware of the action or state described by predicate, but which is not in control. According to Berk (1999:17), the EXPERIENCER is animate but unintentional locus of a sensory impression or psychological state. “**Bob**” in the coming examples is the EXPERIENCER:

Bob felt happy about the news. **Bob** heard the news two days ago. The news seemed satisfying to **Bob**.

INSTRUMENT: An instrument used in an event; the means by which an action is performed or something comes about. Usually, an AGENT acts upon an INSTRUMENT and the latter affects the event or situation. “**Stone**” in the following examples is INSTRUMENT:

Peter broke the egg with a **stone**. The **stone** will break the egg. The egg was broken by the **stone**

PATIENT: the entity undergoing the effect of some action, often change of state. Berk (1999:19) defines this semantic role as a participant that is affected by the action of a verb. “**James**” in the following examples is illustrative of this semantic role:

James fell off the ladder. The man slapped **James**. **James** died. They dropped the brick on **James**.

THEME: the participant most directly affected by an event; the entity which is moved by an action, or whose location is described. This participant fills the function of the direct object of an active sentence. Berk (1999:20) calls it “described or located”. Moreover, it is a participant whose properties, location or involuntary movement is predicated. “**Tennis**” accounts for the THEME role in the examples hereafter:

The **tennis** rolled into the hall. Jeff saw the **tennis**. The **tennis** is in the hall. There is a **tennis** in his bag. The **tennis** is green

RECIPIENT: the typically animate endpoint of a transferred item. **John** expresses RECIPIENT in the following examples:

John received the letter. The editor in chief forwarded **John** the letter. The editor in chief forwarded the letter to **John**

BENEFICIARY also BENEFACTEE or BENEFACTIVE (Berk, 1999, p.291) the entity for whose benefit the action was performed viz. the beneficiary of an event. More specifically, it is the typically animate participant that benefits from an action or situation. “**Peace**” is the BENEFACTEE in the examples below:

I cooked some scrumptious noodle for **Peace**. This black bag is for **Peace**. I opened the door for **Peace**.

SOURCE/LOCATION or LOCATIVE participant: The participant that describes the location of an action or a situation. It is the source, or the path, of a moving object. Additionally, it is the entity from which something moves; the origin of the object of a transfer event. “**dining table**” refers to LOCATIVE participant in the following example:

Your food is on the **dining table**. I put the cup on the **dining table**. The dish fell off the **dining table**

Note: In the following sentence: **The dining table is in the kitchen**, the semantic role of “dining table” is THEME (described or located subject according to Berk). “the kitchen” in the same sentence is the LOCATION

POSSESSOR: the typically animate participant that owns or is temporarily in control of some other participant. In the following example, “**Dan**” refers to the POSSESSOR.

Dan has a nice three-storied building. **Dan’s** bag is expensive. Those nice cars are **Dan’s**

GOAL: the entity towards which something moves; the destination of an object of a transfer event. “**USA**” in the following example refers to Goal:

The plane flies to **USA**.

The above listed semantic/ thematic roles are the various arguments that verbs, be they transitive or intransitive, can take. Actually, the set of thematic role arguments taken by a verb is often called the **thematic grid or case frame**. The following examples are illustrative of what is being elaborated on:

Cathy (Agent) shattered the pane (Theme)

Cathy (Agent) shattered the pane (Theme) with a hammer (instrument)

The hammer (Instrument) shattered the pane (Theme)

The pane (Theme) shattered

The pane (Theme) was shattered by Cathy (Agent)

The above examples clearly show that “shatter” has at least the possible arguments Agent, Theme, and Instrument which, as said earlier, can be referred to as the thematic grid or case frame. As it can be easily noticed, there are among others, the following possibilities for the realization of these arguments of *shatter*:

AGENT/Subject, THEME/Object; AGENT/Subject; THEME/Object,
INSTRUMENT/PP *with*; INSTRUMENT/Subject, THEME/Object;
THEME/Subject; THEME/Object, AGENT/Adjunct

It then turns out that many verbs allow their thematic roles to be realized in various syntactic positions. For example, verbs like give can realize the THEME and GOAL arguments in two different ways:

a- Onko (Agent) gave the wad of banknotes (theme) to Baby T (Goal)

b- Onko (Agent) gave Baby T (Goal) the wad of banknotes (Theme)

These multiple argument structure realizations (the fact that “shatter” can take AGENT, INSTRUMENT, or THEME as subject, and “give” can realize its THEME and GOAL in either order) are called **verb alternations or diathesis alternations**. The alternation I showed above for “give”, the dative alternation, seems to occur with particular semantic classes of verbs, including “verbs of future having” such as: advance, allocate, offer, owe; “send verbs” like: forward, hand, mail; “verbs of throwing” such as: kick, pass, throw, Levin (1993) lists for 3100 English verbs, the semantic classes to which they belong (47 high-level classes, divided into 193 more specific classes) and the various alternations in which they participate. These lists of verb classes have been incorporated into the online resource VerbNet (Kipper et al., 2000), which links each verb to both WordNet and FrameNet entries.

In other respects, it is important to note that it is not easy to provide formal definitions of roles like AGENT, THEME, or INSTRUMENT. In fact researchers attempting to define role sets often find they need to fragment a role like AGENT or THEME into many specific roles. Levin and Rappaport Hovav (2005) summarize a number of such cases, such as the fact that there seem to be at least two kinds of INSTRUMENTS: **Intermediary Instruments** that can appear as subjects and **Enabling Instruments** that cannot. Let’s consider the following pairs of examples:

- a- Brian (Agent) opened the door (Theme) with the master key (Intermediary instrument)
- b- The master key (Intermediary Instrument) opened the door (Theme)
- c- Greg (Agent) drank the porridge (Theme) with a spoon (Enabling Instrument)
- d- *The spoon (enabling Instrument) drank the porridge

Finally, it has proved tough to formally define the thematic roles. Considering the AGENT role; most cases of AGENTS are animate, volitional, sentient, causal, however not every individual noun phrase will exhibit all of these properties. These problems have led to alternative semantic role models that use either many fewer or many more roles. The first of these options is to define generalized semantic roles that abstract over the specific thematic roles. For example, **PROTO-AGENT** and **PROTO-PATIENT** are generalized roles that express **roughly agent-like** and **roughly patient-like** meanings. These roles are defined, not by necessary and sufficient conditions, but rather by a set of heuristic features that accompany more agent-like or more patient-like meanings. Thus, the more an argument displays agent-like properties (being volitionally involved in the event, causing an event or a change of state in another participant, being sentient or intentionally involved, moving) the greater the likelihood that the argument can be labeled a PROTO-AGENT. The more patient-like the properties (undergoing change of state, causally affected by another participant, stationary relative to other participants, etc.), the greater the likelihood that the argument can be labeled a PROTO-PATIENT.

The semantic roles as well as the relations among them are codified in databases like PropBank using both proto-roles and verb-specific semantic roles (palmer et al., *ibid*), FrameNet which uses semantic roles that are specific to a general semantic idea called a frame (Baker et al., *ibid*), and NoamBank (Meyers et al., 2004). But as mentioned earlier in my introduction, the analysis in the ongoing article is not going to take into account, those computational semantic roles labeling soft-wares and codes. It is rather going to be done manually as exemplified in the next section of the article.

3. Methodology of the study

The study employs both the quantitative and qualitative methodologies. More specifically, via the quantitative methodology, samples of texts that yield to the study at hand have been selected from the novel under study and analyzed following the semantic roles theoretical framework as elaborated on by Berk (1999), Fillmore (1976), and Yule (1996/2010) while using the analysis keys designed by myself as presented on the first page of the analysis. Furthermore, the analyzed excerpts have been broken into their clause constituents and numbered to allow easy referencing in the interpretation. To allow readers to capture the analysis easily, the various identified semantic roles have been put into round brackets. Following the quantitative methodology statistics of the analyses carried out have been drawn up with their respective percentages. This, of course, has paved the way to the qualitative methodology through which the interpretation of the findings has been carried out.

4. Semantic Roles Identification in the selected extracts

The semantic roles identification has been carried out in the appendices.

4.1. Semantic Roles Identification in the first extract

The identification carried out in the appendices, has revealed that the excerpt embeds barely all the different types of the semantic roles elaborated on in the theoretical framework. Only the **Possessor** role is missing. As a matter of fact, it (the excerpt) is crammed with such semantic roles as: seventy(70) Agents, twelve(12) Forces, eleven (11) Experiencers, five (5) Intermediary instruments, eleven (11) Enabling Instruments, twenty-three (23) Patients, sixty-three (63) Themes, six (6) Recipients, five (5) Benefactives, sixteen (16) Sources, zero(0) Possessor, and eleven (11) Goals. The features of the excerpt as presented here will be more understood in the section devoted to the interpretation of the findings.

4.2. Semantic Roles Identification in the second extract

Unlike the first excerpt, the semantic roles related to the Intermediary Instrument and the Possessor are missing in this second excerpt. To descend to particulars, the excerpt encompasses sixty-nine (69) Agents, five (5) Forces, thirteen (13) Experiencers,

zero (0) Intermediary Instrument, three (3) Enabling instruments, eight (8) Patients, seventy-eight (78) Themes, one (1) Recipient, three (3) Benefactives, twenty (20) sources, zero (0) Possessor, and eight (8) Goals. The meanings of these linguistic features of the excerpt will be disclosed in the section devoted to the findings and interpretation coming below.

The table hereafter is the statistical table of the overall semantic roles identified in both excerpts together with their respective percentage rates.

Table I: Statistical table of the semantic roles identified in the two studied excerpts.

Semantic Roles	Excerpt1	Excerpt2	Aggregate number	Percentage
AGENT	68	68	136	30.42%
FORCE	12	05	17	03.80%
EXPERIENCER	11	14	25	05.59%
INTERMEDIARY INSTRUMENT	05	00	05	01.11%
ENABLING INSTRUMENT	11	03	14	03.13%
PATIENT	23	08	31	06.93%
THEME	67	82	149	33.33%
RECIPIENT	06	01	07	01.56%
BENEFACTIVE	05	03	08	01.78%
SOURCE	16	20	36	08.05%
POSSESSOR	00	00	00	00.00%
GOAL	11	08	19	04.25%

The percentages are calculated by taking the aggregate number per each semantic role type times 100 divided by the overall number of the identified semantic roles in both excerpts which amounts to 447. For example the percentage of the AGENT role is calculated by simply doing as follows: $AGENT = \frac{136 \times 100}{447}$

As it can be witnessed from the above statistical table, the THEME roles are head and shoulders above all the other semantic roles categories with a total number of 149 (33.33%) out of the global number of 447 roles identified in both studied excerpts. They are followed by the AGENT roles which rank second with a total number of 136 viz. 30.42%. The SOURCE roles rank third with a number of 36 (08.05%) in total. The PATIENT roles follow in the ranking order and are 31 (06.93%) in number. The EXPERIENCER roles rank fifth with an aggregate number of 25 (05.59%). Both the GOAL roles and the INSTRUMENT roles are placed joint sixth and are 19 (04.25%)

each in number. The FORCE roles are 17 (03.80%) and rank eighth. The BENEFACTIVE roles rank ninth and are just 08 (1.78%) in number. The last but one in the order are the RECIPIENT roles which are tenth and are only 07 (01.56%) in number. The POSSESSOR roles are downright nonexistent in both studied excerpts. A close look into the statistics of both studied texts, as presented above, reveals that the first excerpt embeds more semantic roles (235 viz. 52.57%) than the second one (212 i.e. 47.42%). The upcoming section which deals with the findings and interpretation will help did up the meanings of the interpretable linguistic features displayed by the studied texts.

5. Findings and Interpretation

A glimpse at the above recap statistical table clearly shows that all the different types of semantic roles except the POSSESSOR role have been identified in fairly different proportions in both analyzed excerpts altogether. This means that the selected excerpts have really been conducive to the analysis. Moreover, it also implies that the author of the analyzed texts viz. Amma Darko has linguistically coded therein different important messages that I am going to dig out in this section. First of all, a close look into the above recap statistical table reveals that whether in the first or second analyzed text, the overriding roles are both the AGENT and the THEME roles. Likewise, the POSSESSOR role is not recorded at all in either of the two texts whereas the AGENT roles in both excerpts are recorded in equal number. These striking linguistic features of the texts are not trivial as regards the writer's writing style. In fact, such linguistic patterns reveal that Amma DarKo has adopted a consistent written mode. Moreover, the predominance of the AGENT and THEME roles is also evocative of the fact that the author has written about true information in the sense that all the AGENT participants in both excerpts are really capable of acting with volition. They (AGENT participants) have indeed initiated actions that have actually affected and moved other volitional and non-volitional participants (THEME, PATIENT, and BENEFACTEE Participants). The following clauses tell more about it: 11, 19, 20, 21, 23, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130 of the first excerpt and 14, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85 of the second excerpt to name but a few of them. More to the point, the AGENT roles in the first excerpt have been basically carried out by Kwei and Maa Tsuru (husband and wife) who performed respectively 32 and 14 roles i.e. 42 out of the total 68 AGENT roles recorded in the excerpt. The other AGENT roles in the excerpt are sparsely shared out among Maa Tsuru's sons (1), the crawling son(1), Maa Tsuru's uncle(1), Kwei's mother (6), Kwei's mother's messenger(1), the Juju man(1), A woman(8), a woman wearing a strange grin (1), the cunning child (1), and people at Agboo Ayee(1). Likewise in the second excerpt, Maa Tsuru and Kpakpo (husband and wife) carried out respectively 25 and 5 viz. 30 Agent roles out of the 68 identified in the excerpt. Next, comes Onko Maa Tsuru's daughter Baby T's rapist who performed 23 of the same role type. Baby T carried out 12 of the same role and the devil, the other children, and Fofu equally share the remaining three (3) roles. A close look into the sharing out of the AGENT roles in both excerpts reveals that Amma Darko's message

goes around the family circle as it can be witnessed in the sharing out of the AGENT roles among family members. The writer's focus of attention is, without any doubt, on the deprivation of African families' manners. Amma Darko is certainly calling attention to the African family decline. Moreover, the portrayal of Maa Tsuru as a polyandrous woman in both excerpts really goes against the natural order of things as regards the African woman status in Africa. This, as said earlier, is revelatory of the African family decadence since in traditional Africa, until further notice, a woman is known for her decency and expected to be married to only and only one man. In other respects, Kwei's portrayal through the AGENT roles in clauses 127, 128, 130, 134, 138, 140, and 141, that of Kpakpo through the same role type in clauses 19, 20, 21, 22, as well as Onko's one in clauses 76, 79, 81, 82, 83, 84, and 87 are real signs of great irresponsibility, meanness, and pettiness. Knowing that the POSSESSOR role depicts possession, its complete absence in both analyzed excerpts, accounts for this to some extents. Additionally, such a linguistic pattern also signals the stern poverty that deals ruthlessly with almost all the participants in the analyzed excerpts leading them to such vices as irresponsibility, idleness, wickedness, cowardice, pedophilia, hypocrisy, and meanness witnessed with Kwei, Kpakpo, Maa Tsuru and Onko. Furthermore, this linguistic feature justifies the low number of the BENEFACTEE (08) recorded in the excerpt because actually only little has been done in favor of in the studied excerpts.

The statistics of the EXPERIENCER role together with that of the PATIENT role clearly show that Maa Tsuru has been mostly affected by the events presented by Amma Darko in the studied excerpts. As an illustration, she (Maa Tsuru) has performed eleven (11) out of the thirty-one PATIENT roles recorded in both excerpts. Knowing that the PATIENT stands for the participant undergoing the effect of some action, often change of state, such a linguistic representation by the writer through Maa Tsuru a female gender reveals how much psychological and physical trauma and torture some African women silently suffer from some irresponsible men. A close look into the second excerpt also reveals that the participant mostly affected by the events narrated by the author is again a woman: Baby T, one of Maa Tsuru's daughters. Up to three (03) out of the eight (08) PATIENT roles recorded in the excerpt relate to her. This linguistic coding of that role type predominantly associated to the female gender clearly shows Amma Darko's concern about African women's depraving social living conditions. Indeed, though in the studied texts nobody seems to mind the humiliation and terrible living conditions that women are reduced to; where impunity prevails allowing irresponsible men to continue with their nasty and dirty behavior, Amma Darko via the PATIENT roles encoding is not only calling attention for awareness but also for a more responsible and fairer society where women are not left to themselves but are well-cared for and enjoy the same right as men; which from my perspective calls for her feministic trend in her writing.

Conclusion

Aimed at showing how the application of the theory of semantic roles to texts analysis can contribute to their deeper understanding, this study has explored two texts from Amma Darko's *Faceless* from that angle. The study has adopted both the quantitative and qualitative methodologies that have respectively allowed not only the drawing up of the statistics of the analyses carried out but also the interpretation of the most interpretable linguistic features recorded. As a matter of fact, the interpretation has arrived at very impressive results. The analysis has indeed revealed that Amma Darko in the two studied excerpts has adopted a consistent writing style to ensure that her message is effectively delivered. Moreover, the sharing out of the AGENT roles has also revealed that Amma Darko's message is directed at raising African families members' consciousness as regards their responsibilities so that they can enjoy better living conditions. The study, via the POSSESSOR roles has also revealed that poverty is what has led barely all the animate participants in the studied excerpts into vices like meanness, pettiness, wickedness, irresponsibility, cowardice; and as such should be fought against by hook or by crook. Finally, the EXPERIENCER and the PATIENT roles patterns have revealed Amma Darko's feministic call for the improvement of African women's social, material, and financial living conditions. To round off, the study has interestingly opened up to such further linguistic research explorations as: discourse-semantic analysis, lexico-grammatical analysis, and register analysis.

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APPENDICES

Semantic Roles Identification

The identification is done using the following keys that I have designed for the purpose:

A= Agent; F=Force; E=Experiencer; II=Intermediary Instrument; EI=Enabling Instrument; Pt=Patient; T=Theme; R=Recipient; B=Beneficiary; S=Source; Pr=Possessor; G=Goal

The excerpts are broken into their clause constituents and numbered. Then the semantic roles are manually identified and put into round brackets.

Semantic Roles Identification in the First Excerpt

1.Maa Tsuru (A) was still spending the nights(T) with Kwei(II). 2.Neither of them (A) took any precaution(T). 3.They (E) knew 4.it (F) could happen. 5.They (E) assumed and hoped 6.it(F) wouldn't. 7.Then it(F) did. 8.Maa Tsuru (Pt) became pregnant the third time, 9.while their second son(A) was still crawling.

10.Kwei(Pt) became a changed man(T) overnight. 11.“How?” he(A) yelled at Maa Tsuru(Pt). 12.“Why? Why did you(A) let it(F) happen?” 13. as though he(A) played no part at all in the making of it(T).

14. “Nonsense!” Maa Tsuru's uncle(A) yelled back. 15. “Why didn't you (Pt) ensure 16.it(F) didn't happen 17.by glueing an iron sheet around your loin?” (S)

18.Kwei's response (T) was prompt and cruel.19.He (A)stopped Maa Tsuru(Pt) from cooking for him(B) with immediate effect, 20.banned her(Pt) from stepping anywhere near his doorstep (S), 21.as he (A) said to her(Pt),22. “after all you are not my wife!”23.Then he(A) accused Maa Tsuru(Pt) of being a bad luck woman(T)24.and of having a bad womb(T)25.that(F) had no sense of judgement or direction(T).26.Maa Tsuru and everyone else(Pt) were dumbfounded (T). 27.Since when did a fertile womb(Pt) became a bad thing?(T)

28.In the secrecy of his head (S), Kwei(E) also began to wonder 29.if maybe there (F)wasn't really something(T) in the matter(S) with the curse on Maa Tsuru' head(T).

30.Maa Tsuru(A) weaved her way(T) back to the mercy of her aunt (Pt), 31.while secretly waiting and hoping for kwei (T) to reconcile with her(B). 32.But all too soon, the pregnancy and the two young sons (A) began to take their toll(T) on her.33.She (E) decided to no longer sit back 34.and wait for Kwei (A) to come to his senses (T). 35.She(A) called at his place(S) unannounced one day 36.to demand upkeep money (T) from him (S).37.She(A) did not meet him(T). 38.His door(Pt) was opened by a woman (A) twice her size 39.and endowed with a bosom(EI) the size of two extra-large watermelons. 40.This (T) was most unexpected. 41.Another woman in Kwei's room 42.when she(Pt) was carrying his third child (T)?

43.“Who are you?(T)44.Maa Tsuru (A) wailed, consumed with jealousy (EI)

45.“Kwei's new woman.” (T) Melon-bosom (A) retorted.

46.“Who told you?” (T)47.Maa Tsuru (A) cried foolishly.

48.Melon-bosom (A), in response, hurled with the flowing gusto of a volcano, every existing *Ga* insult, many of it, unprintable(EI), at Maa Tsuru (Pt). 49.Then she(A) crowned it (T)with, “Foolish woman! (II)50.Don't you(E) know 51.it(T) was the curse on your head 52.that(F) got him (Pt) into bad company (G)53.when he(A) set off during your first pregnancy in search of good work and money?”

54.Maa Tsuru(A) returned home(G) in shock. Unknown to her (T), 55.Melon-bosom (E)was not through with her yet. 56.Like the cunning child(A) who pokes a finger(T) in a mate's eye

(S)57.only to return off thereafter 58.crying to its own mother(Pt)59.to lodge a complaint against the mate (T), 60.Melon –bosom(A) turned round 61.and rushed to Kwei(G) to complain 62.that Maa Tsuru (A) had been to the house(G)63.and threatened to eliminate the two of them(T) from the earth's surface(S) through powerful juju.(II)

64.Kwei's(A) mother sang him another version 65.of her "I told you so"(T) with greater gusto(EI). 66.Kwei (E) felt his back (T) against the wall.(S)67.He(A) took matters(T) into his own hands (T). 68.First, he(A) shocked melon-bosom (Pt)69.by ordering her out of his room(S).

70."Why?" Melon-bosom(A) shrieked.

71."Out" (T) kwei (A)yelled.

72.Melon-bosom(A) scurried off 73.as fast as her enormous bosom(A) could carry her(T), 74.wondering where 75.she(E) went wrong.

76.Kwei's(A) next next move got 77.his mother(A) rushing in despair 78.to seek the services and fast-tract intervention of a juju man (T). 79.He(A) invited Maa Tsuru(B) to his place, 80.'to talk things over', 81.he(A) told her(R).

82.His third move(F) got 83.his mother(A) acting and reacting. 84.She(A) smiled so broadly that 85.it(F) was like 86.the elasticity in her lips(F) had gone completely loose. 87.Then she(A) sent a message(T) to the juju man(R)88.to demand back, pronto, her fat fowl and bottle of dry gin(EI).89.Her messenger(A) returned soaked from head to toe in a greenish liquid(EI)90.that had been angrily poured over him by the juju man(A), 91.and with a warning(EI) to kwei's mother(R) to come 92.and appease the gods(T) with another fowl and a bottle of dry gin(II)93.for offending them(T) with her absurd demand(II). 94.When had a fowl(F) entered a jujuman's abode(S)95.and come back?96.But even this did not let Kei's mother(A) lose her smile(T).

97.When kwei(A) invited Maa Tsuru(B) to his place 98.to supposedly talk things over, 99.Maa Tsuru(A) arrived there (G)full of hope(EI). 100.Indeed, she(A) arrived there (G)smiling. 101.Kwei(A) returned her smile(T)102.and let her(T) into the room(S).

103."One minute!" he(A) told an unsuspecting Maa Tsuru(R), 104.and stepped out of the room.(S)

105.While Maa Tsuru(E) wondered 106.what the whole drama(T) was about, 107.she(E) heard a turn(T) in the door lock(S). 108.Kwei(A) had locked the door(T).

109.Kwei(A) headed off to his favorite drinking spot. Agboo Ayee(G).

110."Two tots!" he(A) told the *akpeteshie* seller(R).

111She(A) obliged.

112.Kwei (A)downed it (T) all in one gulp.

113.Another two tots!"(T)Obliged

114.He(Pt) began to feel warm. 115.He(A) gulped down four more tots(T)116.and felt his reflexes fairly sharpened(T).

117."You(B) want free minced meat (T)to chop?"118. he(A) asked the woman(R) wearing a strange grin(T)."

119.The woman(A) collected her money 120.and waved kwei(T) away wondering 121.what he(A) was up to.

122.Kwei(A)returned to the house(G)123.reeking like pure vodka on two legs(T).124.He (A)entered the room(G) with a bland face(T). No smile. No frown.

125.Maa Tsuru(A) had just opened her lips(Pt)126.to ask what was amiss(T)127.when she(E) felt Kwei(A) upon her(Pt). 128.He(A) pounced on her(Pt) like a cat on an unsuspecting mouse (T)129.and began a vicious pounding spree(T). 130.He(A) pounded Maa Tsuru(Pt) with his fists(EI), 131.landing the blows(T) anywhere and everywhere and on every part of her pregnant body(T). 132.The daylight(F) went out of Maa Tsuru(Pt).

133.She(Pt) began to bleed.134. Kwei(A) grinned. 135.He(A) pulled her(T) up by one arm(EI), 136.held her(T) by the back of her neck(S)137.and pushed her(T) out of the house(G). 138.Then he(A) returned to Agboo Ayee(G)139.and told all(T) there(S) that, with immediate effect, 140.they(A) had better start calling him Dr. kwei(T), 141.because he(A) had singlehandedly(EI) and very cost effectively terminated an unwanted pregnancy(T).

Semantic Roles Identification in the Second Excerpt

1.Maa Tsuru (A) stared long at the thick wad of notes(T) in her hand(S). 2.There was a look of worry and hopelessness in her eyes and another not so easily discernible. 3.Then she(A) rested her gaze(T) upon Onko's face(G).4.Onko(E) found it(T) difficult 5.to return the gaze(T). 6.He(A) turned his head away(T).7. Maa Tsuru(A) sighed heavily. 8.Never once in her entire life till then 9.had she(A) held so much money(T) in her hand(S). 10.Onko (E)read her thoughts(T). 11.Strike while it's hot (T) 12.he(E) thought.

13.“It is not just for the money, Maa Tsuru” (T), 14.he(A) urged her (T)urgently, 15.and “think also of 16.what would happen to kpakpo.17.His name(T) will by all means crop up. 18.I(A) will ensure that(T). 19.He(A) started it (T)all. 20.He(A) should not have touched her(T) in the first place. 21.He(A) should never have played with her(Pt)with his fingers(EI).22.What he(A) did made her(Pt) curious about trying out the real thing(T).23. It was she(A) who started pushing herself(T) on me(G). 24.You(A) can ask the other children(T)25.who(A) always come to watch television in my room(S). 26.She(A) was always hopping on my laps(S) and provoking me(T).27.I(A) didn't just get up one day 28.to do it (T)with her(EI). 29.She(A) led me(T) on.”

30.Tears(F) welled up in Maa Tsuru's eyes(S). 31.“ she(A) isn't even yet twelve (T). 32.Did you(E) know that?(T)”

33.“ I(E) am sorry Maa Tsuru(T). 34.Really I(E) am. 35.I(E) am very sorry”. 36.Onko(E) sounded really repented. 37.“I (E) can't even understand 38.how the whole thing(F) happened. 39.The more I(E) think about it(T), 40.the more I(E) am convinced 41.that it(T) was the devil (A)42.that made me(T)...”

43.“ Spare me(T) that onko!(A)” 44.Maa Tsuru(A) cut him(T) short sharply. 45.Onko (Pt)was taken aback by the severity of her tone(T).

46.“Does that mean you won't take the money?” (T) 47.he(A) frowned.

48.“Look! Even with my fairly successful welding business(EI), 49.this money(T) in your hand (S)would have taken me a long time to make.50.And let me(A) assure you (T)51.that it(T) is not my final present(T) to you(B). 52.I(A) told you(R) that(T) already, or?”

53.Maa Tsuru(A) looked him(T) directly in the face(G). 54.She(A) said nothing(T).

55.“I(A) will pay for her(B) treatment too!” (T)56. he(A) went on hurriedly. 57.“Trust me Maa Tsuru. 58.It (T) is the best way out. 59.Allow me(A) to show you(T)60.how generous I(A) can be. 61.Just drop the matter (T). 62.Forget it(T) ever happened 63.and spare us (T) all the trouble (T).”

64.Maa Tsuru(A) rose abruptly. 65.Onko's face(F) fell. 66.Then the corners of his lips(Pt) stretched into a smile (T)67.as Maa Tsuru(A) untied her cover cloth(T) around her waist(S); 68.placed the wad of notes(T) in one corner of it (S)69.and proceeded to slowly tie it(T) up. 70.She(A) did not look once in Onko's face(G).71.If she(A) had, 72.she(A) would have seen 73.how the initial trace of shame and remorse(Pt) had completely disappeared from Onko's face(S).

74.It had been three weeks since 75.it(F) happened, 76.when Onko(A) asked Baby T (T)into his room (S)77.to collect money(T) to buy food(T) for both of them(B). 78.Kind generous Onko(T). 79.Three weeks since he(A) had unexpectedly locked the door(T)80.and pushed an unsuspecting and too trusting Baby T(T) onto his bed(S), 81.pinned her (T)down, 82.forced a handkerchief(T) inside her mouth(S)83.and torn off her pants(T).84.Three times he(A) did it(T)85.and left her(T) bleeding on his bed(S). 86. “Better tell no one!87.he(A) warned. 88.I(E)know what (T)89.you(E) knew father Kpakpo(A) did to you(T). 90.Fofo (A) told it(T) all to me(B). 91.Your mother(A) loves him(T). 92.I(A) will tell it(T) all 93.if you(A) tell anyone(T)”

94.Three weeks! and there he(A) was, 95.calling her(T), 96.grinning at her,97.asking her(T) lewdly, 98.“Baby T how are you doing?” 99.And when Baby T(A) ignored him(T), 100.went on without shame, 101.“Oh why? Don’t you(A) want to mind me(T) again?”

102.Maa Tsuru(A) was folding things(T) on the bed (S)103.when a distraught Baby T (A)came 104.and reported 105.what just happened(T).

106.“ Don’t mind him.” 107. Maa Tsuru(A) told her(T).

108.Baby T(A) remained standing there(S).

109.“ I(A) said don’t mind him!(T)” 110.Maa Tsuru(A) shouted at her(Pt)111.and folded the cloth(T) in her hand (S)with a highly-strung urgency.

112.Baby T(A) left the room(S) quietly. 113.The tears(F) welled up involuntarily.

114.Maa Tsuru (A)finished folding her things (T)in deep thought. 115.The following day, she(A) watched Onko(T) leave the house(S) for his workshop(G). 116.An hour later, she(A) paid him a surprise visit(T) there.*

117.“ I(E)have noticed what is going on(T), Onko 118.and I(A) don’t like it!(T)” 119.she(A) confronted him(T) in a low voice 120.to avoid attracting the attention of his apprentices(T).

121.“ what has been going on,” 122.Onko(A) feigned surprise

123.“ since Baby T (A)got back on her feet(T), 124.you (A)have been grinning lewdly 125.and staring at her behind!(T)” 126.she(A) accused him(T).

127.Onko(Pt) wore a serious look 128.and stepped closer to Maa Tsuru(G). 129.“ I(A) love her!(T)” 130.he(A) muttered without pretence

131.Maa Tsuru(Pt) was shocked into dumbness. 132.She(A) left the workshop(S) wordlessly.

133.By the time Onko(A) returned home(G) from the workshop(S) that evening, 134.Baby T(A) had been sent away(G).