Decoding the context of ideology in two extracts from a contemporary Ghanaian prose work

Leonard A. KOUSSOUHON✎
Patrice C. AKOGBETO
Innocent KOUTCHADE
Ayodele A. ALLAGBE
Université d'Abomey-Calavi

Abstract – This study is premised on the systemic functional perspective to textual analysis, which considers language as a means for the expression of content, the enactment of the social world and the construction of texts or discourses (cf. Halliday, 1971, Halliday and Hasan, 1985/1989, Eggins, 1994, Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004, Fontaine, 2013). It takes the view that only authentic products of social interaction-texts- have the potential to reflect or mirror reality in the (social) world. It contends against this backdrop that the analysis of authentic products of social interaction-texts- should always consider the cultural and social context in which they are negotiated (Eggins, 1994). It follows from this to highlight that there is a dialectal relationship between text (or language) and context (or culture) (Widdowson, 2004). This is to say, text shapes and is in turn shaped by context. Systemic scholars underscore three types of context, viz. context of culture (or genre), context of situation (or register) and context of ideology (Eggins, 1994). This paper aims to decode the context of ideology in a fictional text, viz. *The Housemaid* (1998), written by an African (Ghanaian) female writer. Specifically, it aims to unveil the linguistic structures which obviously encode the world-view or ideological stance of the writer. The assumption here is that a fictional (or narrative) text is framed by the authorial ideology. While the findings of this study prove the relevance of the SFL theory to the analysis of a contemporary literary text, they also confirm that Amma Darko endorses the feminist theoretical praxis.

Key words: Context of ideology, feminist theoretical praxis, systemic functional perspective, textual analysis, world-view, etc.

1. Introduction.

Systemic Functional Linguistics (henceforth, SFL), as the name implies, is a linguistic theory that focuses on the functions of language as well as how those functions are organised (Fontaine, 2013) in authentic human communication. According to Eggins (1994:2), four theoretical claims characterise SFL. These claims are:

  i. Language use is functional (functional);
  ii. Its function is to make meanings (semantic);
  iii. These meanings are influenced by the social and cultural context in which they are exchanged (contextual) and

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✎ koussouhon@yahoo.com

iv. The process of using language is a semiotic process, a process of making meanings by choosing (semiotic).

It follows from the above that SFL is a useful analytic model. Unlike other linguistic theories such as the Chomskyan theory, for instance, the SFL theory pays more attention to language (form and function) as well as the role it plays in a given socio-cultural context. It is obvious in the foregoing that text (or language) is inextricably linked to context (or culture) (Widdowson, 2004), and that text influences and is in turn influenced by context. Systemic scholars highlight three types of context, viz. context of culture (or genre), context of situation (or register) and context of ideology (Eggins, 1994). A handful of recent scholarly linguistic research works has been carried out on both literary and non-literary texts (cf. Dooga, 2009, Koussouhon, 2009, 2009b, Cunanan, 2011, Koussouhon and Koutchadé, 2011, Treimane, 2011, Bilal, 2012, Koussouhon and Koukpossi, 2013, Koussouhon and Allagbé, 2013, Koussouhon and Dossoumou, 2014, Koussouhon, Akogbéto and Allagbé, 2014, etc.).

While some of these works explore such grammatical aspects as Transitivity, Mood and Theme which realise such semantic dimensions as Ideational/Experiential, Interpersonal and Textual in texts, others analyse such contextual properties as Field, Tenor and Mode which lexicogrammatically enact the context (cultural, situational and ideological) within which patterns of meaning are negotiated in texts. It should be noted, however, that none of these linguistic endeavours has focused on how the context of ideology influences the language of the fictional oeuvre, viz. *The Housemaid* (1998), written by an African (Ghanaian) female writer, under study here. And given that some recent scholarly research works (cf. Ofosu, 2013, Koussouhon, Akogbéto and Allagbé, 2014, etc.) have fairly revealed that Amma Darko is a feminist writer, the current study aims to check whether she borrows some ideological ingredients from the feminist theoretical praxis to thread her fictional text under study or/and to find out to what extent she shifts from or holds onto conventional ideologies with regard to such aspects as gender representation, voice, power, reality, etc. The theoretical assumption that a fictional (or narrative) text is framed by the authorial ideology is also probed here.

2. Theoretical Prerequisites.
2.1. Text and context: systemic functional perspective.

SFL is a theoretical model that usually describes, treats and interprets text in context. According to Halliday and Hasan (1976), text is "any passage (of language), spoken or written, of whatever length, that does form a unified whole. (p.1)" Text can also be referred to as a construct of meanings mediated by a purposively selected set of linguistic conventions employed in a given generic template (Allagbé, 2015). It follows from this a view that text cogently identifies with or belongs to a specific register or/and genre.

The term "context" or "co-text" simply means "what is with text" or the "total environment" (Halliday and Hasan, 1985/1989:5) within which the text functions, unfolds and upon which its interpretation depends. According to systemicists, there are three types of context, viz. context of culture (or genre), context of situation (or register) and context of ideology (Eggins, 1994). In SFL, the concepts "genre" and "register" are associated respectively with the context of culture and the context of situation. While genre serves to indicate "the impact of the context of culture on language [use]" (Eggins, 1994:9), register describes "the impact of the dimensions of the immediate context of situation of a language event on the way a language is used" (Ibid). Lexicogrammatically, three dimensions called register variables, viz. field, tenor and mode, function to elicit the immediate context of situation. Table 1 summarily defines each of the variables.

Register variables	Meanings
Field	is the social action which is going on and has a recognizable meaning in the social system; a complex of acts in some ordered configuration, and in which the text plays some part. The field includes, but is not limited to, the subject matter as one aspect.
Tenor	is the role structure, or the cluster of socially meaningful participant relationships, both permanent attributes of the participants and role relationships that are specific to the situation.
Mode	is the symbolic organization, or a particular status that is assigned to the text within the situation; its function in relation to the social action and the role structure, including the channel or medium, and rhetorical mode.

Table 1: Register Variables and their Meanings (Drawn from Treimane, 2011:80).

Of the three types of context, the most abstract is the context of ideology (Eggins, 1994). The term "ideology" denotes "the matrix of beliefs we use to comprehend the world and to the value systems through and by which we interact

in society" (Simpson, 2004:78). In other words, it refers to "the system of beliefs, values, and categories by reference to which a person or a society comprehends the world" (Fowler, 1986:130). In fact, ideologies are encoded in language. This means thus that linguistic conventions function to realise, reproduce and even change ideologies. Ideologies are also embedded in particular conventions whose nature depends on the power relations that underlie those conventions (Fairclough, 1989:2). This is to say, ideologies are the product of power relations dissimulated in human or social relations.

It follows from the foregoing to argue that ideologies are pervasively present in any use of language, and that they diffusely tincture any human or social relations. As Eggins (1994:10) notes, "Whatever genre we are involved in, and whatever the register of the situation, our use of language will also be influenced by our ideological positions: the values we hold (consciously or unconsciously), the biases and perspectives we adopt." So a fictional (or narrative) text can be argued to embed its author's/narrator's/speaking character's ideology or, to borrow Fowler's terms, point of view. In fact, it is the author's/narrator's/speaking character's ideology or point of view that orientates the text, fleshes out its field (theme) and even determines its transitivity (linguistic) profile.

2.2. Field/ideology/transitivity: is there a link?

As implied in passing in the discussion above, there is a direct link between field, ideology and transitivity in the sense that they are all encoded on the lexicogrammatical axis. This denotes thus that selections in lexicogrammar would realise the register variable "field", which invariably deals with what a text is all about, and ideology, which obviously exudes the perspective(s) or the matrix of beliefs underlying what a speaker/writer/narrator says or writes; i.e., the text. In SFL, transitivity is seen as the cornerstone of the semantic organisation of reality or experience. That is why it is often referred to as the grammar of Ideational/Experiential Meaning or Metafunction. Transitivity usually accounts for how a speaker/writer/narrator draws on language resources to express his/her perception(s) of the external world and the internal world of his/her own consciousness (Bloor and Bloor, 2004). Drawing on this, Halliday (1971:354) argues that:

> Transitivity is the set of options whereby the speaker encodes his experience of the processes of the external world, and of the internal world of his [or her] own consciousness, together with the participants in these processes and their attendant circumstances; and it embodies a very basic distinction of processes into two types,

> those that are regarded as due to an external cause, an agency other than the person or object involved, and those that are not.

Elsewhere, Halliday (1976:30 cited in Fontaine, 2013:73) contends that "transitivity is the grammar of processes … and the participants in these processes, and attendant circumstances." It follows from this that a transitivity analysis entails the identification of process types, participant types and circumstantial elements (Koussouhon and Allagbé, 2013) contained in a text. According to Koussouhon (2009b:129), a transitivity analysis helps one to answer the functional question: *who does what to whom/what, when, where, why and how?* Table 1.2 swiftly presents the various process types, their corresponding participants and attendant circumstances.

Processes	Meanings	Participants	Circumstances	Examples
Material	Doing, happening	Actor, Goal, Beneficiary		Ayodele(Actor) plucked the mango(Goal) on the tree(Location)
Mental	Sensing, seeing, thinking, wanting, feeling	Senser, Phenomenon		Ayodele(Senser) liked the mango(Phenomenon)
Relational	Being	Carrier, Attribute, Token, Value	Extent, Cause, Location, Matter, Manner, Role and Accompaniment	Ayodele(Carrier) is nice (Attribute) Ayodele(Token) is the linguist(Value) The linguist(Value) is Ayodele(Token)
Verbal	Saying	Sayer, Verbiage, Receiver		Ayodele(sayer) asked me(Receiver) a question(Verbiage)
Existential	Existing	Existent		There was a mango(Existent) on the tree
Behavioural	Behaving	Behaver, Behaviour, Phenomenon		Ayodele(Behaver) would smile a wry smile(Behaviour) Ayodele(Behaver) laughed at me(Phenomenon)

Table 1.2: Process Types, Participant Types and Circumstantial Elements (Slightly adapted from Eggins, 1994:237; Bloor and Bloor, 2004:132; Fontaine, 2013:77).

3.   Analysis of the Fictional Text.

This paper aims to decode the context of ideology in *The Housemaid* (1998), written by an African (Ghanaian) female writer. For this goal, two extracts have been drawn from the novel. Following Eggins (1994), Fontaine (2013), Koussouhon and Allagbé (2013), etc., the extracts have been segmented into clauses. The clauses

have also been explored for transitivity features (processes, participants and attendant circumstances). These features, as systemicists argue, account for how an author/narrator/speaking character encodes his/her ideology or represents his/her (fictional) reality or/and experience via language.

3.1.1. **Identification of Transitivity Features in Extract 1 (p.6-8)**

The identification of Transitivity features in Extract 1 is realised according to the key below.

Key:

P=Process, Pm=material, Pme=mental, Pb=behavioural, Pv=verbal, Pe=existential, Pi=intensive, Pcc=circumstancial, Pp=possessive, Pc=causative. A=Actor, G=Goal, B=Beneficiary, R=Range S=Senser, Ph=Phenomenon. Sy=Sayer, Rv=Receiver, Vb=Verbiage. Be=Behaver, Bh=Behaviour. X=Existent. T=Token, V=Value, Cr=Carrier, At=Attribute. Pr=Possessor, Pd=Possessed. C=Circumstance, Cl=location, Cx=extent, Cm=manner, Cc=cause, Ca=accompaniement, Ct=matter, Co=role. Ag=Agent.

NB: It should be noted that all the processes in the extracts are in bold and the participants underlined.

1. By now (Cl) <u>the abandoned baby's story (A)</u> **had spread (Pm)** to every nook and corner (Cl), 2. **causing (Pm)** <u>fights and arguments (G)</u> in many camps (Cl). 3. Suddenly (Cm), <u>the name of the unknown eastern village (Cr)</u> **was (Pi)** on the lips of every Ghanaian (Cl). 4. At the station near the main market in Kumasi (Cl), <u>the town where the two scavengers (A)</u> **made (Pm)** <u>their find (G)</u>, 5. <u>a male truck pusher (A)</u>, [**scarred (Pm)** by a tribal mark (Cm) on his left cheek (Cl)], **was loading (Pm)** <u>a woman's yams (G)</u>. 6. <u>He (Sy)</u> **shouted across (Pv)** to no one in particular (Cl), 7. 'As for this (Ct), when <u>the mother (G)</u> **is caught (Pm)**, 8. <u>her womb (G)</u> **should be removed (Pm)**, 9. **cut (Pm)** in two (Cm), 10. **given (Pm)** to her (Cl) 11. **to swallow (Pm)** by the count of three (Cm),' 12. 'Yes! (Vb)' 13. **agreed (Pb)** <u>a second truck pusher (Be)</u>, eager (At) for blood (Cc), 14. as <u>he (A)</u> **haggled with (Pm)** <u>a tomato seller (G)</u>. 15. Baring his badly stained teeth (Cm), <u>he (Sy)</u> **yelled (Pv)**, 16. 'And <u>she (G)</u> **shouldn't be anaesthetised (Pm)** 17. when <u>the womb (G)</u> **is being removed (Pm)**.' 18. 'Rubbish! (Vb)' **butted in (Pv)** <u>the tomato seller (Sy)</u>, 19. <u>who (A)</u> **could take (Pm)** <u>no more of this male nonsense (G)</u>. 20. '<u>I (S)</u> **can see (Pme)** <u>you two young men (Ph)</u> 21. **turning out (Pi)** just like the irresponsible man (Cm) 22.

who (A) **impregnated (Pm)** the poor woman (G) in the first place (Cl).' 23. 'Madam! Ah! (Vb)' 24. The scarred truck pusher (T) **was (Pi)** at a genuine loss (Cm). 25. 'Who (Sy) **said (Pv)** 26. he (Cr) **was (Pi)** irresponsible (At)? 27. And as for him (Ct), **what (G) does** he (A) **even have to do (Pm)** with the abandonment of the baby (Cm)?' 28. This (A) **so infuriated (Pm)** the woman with the yams (G) 29. that she (A) **spat (Pm)** angrily (Cm) right at the scarred truck pusher's feet (Cl). 30. He (A) **seethed (Pm)** with disgust (Cm). 31. The yam woman (A) **didn't give (Pm)** a hoot (G). 32. You holy fool! (Vb)' 33. she (Sy) **roared (Pv)**. 34. 'You (S) **think (Pme)** 35. the mother (A) just **sat (Pm)** there (Cl), 36. **opened up (Pm)** her legs (G), 37. and God (A) above (Cl) **pushed (Pm)** the baby (G) into her (Cl) or what?' 38. 'Oh! (Vb)' **cried (Pv)** stained teeth (Sy), 39. unable (At) **to hold (Pm)** his tongue (G), 40. 'Oh! (Vb) 41. Why? (Cc) 42. **Did** my brother (Sy) **say (Pv)** 43. it (T) **wasn't (Pi)** the man (V) 44. who (A) **impregnated (Pm)** her (G)? 45. **Is (Pi)** that (T) the issue (V)?' 46. 'Good question, my brother (Vb). 47. **Ask (Pv)** that (Vb) again (At).' 48. A taxi driver (A) **parked (Pm)** nearby (At) [and busily (Cm) **feasting on (Pm)** boiled corn and salted coconut (G)] (Cm), 49. **interrupted (Pm)**. 50. 'Why **do** women (A) always (Cl) **try to turn (Pm)** issues (G) **around** like that (Cm)? 51. The issue (Cr) **is (Pi)** 52. why she (A) **should deliver (Pm)** a baby (G) 53. and **dump (Pm)** her (G) in the thicket (Cl), not ...' 54. '**Shut up (Pm)**! (Vb) 55. **SHUT UP (Pm)**! (Vb)' 56. the tomato woman (Sy) **shouted (Pv)**. 57. 'Why **do** you men (A) always (Cl) **try to make (Pm)** nonsense of issues (G), 58. just **to escape (Pm)** blame (G)?' 59. '**Escape (Pm)** blame (G)? 60. Please Madam!' (Vb) the truck pusher with stained teeth (Cm) (Sy) **sneered (Pv)**. 61. '**Tell (Pv)** me (Rv),' to the taxi driver (Cl), 62. '**can** you (S) **understand (Pme)** 63. why whenever trouble to do with sex (Cr) **crops up (Pi)**, 64. women (Sy) **talk (Pv)** 65. as if it (V) **was (Pi)** only men (T) 66. who (S) **enjoyed (Pme)** the act (Ph)?' 67. The taxi driver (A) **applauded (Pm)** wildly (Cm). 68. 'How you (A) **have hit (Pm)** the nail (G) right on the head (Cl), my brother!' 69. To more cheers (Cl), which (A) **disgusted (Pm)** the tomato seller (G). 70. 'This (A) **is getting (Pm)** nowhere (Cl), (Vb)' 71. she (Sy) **blurted out (Pv)**. 72. And **turned (Pm)** her frustration (G) on her truck pusher (Cl). 73. 'You (A) either **take (Pm)** what (G) 74. I (A) **am offering (Pm)**, 75. or me and you (A) **have (Pm)** no deal (G).' 76. 'Why? (Cc/Vb)' 77. stained teeth (Sy) **shrieked (Pv)**. 78. 'Ah! (Vb) 79. **Are (Pi)** you (Cr) mad (At) at me (Cl) 80. because of what (Vb) I (Sy) **said (Pv)**?' 81. 'Why **should** I (Cr) **be (Pi)**?' with caustic sarcasm (Cm). 82. The poor baby's mother, [whoever (V) she (T) is (Pi)] (T), **is (Pi)** no relation of mine (V), 83. so why **should** I (Cr) **be** mad (At) with you over her (Cm)? 84. [All that (Ph) I (S)'m interested in (Pme)] (A) **is paying (Pm)** you (B) the lowest possible price (G) 85. **to cart (Pm)** my tomatoes (G).

86. <u>That (V)</u>**'s (Pi)** <u>all (T)</u>.' 87. <u>The all-male cart pushers (S)</u> **realised (Pme)** 88. that <u>they (A)</u> **had better not provoke (Pm)** <u>their all-female customers any further (G)</u>. 89. 'Then as for this (Ct), my brother, **let (Pc)** <u>me (A)</u> **shut (Pm)** <u>my big mouth **up**</u> (G), 90. before <u>my madam customer here (Cl) (S)</u> **decides (Pme)** 91. **to let (Pc)** <u>someone else (A)</u> **cart (Pm)** <u>her yams (G)</u>, (Vb)' 92. **quipped (Pv)** <u>the scarred pusher (Sy)</u>. 93. And <u>all, including the taxi driver (Be)</u>, **laughed (Pb)**.

3.1.2. *Transitivity Analysis of Extract 1.*

As mentioned earlier, the transitivity analysis of an instance of language-in-use- text- involves the identification of such features as process types, participants and attendant circumstances therein. Table 1.3 gives the statistics of the various process types identified in Extract 1.

Process Types	Material	Mental	Behavioural	Verbal	Existential	Relational			
						Intensive	Circumstantial	Possessive	Causative
Frequency	49	07	01	16	00	14	00	00	02
Percentage (%)	55.05	07.86	01.12	17.97	00	15.73	00	00	02.24

Table 1.3: Process Types in Extract 1.

As shown in the table above, Extract 1 contains a total number of 89 processes. It comprises five out of the six types of process types as indicated in the table.

3.1.2.1. *Material Processes in Extract 1.*

In Extract 1, the material type ranks first with a figure of 49 (i.e., 55.05%) processes. The processes are encoded in such verbs as "had spread" in (1), "causing" in (2), "made" in (4), "was loading" and "scarred" in (5), "is caught" in (7), "should be removed" in (8), "cut" in (9), "given" in (10), "to swallow" in (11), "haggled with" in (14), "shouldn't be anaesthetised" in (16), "is being removed" in (17), "(could) take" in (19 and 73), "impregnated" in (22 and 44), "does ... he even have to do" in (27), "infuriated" in (28), "spat" in (29), "seethed" in (30), "didn't give" in (31), "sat" in (35), "opened up" in (36), "pushed" in (37), "parked" and "feasting on" in (48), "interrupted" in (49), "try to turn" in (50), "should deliver" in (52), "dump" in (53), "shut up" in (54, 55 and 89), "try to make... of" in (57), "(to) escape" in (58 and 59), "applauded" in (67), "have hit" in (68), "disgusted" in (69), "is getting" in (70), "turned" in (72), "am offering" in (74), "have" in (75), "is paying" in (84), "(to) cart" in (85 and 91) and "had better not provoke" in (88).

It is obvious in the above that all the clauses in Extract 1 do encode concrete, real and tangible actions realised mainly by animate participants. Most of these

actions are transitive (more than 80%), thereby revealing how relatively dynamic the participants that realise them are. The relative dynamism of the participants is measured against the backdrop of the number of actions they realise in the extract. It should be noted that while some of the participants in the clauses play the Actor roles, others act simply as Goals. To gauge the dynamism of the participants, we simply consider the ones in initial positions in the clauses irrespective of whether they are Actors or Goals. As a result, the participants with a large number of realised actions are considered as major but those with a low number are treated as minor. Table 1.4 presents the major participants in the material processes in Extract 1.

Participants	The woman	A taxi driver	The scarred truck pusher	The mother's womb	The tomato seller	The stained teeth
No of actions	07	06	05	04	04	04
Percentage (%)	14.28	12.24	10.20	08.16	08.16	08.16

Table 1.4: Major Participant Types in the Material Processes in Extract 1.

3.1.2.2. Mental Processes in Extract 1.

Mental processes rank fourth with a number of 07 (i.e., 07.86%) processes. These processes are expressed by "can see" in (20), "think" in (34), "understand" in (62), "enjoyed" in (66), "'m interested in" in (84), "realised" in (87) and "decides" in (90). In fact, these processes fall into the categories of mental processes, viz. Cognition (34, 62, 84, 87 and 90; i.e., 71.42%), Perception (20; i.e., 14.28%) and Affection (66; i.e., 14.28%), propounded by Halliday and Matthiessen (2004). The Senser roles in these processes are realised by conscious beings. These are "I (the tomato seller)" in (20 and 84), "You (the scarred truck pusher)" in (34), "you (the taxi driver) in (62), "who (men)" in (66), "The all-male cart pushers" in (87) and "my madam customer" in (90).

3.1.2.3. Behavioural Processes in Extract 1

There is only one (01.12%) behavioural process in this extract. And this process is encoded in "laughed" in (93) undertaken by the Behaver "all, including the driver".

3.1.2.4. Verbal Processes in Extract 1

Verbal processes share the same proportions with relational processes. There are 16 (i.e., 17.97%) processes in this extract. These processes are expressed by

"shouted across" in (6), "yelled" in (15), "butted in" in (18), "said" in (25 and 80), "roared" in (32), "cried" in (38), "did … say" in (42), "Ask" in (47), "sneered" in (60), "Tell" in (61), "talk" in (64), "blurted out" in (71), "shrieked" in (77) and "quipped" in (92). The main Sayer roles are performed by "The stained teeth" in (15, 38, 47, 60, 77 and 80), "The scarred truck pusher" in (6, 42 and 92), and "The tomato seller" in (18, 56 and 71).

3.1.2.5.   Relational Processes in Extract 1

The 16 (i.e., 17.97%) relational processes are shared by two out of the four sub-types, viz. Intensive (14; i.e., 15.73%) and Causative (02; i.e., 02.24%). The 14 intensive processes are expressed mainly by the copula "be". It appears 13 times (3, 24, 26, 43, 45, 51, 65, 79, 81, 82, 82, 83 and 86) both in the simple present, simple past and present conditional forms. It should be noted that 08 (3, 21, 24, 26, 51, 79, 81 and 83) out of these processes are attributive and 06 identifying (43, 45, 65, 82, 82 and 86). The last process is encoded in "turning out" in (21). The two causative processes are encoded in "(to) let" in (89 and 91). All these processes have both animate and inanimate participants such as "the name of the unknown eastern village", "(the truck pushers)", "I" (the tomato seller)", "it", etc.

3.1.2.6.   Circumstances in Extract 1.

There are 48 circumstantial properties in Extract 1. This figure is shared by four out of the seven sub-types propounded by Eggins (1994). Table 1.5 presents the four sub-types as they appear in the analysis above.

Circumstances	Location	Extent	Manner	Cause	Accompaniment	Matter	Role
Frequency	24	00	18	03	00	03	00
Percentage (%)	50	00	37.50	06.25	00	06.25	00

Table 1.5: Circumstances in Extract 1.

It is obvious in the table above that circumstances of location (24; i.e., 50%) and manner (18; i.e., 37.50%) are the dominant categories in the extract. They function to realise experiential meanings related to the time, duration, place and manner of the processes contained in the extract. So the extract contains a spatio-temporal setting.

3.2.1. Identification of Transitivity Features in Extract 2 (p.29-31)

This extract is analysed based on the key presented above.

1. <u>Kataso, a village in the eastern hills (A)</u>, **had (Pm)** <u>no flowing water, no electricity, no entertainment centre, nothing (G)</u>. 2. <u>Only the chief (A)</u> **owned (Pm)** <u>a television set- old, black and white, and 100 per cent out of order (G)</u>. 3. There **would have been (Pe)** <u>no power (X)</u> 4. **to run (Pm)** <u>it (G)</u>, 5. even if <u>it (A)</u> **had worked (Pm)**. 6. <u>It (Cr)</u> **stood (Pi)** in the palace (Cl) for decoration (Cc). 7. <u>A privileged few, [who (A) **could occasionally (Cm) afford (Pm)** batteries (G)] (A)</u>, **owned (Pm)** <u>pre-set radios (G)</u>, 8. <u>the kind (G)</u> **imported (Pm)** from China (Cl) in the 1960s (Cl); 9. <u>they (G)</u> **were set (Pm)** permanently (Cm) to the only radio station (Cl) 10. <u>that (Cr)</u> **had been (Pi)** available (At) at the time (Cl). 11. <u>Which (A)</u> therefore **left (Pm)** <u>sex (G)</u> as the only really affordable entertainment (At) in Kataso (Cl). 12. <u>Everyone- young, old, mature and immature- (A)</u> **indulged in (Pm)** <u>it (G)</u> freely (Cm), 13. **making (Pc)** <u>the two midwives (A)</u> <u>the busiest of the village professionals (G)</u>. 14. <u>The young men, [when they (A) **could no longer stand (Pm)** this bland, grey life (G)] (A)</u>, **would leave for (Pm)** <u>Accra, Kumasi and Tarokadi (G/Cl)</u>, 15. **to work (Pm)** as shoe-shine boys, truck pushers or hawkers of items such as popcorn, dog chains and air fresheners along the cities' business streets (Co). 16. Occasionally (Cm), <u>some (G)</u> **were booted out (Pm)**, on the chief's orders for gross misdemeanour (Cm). 17. One dawn (Cl), <u>the palace announcer (Sy)</u> **would shout out (Pv)**, 18. '**Hear (Pme)**, 19. oh **hear (Pme)**, <u>you good people of Kataso (S)</u>. 20. <u>The chief (Sy)</u> **has asked (Pv)** <u>me (Rv)</u> 21. **to bring (Pm)** <u>this message (G)</u> to you all (Cl). 22. <u>Kofi Akorti (Rv)</u> **has been asked (Pv)** 23. **to leave (Pm)** <u>this village (G/Cl)</u> immediately (Cm). 24. <u>Mama Ama Mbroo (Sy)</u> **reported (Pv)** 25. that <u>he (A)</u> **had impregnated (Pm)** <u>her fourteen-year-old daughter (G)</u>. 26. <u>This (A)</u> **brings (Pm)** to twelve (Cl) 27. <u>the young girls (G)</u> <u>Kofi Akorti (A)</u> **has so far impregnated (Pm)** in Kataso (Cl). 28. <u>The chief (S)</u> **thinks (Pme)** 29. <u>it (Cr)</u> **is (Pi)** in the interest of the village (At) 30. that <u>Akorti (A)</u> **carries (Pm)** <u>his wilful and undisciplined penis away (G)</u> from here (Cl) 31. before <u>he (A)</u> **impregnates (Pm)** <u>another twelve girls (G)</u>.' 32. <u>The girls (G)</u>, in contrast, **were sent for (Pm)** by relations or contacts (Cm) in the cities (Cl) 33. **to work (Pm)** as housemaids and babysitters (Co), 34. though <u>many (A)</u> eventually (Cm) **ended up (Pm)** as ice-water sellers and prostitutes (Co). 35. One day (Cl), four years ago (Cl), Akua (G), **frustrated and itching to leave (Pm)** <u>Kataso (G/Cl)</u>, 36. but **seeing (Pme)** [<u>no protest at all of **being sent for (Pm)**</u>] (Ph), 37. **did (Pm)** <u>what (G)</u> 38. <u>only one girl before her (A)</u> **had done (Pm)**. 39. <u>She (A)</u> **left (Pm)** home (G/Cl) 40. and **headed out (Pm)**, 41. **saying (Pv)** nothing (Vb) to anyone (Cl). 42. <u>Her mother (S)</u> **thought (Pme)** 43. <u>she (A)</u> **was going (Pm)** to friends (Cl). 44. <u>Those [who (S) **saw (Pme)** her (Ph) **heading (Pm)** towards the outskirts of Kataso (Cl)] (S)</u> **assumed (Pme)** 45. <u>she</u>

(G) **had been sent (Pm)**. 46. So <u>Akua (A)</u> **walked on (Pm)**, 47. **left (Pm)** <u>Kataso (G/Cl)</u>, 48. **continued (Pm)** through Braha, the next village (Cl), 49. **arrived (Pm)** at Osiadan (Cl), 50. and **walked (Pm)** through town (Cl) [**to position (Pm)** <u>herself (G)</u> on the Accra-Kumasi highway (Cl)] (Cl), 51. **armed (Pm)** only with her determination (Cm) [**to make (Pm)** <u>it (G)</u> to the city (Cl)] (Cl). 52. For nearly three hours (Cx) <u>she (A)</u> **stood (Pm)** by the roadside (Cm) 53. **asking for (Pv)** <u>a lift (Vb)</u>. 54. Eventually (Cm), <u>a contractor's truck (A)</u> **stopped (Pm)** for her (Cc). 55. 'Where to? (Cl) 56. <u>The driver (Sy)</u> **asked (Pv)** curtly (Cm). 57. '<u>Kumasi (Vb/Cl)</u>.' 58. 'You (A) **have** <u>the money (G)</u> **to pay (Pm)** <u>me (B)</u>?' 59. '<u>No (Vb)</u>.' 60. <u>He (Sy)</u> **grunted (Pv)**. 61. 'So <u>you (A)</u> **won't pay (Pm)** <u>me (G)</u>?' 62. <u>Akua (A)</u> **unbuttoned (Pm)** <u>her blouse (G)</u>. 63. <u>The driver's eyes (A)</u> **blazed (Pm)** with consent (Cm). 64. <u>She (A)</u> **removed (Pm)** <u>her pants (G)</u>. 65. <u>He (Be)</u> **grinned (Pb)**, 66. and **stopped (Pm)** <u>the truck (G)</u> in a secluded bend (Cl). 67. 'But **don't make (Pc)** <u>me (A)</u> pregnant (At), (Vb)' 68. <u>Akua (Sy)</u> **cautioned (Pv)**. 69. '<u>I (Ag)</u> **won't (Pc)**,' 70. and <u>he (A)</u> **covered (Pm)** <u>her nipples (G)</u> with his lips (Cm). 71. <u>He (A)</u> **sucked (Pm)** 72. and **fondled (Pm)** <u>her body (G)</u>. 73. <u>Akua (S)</u> **liked (Pme)** <u>it (Ph)</u> 74. and **did (Pm)** <u>the same (G)</u> for him (Cc). 75. When <u>it (Cr)</u> **was over (Pi)**, 76. <u>the rest of the journey (A)</u> **continued (Pm)** in stunned silence (Cm). 77. <u>The driver (A)</u> **dropped (Pm)** her (G) at the railway station (Cl) four hours later (Cl). 78. '<u>I (S)</u>**'m sure (Pme)** 79. <u>you (A)</u>**'ll find (Pm)** <u>help (G)</u> here (Cl),' 80. <u>he (S)</u> **assured (Pme)** <u>her (Ph)</u>. 81. And **drove away (Pm)**. 82. <u>Akua (A)</u> **did (Pm)**. 83. There **were (Pe)** <u>many young girls (X)</u> here (Cl) 84. **working (Pm)** as porters (Co), 85. <u>who (A)</u> **had bolted (Pm)** from home (Cl) 86. **to seek (Pb)** greener pastures (Bh), just like her (Cm).

3.2.2. *Transitivity Analysis of Extract 2*

Table 1.6 summarises the various Process Types (as they appear in the Transitivity identification above) in Extract 2.

Process Types	Material	Mental	Behavioural	Verbal	Existential	Relational			
						Intensive	Circumstantial	Possessive	Causative
Frequency	58	10	02	09	02	04	00	00	03
Percentage (%)	65.90	11.36	02.27	10.22	02.27	04.54	00	00	03.40

<u>**Table 1.6**</u>: Process Types in Extract 2

There are 88 processes in Extract 2. Unlike Extract 1, this passage contains all the various process types as shown in the table.

3.2.2.1. *Material Processes in Extract 2*

Just like in Extract 1, the dominant process type in this text is material with a total number of 58 (i.e., 65.90%) processes. These processes are encoded in "had" in (1), "owned" in (2 and 7), "to run" in (4), "had worked" in (5), "imported" in (8), "were set" in (9), "left" in (11, 39 and 47), "indulged in" in (12), would leave" in (14), "could ... stand" in (14), "to work" in (15 and 33), "were booted out" in (16), "to bring" in (21), "to leave" in (23), "had impregnated" in (25), "brings" in (26), "has ... impregnated" in (27), "carries" in (30), "impregnates" in (31), "were sent for" in (32), "ended up" in (34), "frustrated and itching to leave" in (35), "... being sent for" in (36), "did" in (37, 74 and 82), "had done" in (38), "headed out" in (40), "was going" in (43), "had been sent" in (45), "walked (on)" in (46 and 50), "continued" in (48 and 76), "arrived" in (49), "to position" in (50), "(was) armed" in (51), "to make" in (51), "stood" in (52), "stopped" in (54 and 66), "have ... to pay" in (58), "won't pay" in (61), "unbuttoned" in (62), "blazed" in (63), "removed" in (64), "covered" in (70), "sucked" in (71), "fondled" in (72), "dropped" in (77), "'ll find" in (79), "drove away" in (81), "working" in (84) and "had bolted" in (85).

As the analysis above exudes, this extract contains both transitive (38) and intransitive (20) verbs. Compared to Extract 1, this extract includes a lower proportion of transitive verbs but a greater number of intransitive processes. Most of the intransitive verbs here are used to express motion or movement. But the transitive ones point out performed actions, which exudes that someone acts on something or someone in the text. Like in the first extract, the participants in Extract 2 are classified into two groups: minor and major. But only the major participants are tabulated below.

Participants	Akua	The driver	Kofi Akorti	The young men	The girls
No of actions	23	08	05	04	03
Percentage (%)	39.65	13.79	08.62	06.89	05.17

Table 1.7: Major Participant Types in the Material Processes in Extract 2.

3.2.2.2.   Mental Processes in Extract 2.

There are 10 (i.e., 11.36%) mental processes in this extract. They are encoded in such verbs as "Hear" in (18 and19), "thinks" in (28), "seeing" in (36), "thought" in (42), "assume" in (44), "saw" in (44), "liked" in (73), "'m sure" in (78) and "assured" in (80) and can be grouped into three categories: Cognition (28, 42, 44, 78

and 80; i.e., 50%), Perception (18, 19, 36 and 44; i.e., 40%) and Affection (73; i.e., 10%). The Senser roles are performed by "You good people of Kataso" in (18 and 19), "The chief" in (18), "Akua" in (36 and 73), "Her mother" in (42), "Those (the people) in (44 and 44) and "I and he (the driver)" in (78 and 80).

3.2.2.3.   Behavioral Processes in Extract 2.

Extract 2 contains only two (i.e., 02.27%) behavioural processes which are expressed by "grinned" in (65) and "seek" in (86). The Behaver roles in these processes are played by "He (the driver)" and "(Many young girls)".

3.2.2.4.   Verbal Processes in Extract 2.

Verbal processes are nine (i.e., 10.22%) in number here. They are encoded in "would shout out" in (17), "has (been) asked" in (20, 22 and 56), "reported" in (24), "saying" in (41), "asking" in (53), "grunted" in (60) and "cautioned" in (68). The main Sayer roles are played by "Akua" in (41, 53 and 68) and "The driver" in (56 and 60).

3.2.2.5.   Existential Processes in Extract 2.

There are only two (i.e., 02.27%) existential processes realised by "would have been" in (3) and "were" in (83). The existents in these clauses are "no power" and "many girls".

3.2.2.6.   Relational Processes in Extract 2.

Only seven (i.e., 07.95%) relational processes are identified in this extract: four (04) Intensive Attributive and three (03) Causative. The 04 intensive attributive processes are realised by such verbs as "stood" in (5), "had been" in (10), "is" in (29) and "was" in (75). The 03 causative processes are expressed by "making" in (13), "don't make" and "won't (make)". The participants in this text are both conscious and unconscious such as "it", "that (the only radio station), "people's indulgence", "I", etc.

3.2.2.7.   Circumstances in Extract 2.

There are 60 circumstantial properties in Extract 2. Table 1.8 presents these properties as they appear in the analysis above.

Circumstances	Location	Extent	Manner	Cause	Accompaniment	Matter	Role
Frequency	36	01	16	03	00	00	04
Percentage (%)	60	01.66	26.66	05	00	00	06.66

Table 1.8: Circumstances in Extract 2.

As it appears in the table above, the dominant categories of circumstances here are location (36; i.e., 60%) and manner (16; i.e., 26.66%). They function to encode such experiential dimensions as place, time, duration, extent, cause, manner, etc., in the processes.

4.   Discussion of the Findings.

Following the analysis above, this paper premises that language is the sole gateway into an author's/narrator's/speaking character's inner and outer world. In this sense, to decode Darko's ideology, one forcefully needs to draw on the linguistic choices she employs in her fictional text. The linguistic choices in/from the two extracts under study here actually provide means into the ideology typifying Darko's literary world.

From the analysis, it is obvious that Darko draws on material processes much more than any other types. This denotes thus that she encodes concrete, real and tangible actions which are meant to operate motion or movement, change, etc. She puts in relief such traditional structures as male-dominance, patriarchy or institutionalised sexism, etc. While she stylistically questions the down-to-earth power that the patriarchal structure accords to man, she, in fact, repositions woman via such narratological devices as characterisation and focalisation. In Extract 1, for instance, she raises issues like child dumping, parental neglect, etc., and symmetrically gives voice to her personae- male and female. The male characters in this text are "A taxi driver", "The scarred truck pusher" and "The stained teeth". The female personae in this text are "The tomato seller" and "The yam woman". While both sexes clearly agree that child dumping is not a good thing, Darko subtly points out the excesses in her male characters' attitudes. These men phallocentrically allot this bad act to the woman and hold her and only her responsible for this (see clauses 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 16, 17, 52, 53, etc.). Darko, via her female characters, opens the reader's eyes to the other side of the coin, which is reckless husbandhood. She actually questions the role of the woman's man (or husband) in the act (refer to clauses 22, 35, 36, 37, etc.). During this male-female

discussion, it is noticeable that there is a remarkable "political solidarity" (Hooks, 2000:17) between the two sexes; i.e., one sex leagues up to contest the other. It is also noted that the women are verbally vociferous and assertive and even attempt violent assaults on their all-male counterparts (see clauses 19, 22, 28, 29, 31, 54, 55, 57, etc.). In addition, unlike their male counterparts, the women are placed in a relatively high economic situation (see clauses 5, 73, 74, 84, 85, etc.). In contrast, in front of these women, the men seem somewhat passive and powerless (refer to clauses 30, 84, 85, 88, etc.), though one can still contend that these men are as fully self-actualised as their all-female counterparts.

In Extract 2, Darko discusses issues like causes of rural exodus, sex, etc. Rural exodus serves as the core cultural context for the exploration of the complexities of people's- old and young, mature and immature, male and female- lives in Kataso, an eastern village in Ghana. The writer points out such causes as lack of entertainment centres, basic social amenities like flowing water, electricity, etc., which denotes a state of rampant and abject poverty (see clauses 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, etc.) in Kataso. This issue actually reduces the villagers', especially the youths', source of distraction to sex (refer to clause 12), which is the root cause of perverted cultural mores. Some young men, like Kofi Akorti, who enjoy such a morose life, are quickly booted out of the village, and others who abhor it deliberately go to urban cities in search of Eldorado (see processes 14, 14, 16, 23, 25, 26, 30, and 31); i.e., greener pastures. In the cities, disillusioned and incapacitated, these youths end up working as shoe-shine boys, truck pushers or street hawkers. Young women too are forced to follow the wind; they either go to the cities by their own will or sent for by relations or contacts to work as housemaids and babysitters. But some of them later end up as ice-water sellers and prostitutes. Akua is one of such young women. She is determined to quit her insipid village-life for a more interesting one. She actually does so at the expense of her dignity as a woman. She willingly accepts to pay the driver with her sex (refer to clauses 62, 64, etc.), and, like the driver, she actively partakes in the sexual act (see clauses 70, 71, 72 and 74). The way Akua is portrayed here downgrades her somehow all the same this exudes that she has power over her sexuality; she decides who to give her body to and the use to make of it. It follows from this that the nature of human behaviours, thought patterns and values potentially evolves over time. In fact, contemporary Ghanaian (or African) women, whether literate or not, whether materially privileged or not, have been challenging and subsequently moving out of the shackles of traditional structures to adapt to and face the exigencies of their time.

Such is the opinion that Amma Darko cogently endorses in her fictional text under study.

5.   Conclusion.

This paper has set out to decode the context of ideology in Amma Darko's fictional text, viz. *The Housemaid* (1998). This fictional text has been theoretically contended to be framed by the authorial ideology. In addition, language has been premised to be the sole gateway into the authorial ideology. The analysis of language, as it has been repeatedly implied, can provide a full insight into the linguistic means encoding patterns of meaning which obviously point out the representation of an author's/narrator's/speaking character's experience, including what s/he observes (in his/her society) and how s/he relates things, people, etc.

As the findings exude, the two extracts (drawn from the novel) display an ideology which underpins a symmetrical gender representation. This is to say, the writer depicts both male and female personae in a fairly realistic way; she upgrades and downgrades, empowers and disempowers them at will. This ideology is analogous to the human-centred perspective, which favours a full and fair depiction of human beings (male and female) as well as their perceptions, relations, roles, etc., in literature. The human-centred perspective actually points to the core changes that African literature has progressively undergone following the rise of feminism in the seventies (Lakoff, 1975).

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