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**OF ENGLISH, LITERARY AND CULTURAL STUDIES**

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## EDITORIAL NOTE

*The Ethiopie Journal of English, Literary, and Cultural Studies* (ISSN: 0795-5413) is an interdisciplinary journal that explores topical and generative issues in English linguistics and literary and cultural studies. We recognise that African humanities research is both problem-based and knowledge oriented, and we aim to provide a platform for scholars to analyse and theorise Africa in a way that is generative, conversational, and decolonial. Specifically, the journal focuses on both the analytical and theoretical approaches to knowledge production in the context of Africa and the Global South. We want to curate papers that are hinged on African indigenous paradigms and approaches or that seek to extend, reimagine, or contextualise current theoretical or analytical approaches in English language studies and literary and cultural studies.

We invite papers that dwell on all aspects of English language studies, including phonetics/phonology, semantics, syntax, discourse analysis, pragmatics, stylistics, ESL, ESP, etc. We also welcome papers that theorise literary and cultural texts, including film, still and moving images, music and dance, photographs, cultural objects, spaces and places, society and social formations, and other relevant corpora. While we accept purely analytical essays, we encourage authors to focus on theorising the texts or data they engage with. In particular, we welcome theoretical conversations that implicate postcolonial subjecthood, ecocritical approaches (especially postcolonial ecocriticism), feminism and gender studies, new trends in linguistics, object-oriented criticism and approaches, and other generative approaches to knowledge production. Authors are encouraged to do original theorisation rather than adopt extant theoretical frameworks. They may also extend the scope of extant theories and approaches based on the material they present and discuss.

Furthermore, papers with interdisciplinary approaches are also welcomed. We recognise that knowledge production is an elastic phenomenon, and that bright ideas might implicate various fields. Interesting multi-modal, eclectic, or collaborative research is encouraged in this journal.

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The *Ethiope Journal of English, Literary and Cultural Studies* is published biennially by the Department of English and Literary Studies, Delta State University Abraka, Delta State, Nigeria. All papers submitted to this journal will undergo double-blind peer review before publication. Published papers are well-researched, original, and data-driven.

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The submitted manuscript which should not exceed 7000 words should be typeset in MS Word Times New Roman Font 12, with double line spacing. The first page should include the title of the manuscript, name(s), and institutional affiliation/address, abstract (not more than 250 words and with not more than six keywords). Manuscripts should conform to the current APA or MLA style sheet. Author(s) of published papers will derive the benefits from peer-review of contributions by seasoned scholars, global visibility, and receipt of hard copies as well as soft copies of their papers.

The papers in this edition of the journal cut across disciplines in cultural, and media studies and sub-disciplines in English and literary studies. The contributors include seasoned and renowned scholars of international repute and young astute scholars with a burning desire to excel in academics. It is pertinent to note that the journal accepts contributions from scholars and researchers across the globe. We believe that articles in this volume will be of immense interest to researchers and students.

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## A CRITICAL STYLISTIC STUDY OF SEGUN ADEKOYA'S *UNDER THE BRIDGE*

**Ayomiitan E. Bankole & Moses O. Ayeomoni**

### **Abstract**

This paper is a critical stylistic study of Segun Adekoya's *Under the Bridge* to unravel the ideological leanings of the poet. The study adopts naming and describing and representing actions, events, and states as critical stylistic tools. It describes and identifies critical stylistic features in the poem and relates the features to the socio-political contexts of the poem. The data for the study is drawn from Segun Adekoya's *Under the Bridge*. The poem was read closely and analysed, noting the structure of the nominal groups for naming and describing while using simple statistical methods to identify the frequencies and percentages to determine the rates of occurrences of the transitivity devices in the poem for representing actions, events, and states. Then the overall percentages of the transitivity devices were calculated, and the results obtained were related to the contexts of the poem. The results showed that the features of naming and describing were mainly nominal groups which help to reveal the ideology of the poet. It was also discovered that the choice of head nouns and the pre- and post-modifiers in the nominal groups aid the location and description of the setting as well as the poet's ideology. Also, the feature of representing actions, events, and states has a preponderance of material action intentional (MAI) of 31.58%, material action events (MAE) of 5.26%, mental perception (MP) of 10.53%, relational intensive (RI) of 40% and relational possessive (RP) of 5.26%. These transitivity devices were used to expose the multifaceted challenges of most Africans and Nigerians. The study concludes that Critical Stylistics is a veritable linguistic approach to analysing and interpreting ideological stances in poetry.

**Keywords:** Under the Bridge, Segun Adekoya, Critical Stylistics,

## Nominal Group, Transitivity Introduction

Critical Stylistics specifically “assembles the main general functions that a text has in representing reality? (Jeffries, 2010a: 14), it is a further development of CDA in terms of both theory and methodology (Jeffries, 2007, 2010a). Critical Stylistics introduces a systematic model of analysis that amalgamates tools from stylistics and Critical Linguistics to uncover the linguistic choices of text producers and their possible ideological implications (Jeffries, 2007, 2010).

In analysing this selected poem, we apply the framework of critical stylistics, a branch of Stylistics that unites the analytical frameworks of CDA and Linguistic Stylistics. In this approach, the meaning of a text is a joint production of the form of that text and the situation in which the text comes alive. Also, texts are analysed from this perspective in terms of their linguistic manifestations and the underlying ideologies that constrain linguistic appearances. It is important to point out that all text producers have the potential to produce hidden ideologies in an attempt to persuade or manipulate, and the techniques of embedding some ideology are common in our everyday communication. Stockwell (2002) sees ideologies as a set of beliefs that informs practice. Lesley Jeffries (2010) posits that „ideologies are those ideas shared by a community or society which have been reproduced, reasserted and reaffirmed by dominant groups in the media and texts to the extent that they become naturalized as self-evident or common sense. Hornby (2010) sees ideology as a set of beliefs, especially one held by a political group that influences the way people behave. For most neo-colonial Nigerians/Africans, survival of the fittest is an important ideology. Many Nigerians/Africans, even after democratic rules are still groping in the darkness of bribery and corruption, political instability, dearth of real leadership, and many other socio-political issues. Survival of the fittest is gradually becoming a way of life for most Nigerians/Africans.

## Review of Previous Studies

According to Jeffries (2010:9), critical stylistics “is a branch of stylistics which helps to explain how texts are used to persuade the readers and to change their ideology towards a particular situation”. Jeffries (2010) claims that the framework of critical stylistics discovers the underlying ideologies and gains a deeper understanding and appreciation of texts. She introduces a set of tools for carrying out the critical analysis of texts to uncover or discover the underlying ideologies of the texts. She asserts that „these tools are critical to the analysis of texts to get a clear sense of how texts may influence the ideological outlook of their recipients.

These tools draw heavily on Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar. Jeffries (2010:6) asserts that “to explain what I mean, we make use of Halliday's division of the functions of language into three metafunctions”. Halliday (1971) sees the main functions of language as being “ideational” (how language represents the world), “interpersonal” (how language mediates between people), and “textual” (how linguistic items make the discourse as a whole function). The approach of Critical Stylistics is adequate for the analysis of texts because as a branch of Stylistics, it amalgamates the analytical frameworks of CDA and Linguistic Stylistics. In the preface to *Critical Stylistics: The Power of English*, Jeffries and McIntyre (2010) sum up the content of this approach as follows:

Critical Discourse Analysis provides us with general theories for explaining the impact texts can have, considering the social and political contexts in which texts are produced and read. Stylistics provides detailed tools of analysis for understanding how texts work. Critical Stylistics combines the strengths of these two approaches to uncover the deep-seated ideologies of everyday texts.

Original and engaging, *Critical Stylistics*: presents a new amalgamation of Stylistics, Critical Discourse Analysis and functional approaches to grammar and introduces a comprehensive set of tools to help, explain and analyse the power of written texts. It examines a wide variety of real texts and provides a wealth of practical work examples.

The focus of Linguistic Stylistics is on the linguistic choices made by the producers and the description of these choices concerning the inherent contexts. In this approach, the meaning of a text is derived from the form of that text and the situation in which the text comes alive. Critical Discourse Analysis focuses on social analysis of discourse, using a variety of approaches (Fairclough&Wodak 1997, Wodak& Meyer 2001). In this approach, texts are analysed in terms of their linguistic expressions and the underlying ideologies that confine the linguistic manifestation. Critical Stylistics is a unification of the analytical methods of the two parent disciplines - CDA and Linguistic Stylistics - in that it adopts a level-by-level analysis favoured by the latter and uses the eclectic descriptive approach favoured by the former in working out the significance of texts.

Critical Stylistics aims to “assemble the main general functions that a text has in representing reality” (Jeffries, 2010a: 14) and may be considered a development of CDA in terms of both theory and methodology (Jeffries, 2007, 2010a). One of the main criticisms of CDA is that it has not yet developed a full inventory of tools for the analyst to work with; a (perhaps inevitable) consequence of its multidisciplinary theoretical foundations. Critical Stylistics attempts to counter this by introducing a systematic model of analysis which amalgamates tools from Stylistics and Critical Linguistics, to uncover the linguistic choices of text producers and their possible

ideological implications (Jeffries, 2007, 2010).

Critical Stylistics bridges the gap between Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and Stylistics. CDA aims to show the “non-obvious ways in which language is involved in social relations of power and domination” (Fairclough, 2001: 229). It is predominantly used to analyse nonfictional texts, and most often from the mass media. Stylistics, on the other hand, is broadly defined as “the (linguistic) study of style” (Leech and Short, 2007: 11). In an attempt to explain the “relation between language and artistic function”, (Leech and Short, 2007: 11) says it is primarily concerned with analysing the language of literary texts, although this may also entail the exposition of ideologies.

From the empirical perspective, Ojarikre (2015) is a study that deploys critical stylistics as its analytical approach and it discovers that the major ideology of the Niger Delta is the struggle for resource control. Also, Fatola (2015) undertakes a critical stylistic analysis of selected poems in Niyi Osundare's *Songs of the Market Place*. They discover that the major ideology of Osundare as expressed in these poems through the tools of Naming and Describing and Representing Actions, Events and States is that of condemnation of corrupt practices and negative vices, thus calling for a change of attitude. Bankole (2016) also uses critical stylistics as its theoretical anchor and concludes that the major ideology of Adekoya's poetry is the need for black race consciousness of their unique nature and socioeconomic and political plights in the world. Furthermore, Kadiri et. al (2022), describing stylistics as a sub-discipline of applied linguistics, apply naming and describing as a critical stylistic tool to uncover how ideology and social meaning are encoded in Tanure Ojaide's *Fate of Vultures and other poems*. In a similar vein, Maledo and Emama (2022) also adopt naming and describing as a critical stylistic conceptual function in their study of the metaphorical representation of the socio-political and religious space, Nigeria, in Stephen Kekeghe's award-winning collection of poems, *Rumbling Sky*. To a large extent, these studies show that critical stylistics is a veritable linguistic approach for analysing and interpreting literary texts/genres, particularly, poetic genre.

## Linguistic Approach

In line with the critical stylistic approach of Lesley Jeffries (2010), Segun Adekoya's *Under the Bridge* is analysed using two tools of critical stylistics: naming and describing, and representing actions, events and states. Naming and describing explores how English texts name the world. It is based on how choices for naming and describing are made from the available resources of the language against a background of their ideological effects. Naming can be done in any of the following ways to create ideological meaning;

- i. a noun is chosen from the available alternatives.
- ii. any other information included in the noun group or phrase is considered; and
- iii. the processes and actions usually described by verbs may be converted into nouns by a process called nominalization with certain ideological consequences.

The ideological potential in naming is not only in referring to somebody or something but also in expressing an opinion of that thing. The part of the sentence that names an entity, semantically referred to as actor or goal, can be pre-modified by adjectives and post-modified by prepositions and relative clauses (Jeffries 2010). Naming is the linguistic process by which people, places, and things are typically identified in language, including the (mainly adjectival) ways in which such entities can be characterized and the ideological consequences of this (Jeffries, 2010).

Naming is a broad descriptive term covering several linguistic practices, including the choice of a noun to indicate a referent; the construction of a noun phrase or group that modifies to further determine the nature of the referent; and the decision to use a “name” rather than, for example, expressed as a (verbal) process.

Naming and describing involves examining how entities and events are labelled and modified, and are realised through the nominal group. Acknowledging the significance of how an entity or event is defined and evaluated via naming practices is not in itself a new concept, and is similar to the concept of “referential strategies” in Wodak's model of CDA. Nominalisation is one realization of

naming, and is also frequently considered in CDA studies, it is present in Fowler's list of tools for CDA analysis (1991). What makes Jeffries' critical stylistics unique is the use of the noun phrase as the basic unit of analysis.

Functionally, one of the potentially most influential choices any writer makes is the names she/he uses to make references. Naming characterises this aspect of style and reflects a widening of the CDA category of nominalization. The grammatical process of creating a nominal out of a process, though treated as a transformation by Fowler (1991: 80), is conceptually similar to the process of putting anything into a definite noun phrase and treating it as a "given"; the effect is to reinforce its existence. But the effect is not only one of existential presupposition, it is also the more subtle question of deictic properties being assigned by the demonstratives and possessives and the effect they have on the naming of referents.

There are different stylistic effects achieved by choosing nouns with different connotations. But these differences tend to be quite transparent and are certainly fairly easy to point out, even if their effect is not always so clear. However, if we take the nominal group as the basic unit of naming, as well as the choice of the head noun, there are choices to be made about the modification of the noun. Adjectival choices are considered, but in addition to these, the use of definite and indefinite articles, possessive and demonstrative determiners, and postmodifiers by prepositional phrases or relative clauses results in a naming strategy that can encompass complex presuppositions about ideology (Jeffries, 2001). Essentially, the structure of nominal groups realises naming and describing as stylistic functions. In every sentence, we name or imply the subject (actor) through nouns and the actions being performed through verbal elements (predicators).

Representing Actions, Events, and States is based on the notion that the verbal element of a clause (predicator) is the location of the actions and processes that take place between the entities. Actions represent what is being done, event has to do with what is happening and state what simply is. The following are the main categories as identified by Jeffries (2010) based on Simpson's (1993),



explication of Halliday (1985). Representing Actions / Events / States involves the analysis of transitivity choices, which is based on Simpson's (1993; 2004) presentation of Halliday's model of transitivity, due to its accessibility and ease of application to both literary and non-literary texts. Transitivity forms part of Halliday's functional grammar, which is based on the idea that language is shaped by the social functions it has come to serve. Halliday proposes three metafunctions: the interpersonal metafunction of Halliday's theory is concerned with interactions between the writer/speaker and reader/hearer; on the other hand, the ideational metafunction of language is concerned with the expression of our experiences of the world both internally and externally to the conscious self, while the textual metafunction is concerned with grammatical systems related to the organization of text (Halliday, 1985; 1994; Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004).

The transitivity system realizes the ideational metafunction. The system of transitivity construes experiences into a set of process types and relates them to the participants and circumstances involved in the production of the clause. By analysing the syntax of the language in this way, we may observe how texts employ linguistic devices to direct, question, and inform the reader, and so is extremely useful for exposing ideology in texts. A writer or speaker has the power to choose the words that suit her/his purpose most closely, and this includes the choice of a lexical verb that will present the situation in the way that the author (speaker) desires. Each of these choices has consequences for how the situation is seen by the reader/hearer and though these may be subtle, and in some cases overcome by the reader with a critical attitude to the language itself (Jeffries, 2006).

Halliday's transitivity system is the model which most accurately represents this strand of meaning and it is useful for pointing out how the world is being presented by a text or a group of texts. In the transitivity structure of a sentence, there are three main parts: process, participant, and circumstance. The process is central as it expresses the particular action that a social actor is engaged in. The types of process, as construed in Jeffries (2010), include Material Actions (MA), Mental Process (MP), Relational Process (RP), and

Verbal Process (VP). MA denotes something that is done or happens, often in a physical way, but also in more abstract ways. MA may be intentional, supervention, and events. Material Action Intentional (MAI) is performed by a conscious being. Material Action Superventions (MAS) are unconsciously performed by conscious beings. Material Action Events (MAE) refers to actions performed by inanimate actors. The Mental Process usually refers to what happens within human beings, and they are divided into three types. Mental Cognition (MC) examples are thinking, knowing, realizing, understanding, etc. The second type is Mental Reaction (MR) such as feeling (emotional), liking, hating, etc. Another one is the Relational Process, which represents the static or stable relationship between carriers and attributes. The last is the Verbal Process which establishes the relationship between a sayer, a verbiage, and a receiver.

In analysing Adekoya's *Under the Bridge*, the study examines the representation of social actors through naming and describing (using nominal groups) and the actions and events they are involved in, and their expressed states (as encoded in the transitivity selections). The linguistic description is succeeded by the text's interpretation in terms of ideological dispositions.

## **Data Analysis**

### **Naming and describing as stylistic functions in Segun Adekoya's *Under the Bridge***

The general overview of the poem is that of the street life of underprivileged Lagosians. These people are subjected to this kind of living against their wishes. The nominal groups in lines 1 – 6, portray life on the street/Ghetto life. These lines expose the nature of living of such people. Under the bridge, people living there are incapacitated and lack the usual emotional love and care meant for them. Inconsiderate of what they have or do not have, they try to adapt to the situations at hand. Usually, the rays of light under such bridges are poor. Hence, the place is always gloomy. The filthiness of the environs is noteworthy “Rotten with blight” (line 9). It is obvious diseases are inevitable in an environment like this. Environmental

hazards there are overwhelming. The bad odour makes the place stink. This situation is pitiful and empathetic.

**m                    h**  
an amazing / abundance (line 2)

**m            h                    q**  
The/ ligament t/ of the urban tissue (line 3)

**m                    h                    q**  
the polluted / sphere / with its stink sans (line 5)

**m            h**  
real/ respite (line 6)

In the nominal groups in lines 7 – 12, the poet reveals a poor standard of living and environmental hazards. People under the bridge are referred to as “God's buildings” (line 7). This is a Biblical allusion meaning “God's temple”. These people are supposed to be living dignified lives but the reverse is the case. These so-called God's temples are subjected to a hard life. This said location is like a dunghill “The cesspit for all the filth of Lagos” (line 9). Since they have no option, they turn the place into their haven. Under the bridge are many activities going on. People use the place for different purposes and needs ranging from business and accommodation.

**m                    h**  
These gods / buildings (line 7)

**m                    h**  
the blasted/ bridge (line 8)

**m            h**  
The / cesspit (line 9)

**m      h      q**  
th e/ filth/ of Lagos (line 9)

**m      h**  
real / wonders (line 10)

**m      h**  
Their / salon (line 11)

**m                  h**  
their department/store (line 11)

**m                  h**  
their shoe/ factory (line 11)

**m                  h**  
Their metro/ station (line 12)

**m                  h**  
their love/ garden (line 12)

The nominal groups in lines 13 – 18, depict the theme of poverty. The poet explains the body of an average resident under the bridge is “battered”. These people have no will except the one available to them. Since likes begat likes, the friendships among dwellers revolve within the bridge of nexus.

Packaging in this environment is obvious. Despite the wretched lives staying under the bridge, they try to give themselves lift “tattered raiment to gorgeous garments” (line 15). This shows the extent of the poverty they are experiencing. They try to enjoy what they have at hand, “The broken blocks are erected into monuments” (line 18).

**m      h**  
the/ temple (line 13)

**m h q**  
the/ bridge/ of nexus (line 14)

**m h q**  
The tattered/ remnants/ of their raiment (line 15)

**m h**  
gorgeous/ garments (line 16)

**m h**  
The broken/ blocks (line 17)

**m h q**  
the/ memory/ of their pulverised past (line 18)

In lines 19 – 23, the creativity of these people is tempered despite their conditions. The habitats are well-explicated. The nominal choices and groups in lines 24 – 43 portray the survival of the fittest. To them, the roads of life are rough. Life here is survival of the fittest. The hustle and bustle is obvious. This habitation is equivalent to the forest of life. The ruggedness of “Ogun” (line 24) and his wife “Oosa-oko” (line 24) and their adventures through mountains and hills, navigating through life draw attention to the bridge dwellers. Going through life for them is not palatable. These people struggle to make a living. There is a need for better living.

**m h**  
a concrete/ pentagon (line 19)

**m h m h**  
oily/ hands, jungle/ heads (line 20)

**m h**  
a dense/ delta (line 21)

**m h m h**  
hugue/ ridges, beaming/harvest (line 22)

**m h**  
primordial/ paths (line 23)

**m h**  
The paradoxical/ paths (line 24)

**m h**  
His/ wife (line 25)

**m h**  
combing mangrove/ hairs (line 26)

**m h**  
light/ roe (line 26)

**m h**  
The/ brilliance (line 27)

**m h q**  
the/ rumps/ of birds (line 27)

**m h m h**  
red/ roses, a black/ bush (line 28)

**m h**  
it's glossy/ green (line 29)

**m h**  
the greying/ curls (line 29)

**m h q**  
the/ grin/ of envy (line 30)

**m h m h**  
the/ frantic, life?s/ loss (line 32)

**m h**  
The/ ache (line 33)

**h q**  
pain/of grubby growth (line 33)

**m h**  
The/ oil (line 34)

**m h**  
harmattan-lacerated/ lips (line 34)

**m h q**  
the hard/ edges/ of sour sores (line 35)

**m h m h**  
The/ unguent, scaly/skins (line 36)

**m h**  
the cracked/ contours (line 37)

**m h**  
greasy/ massage (line 38)

**m h q**  
the/ decay/ of mangled mind (line 39)

**m h**  
a high/fever (line 42)

The nominal groups in lines 44 – 52, depict relaxation and enjoyment with affordability. The poet describes under the

bridge, different transactions are carried out. The place is referred to as a “department store” (line 47). Things sold under the bridge are just for sustenance because of their level of affordability. Someone wonder the kind of profits they make from such petty business. All the same, there their survival lies.

**m h q**  
the tangled/ tresses/ of their dark forest (line 45)

**m h q**  
the/ beauty/of life(line 46)

**m h**  
our department/ store (line 47)

**m h m h**  
The/ wares, ten/ naira (line 48)

**m h m h**  
our/ customers, the doleful/ den (line 49)

**m h**  
broken seedy/ boxes (line 50)

**m h**  
their tired/ limbs (line 51)

**m h q**  
the/ heat/ on shabby taxis (line 52)

The nominal groups in lines 53 – 58 depict food as a necessity for human living. Since this is the story of survival, people there depend solely on the local commercial kitchen (Cafeteria) to recharge and fill their stomachs when due. This might not be true because of fluctuations in their living. The cooking processes of these foods are still local and primitive “a chimney pot” (line 54). Hunger and thirstiness are two of those things nature naturally



responds to. In the hierarchy of needs, food is pertinent. The “throat” (line 57) and the “stomach” are referred to as deities. They are indeed to be worshipped.

**m h**  
their triple/ target (line 53)

**m h q**  
The/ function/ of a chimney-pot (line 54)

**m h**  
The/ fireplace (line 55)

**m h q**  
The/ road/ to a thirsty throat (line 57)

**m h q**  
The/ god/ of the hungry gullet (line 58)

In the nominal groups in lines 59 – 70, the poet's persona reveal the abuse of stimulants. Kola nut is a stimulant prevalent and if not abused amongst the less privileged, “Kola lobes reddened blackened lips” (line 59). The poet persona presents this idea naughtily and sarcastically by using sexual imagery “a prostitute's pudenda/a fearless phallus slips” (lines 60 – 61). In lines 65 – 70, just like the words of Segun Akinolu (The Beautiful Nubia) “In Africa, people love some fun to pass the calabash, make we drink so palm wine”. Drinking palm wine in the evening in Africa, particularly, in this part of the world is just like an escape route from all the hustles and bustles of the day. The people eat pounded yam/vegetable soup/palm wine. Men particularly addressed here are men who are not capable in their homes and probably failing in their responsibilities. At least for the shortest period, they are free from every domestic victimisation, “He praises the spot that pushes his problems away” (line 70). A particular man is addressed here though there are several others in this class. He owes this place an apology for

serving as an asylum.

**m** **h**  
 redden blackened/ lips (line 59)

**m** **h**  
 a prostitute?s/ pudenda (line 60)

**m** **h**  
 a fearless/ phallus (line 61)

**m** **h** **m** **h** **q**  
 a/ robber, the/ dead/ of night (line 63)

**m** **h** **q**  
 his/ dread/ on drowsy heads (line 64)

**m** **h**  
 a mouse?s/ moth (line 65)

**m** **h** **q**  
 a/ mound/ of pounded yam (line 66)

**m** **h** **q**  
 the heavy/ mortar/ of vegetable soup (line 67)

**m** **h** **m** **h**  
 The/ den, a hen-pecked/ husband (line 68)

**m** **h** **m** **h**  
 the/hell, his/ home (line 69)

**m** **h** **m** **h**  
 the/spot, his/problems (line 70)

In lines 71 – 76, here is a biblical allusion/rhetorical question.

There is a need for renewal and restoration and these are guaranteed. Everything to be amended and corrected here signifies abject poverty, “sew back the broken rubber strap/Dress the bad bottoms, and tack the tops” (lines 75 – 76). There is hope after all “we shall remove the stumbling block for a smooth race” (line 74). In lines 77 – 95, on this side of the world, certain people are likely cobblers. They polish people’s shoes to earn meagre money, “we are for Oga’s comfort/with a little kiwi polish” (lines 77 – 78). Kiwi is a brand of polish in Nigeria. This vocation is still borne out of survival. People’s shoes shined here are usually the white collar job workers, people who go out on good shoes are of high esteem. Despite the deplorable condition of this place, wealthy people are always treading the street. Different shoes are mentioned: “stiletto, clogs” (lines 91 – 92), and “soft suede” (line 95).

**m        h**  
His/ grace (line 71)

**m        h                m h**  
your/ foot,    a/ stone (line 72)

**m        h**  
the last/ strand (line 73)

**m                h**  
the stumbling/ block (line 74)

**m                h**  
a smooth/ race (line 74)

**m                        h**  
the broken rubber/ strap (line 75)

**m                h**  
the bad/ bottoms (line 76)

**m h**  
his sagging/ ego (line 79)

**m h**  
the day's/ papers (line 80)

**m h**  
the/ tender (line 80)

**m h q**  
the/ case/ of the court shoes (line 81)

**m h**  
the master's waning/ shadow (line 82)

**m h q**  
The/ dust/ of rust (line 84)

**m h m h**  
the rotten/ smell, the/ roar (line 84)

**m h q**  
the/ stream/ of a riotous life (line 85)

**m h q**  
The/ rage/ of a waterfall (line 86)

**m h**  
It's creative/ energies (line 88)

**m h**  
The/ shoes (line 89)

**m        h        q**  
the/ yoke/ of Coke (line 93)

**m        h**  
wayward/ waters (line 94)

**m   h**  
soft/ suede (line 95)

The nominal groups in lines 96 – 106, reveal the wide gap between the Aristocrats and the Proletariats. As against the rich who put in good and nice shoes, the poet persona talks about himself imagining a woman who is a peasant putting on “a pair of plastic slippers” (line 98). The situation of the woman further shows that she is struggling for existence. The gap between the Aristocrats and the Proletariats is obvious here. This is noteworthy: the rich queen is worshipped and her husband according to the persona “cleans our horrid heads/ with the dirt dangling on his beaded boots” (lines 104 – 105).

**m   h**  
the owner?s/ heart (line 96)

**m        h        q**  
the/ main/ of my mind (line 97)

**m        h        q**  
A/ pair/of plastic slippers (line 98)

**m        h**  
the sloppy/ earth (line 99)

**m        h**  
the stainless/ tip (line 100)

**m        h**  
the great golden/ shoes (line 101)

**m        h**  
The cute/ queen (line 102)

**m        h**  
better/ women (line 103)

**m        h                m        h**  
her/lord,                our/ king (line 104)

**m        h**  
our horrid/ heads (line 104)

**m        h**  
his beaded/ boots (line 105)

**m        h**  
The strong/ sap (line 106)

**m        h**  
our truncated/ trunks (line 106)

The nominal groups in lines 107 – 121, depict bad leadership and developmental retardation. The poet persona discusses how bad leadership retards the development of society. Stampedes of leadership faults: poor transportation, poor passenger welfare, and poor road facilities. The plights of people in this area and others are not well taken care of. All these are supposed to have been provided by the government but the reverse is the case. This is as good as putting people's lives on death row. The road is referred to as a “crazy highway” (line 115). The poet persona stresses the fact that the transportation system is “...transparent tyranny...true tragedy” (line 117). The situation here (there under the bridge) is nothing to write home about. Every sphere of their lives is hell – “For everything- from food to hood, from roof to hoof/Burns at the boiling bus stop under the bridge!” (lines 120 – 121). The roughness is pertinent.

**m h**  
your metro/station (line 107)

**m h**  
the/ subway (line 107)

**m h q**  
the/ crow/ in flight (line 110)

**m h**  
our mass/ transit (line 111)

**m h**  
those broken/ hearses (line 113)

**m h m h**  
the giddy/ city, the gaudy/ slums (line 114)

**m h**  
crazy/highways (line 115)

**m h**  
the/ serpent (line 115)

**m h q**  
this/ hell/ of a hole (line 116)

**m h**  
transparent/ tyranny (line 117)

**m h**  
true/ tragedy (line 117)

**m h**  
The/ horror (line 118)

**m            h**  
Vengeance/ ashes (line 119)

**m            h**  
the boiling/ bus (line 121)

**m   h**  
the/ bridge (line 121)

In the nominal groups in lines 122 – 130, the poet's persona portray a faulty transporting system and abuse of drugs. The state of the bus and the bus stop under the bridge is not that good. The place is marshy and slippery. People find it difficult to walk with ease here. The state of commuting and that of the driver are anatomized. Mainly here, the driver uses drugs (ogogoro) (line 127). The bus and other transportation means are not well maintained. Due to this, people on board complain.

**m   h**  
sleazy/ seats (line 122)

**m            h**  
squelching/ buttocks (line 122)

**m            h**  
rattling/ bonnets (line 122)

**m            h**  
The greasy/ ground (line 123)

**m    h            m            h**  
tired/ tyres, the scorching/ tar (line 124)

**m    h            m            h**  
roast/ plantain, cancerous/ palates (line 125)



**m h**                      **m h**  
the/penis,                  his/ palace (line 126)

**h**  
ogogoro (line 127)

**m h**                      **q**  
the/cataracts/ on the road (line 128)

**m h**                      **q**  
The/ tang/ of gas (line 129)

**m h**  
a leaking/ tank (line 129)

**m h**                      **m h**  
the/ nose,                  the/tongue (line 130)

In the nominal groups in lines 131 – 142, the poet persona depicts provocative dressing and lust. Due to provocative dressing, most passengers lust after their female counterparts, “The eyes bolt out of the bus to behold // Bounteous backsides sliding away into oblivion” (lines 131 – 132). There are several erotic music on the streets, “Blue strains” (line 133). There is a justification between lust and love. The poet's persona laments the lust of the flesh. Despite this, the persona's view is that sexually transmitted diseases cannot be contracted through lust, “well thank merciful God, our buried bones/can rest from diseases of desire and despair” (lines 137 – 138). Though passengers on board are not pleased, at last, they are free of their anger and anxiety due to their panic for safe arrival.

**m h**  
The/eye (line 131)

**m h**  
blues/ strains (line 133)

**m h**  
long lonely/ nights (line 134)

**m h q**  
the/ lake/ of lust (line 135)

**m h m h m h**  
our/ flesh, free/fold, its/ flame (line 136)

**m h m h**  
merciful/ God, our buried/ bone (line 137)

**m h**  
diseases/ of desire (line 138)

**m h q**  
the/ ignorance/ of pride (line 139)

**m h**  
the/ ire (line 140)

**m h q**  
the unblinking/ eye/ of all-seeing dog (line 142)

The nominal groups in lines 143 – 157 depict the dignity of labour. Here, there is a celebration of love after a hectic day's work. There is a juxtaposition between the way the poor relax and that of the rich. In lines 158- 161, the absurdities of life are portrayed here with absurdities. The quest for wealth through other means aside from justified labour is noteworthy. In lines 162 – 201, there is a need/awareness for peace, fertility, healing, comfort, and restoration, “In gloom-wrapped rooms, broken hearts begin to heal and heave, like life, under the bridge”.

**m h**  
The/ sun (line 143)

**m        h**  
the somnolent/ sea (line 143)

**m        h        m        h**  
the high/ house, the scabby/ sky (line 145)

**m h   m h**  
the/lowland, the/ lagoon (line 146)

**m   h**  
dance/of love (line 147)  
**m        h**  
cosy/cone (line 150)

**m        h        q**  
the/ labour/ of love (line 151)

**m        h        q**  
the/myriad/ of rooms (line 152)

**m        h        q**  
the/ belly/ of the baroque (line 153)

**m        h**  
A monumental/ masterpiece (line 154)

**m        h**  
the marvellous/ work (line 156)

**m        h**  
the public/park (line 158)

**m        h**  
the tropical/ forest (line 158)

**m h**  
a mad woman's pubic/ mound (line 159)

**m h**  
a magic/ worker (line 160)

**m h q**  
a/ dreamer/ of wealth (line 160)

**m h**  
the/ pants (line 161)

**m h**  
the/ beast (line 162)

**m h**  
the shy full/ moon (line 163)

**m h**  
the red/ eye (line 164)

**m h**  
the famished/ forest (line 165)

**m h**  
the drooping/ leaves (line 166)

**m h q**  
the/ fruits/ of labour (line 167)

**m h m h**  
the/beast, the love/ song (line 169)

**m h q**  
the/ croak/ of love-sick (line 170)

**m        h                q**  
The/ laugh/of hungry hyenas (line 171)

**m        h                q**  
a/ wolf/ in sheep's clothing (line 172)

**m        h**  
the/ wilds (line 173)

**m        h**  
The/ beast (line 174)

**m        h                q**  
a/ hillock/ of dry leaves (line 176)

**m        h**  
the/ paws (line 177)

**m        h                q**  
the/ rape/ of a greenhorn (line 179)

**m        h                q**  
the/ loss/ of virginity (line 180)

**m        h                q**  
the/ hymen/ of peace (line 182)

**m                h**  
a gloomy/ garden (line 183)

**m        h**  
The/ lunatics (line 184)

**m        h                q**  
the/ seeker/ of vanity (line 185)

**m h**  
the savaged/ beauty (line 188)

**m h**  
her thrashed/ trash (line 189)

**m h**  
howling/ hands (line 190)

**m h**  
the maimed/ memory (line 191)

**m h**  
the mangled/ mound (line 191)

**m h**  
fat/ fruits (line 192)  
**m h q**  
the twisted/ belly/ of a barren (line 193)

**m h q**  
the napping/ laps/ of the dreaming  
beast (line 194)

**m h**  
the/ sun (line 196)

**m h**  
its worldly/ eyes (line 196)

**m h**  
the day's/ dreams (line 197)

**m h**  
gloom-wrapped/ rooms (line 200)

**m      h**  
the/ bridge (line 201)

In this poem, the tool of naming and describing is used to express the poet's ideological stance on social stratification, poor standard of living, life on the street/Ghetto life, dignity of labour, abuse of drugs/ stimulants, environmental hazards, and the gap between the Aristocrats and the Proletariats. Representing actions, events, and states as stylistic functions in Segun Adekoya's *Under the Bridge*

In their representations of social actors who are state actors too, the poet deploys the below indicated transitivity choices.

**Material Action Intentional (MAI)** – Some examples of this transitivity device include:

they shuttle in broken seedy boxes (line 50)

He praises the spot (line 70)

He pores over the day (line 80) He calls it the croak (line 170)

He hits a hillock (line 176)

She hides in the blades (line 187)

**Material Action Events (MAE)** – The only example of this transitivity device includes: the sun closes its worldly eyes (line 196)

**Mental Perception (MP)** - Some examples of this transitivity device include:

I see (line 19)

I see in the main of my mind (line 97)

**Relational Intensive (RI)** – Some significant examples of this transitivity device are presented below:

However, some devices such as VP, MC, MR, and RC are not found in the poem. The table below shows the frequencies of occurrence of each of the devices:

**Frequency distribution pattern in Segun Adekoya's *Under the Bridge***

<b>Transitivity Devices</b>	<b>Frequencies</b>	<b>Percentages %</b>
<b>Material Action Process</b>		
<b>MAI</b>	6	31.58
<b>MAS</b>	0	0
<b>MAE</b>	1	5.26
<b>Verbalization Process (VP)</b>	0	0
<b>Mental Process</b>		
<b>MC</b>	0	0
<b>MR</b>	0	0
<b>MP</b>	2	10.53
<b>Relational Process</b>		
<b>RI</b>	9	47.37
<b>RP</b>	1	5.26
<b>RC</b>	0	0
<b>Total</b>	19	100

This poem has 6 items of MAI (31.58%), 1 item of MAE(5.26%), 2 items of MP (10.53%), 9 items of RI (47.37%), and 1 item of RP (5.26%). The MAI structures depict people living under the bridge are incapacitated and lacking the usual emotional love and care meant for them. The plights of people in this area and others are neglected. The poet persona discusses how bad leadership retards the development of the society.

The Mental Perception verbs reveal that despite their conditions, the creativity of these people is not tampered with. The poet's persona talks about the gap between the Aristocrats (the rich) and the Proletariats (the poor). The Relational Intensive (RI) device portrays people under the bridge are referred to as "God's building". This is a Biblical allusion meaning "God's temple". These people are supposed to be living dignified lives but the reverse is the case. The so-called God's temples are subjected to a hard life. Diseases are inevitable in this kind of



environment (under the bridge). The poet uses the verbs to reveal his ideological stance on social stratification, poor standard of living, life on the street/Ghetto life, dignity of labour, abuse of drugs/ stimulants, environmental hazards, and the gap between the Aristocrats and the Proletariats.

## Conclusion

The ideologies of Adekoya as expressed in the poem through the tools of naming and describing, and representing actions, events and states, are a repudiation of bad leadership, corruption, poor standard of living, environmental hazards, drug abuse, poverty, and imbalance in the state of the nation. Thus, the poet advocates good governance for the nation. Hence, he succinctly deploys these tools to project the above ideological standpoints in the poem. The poet has also be able to show in the poem the multifaceted challenges that are inherent in Nigerian/African socio-political systems as a result of poor governance. The study further contributes by enhancing understanding Segun Adekoya's idiolect and ideologies in the poem through the application of critical stylistic tools to the study of the poem.

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