

CONFORMITY IN DEVIATION: STYLISTICS OF TEXTUAL SIGNATURE TUNES IN YORÙBÁ ORATURES

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Abstract

Signature tunes are memorable musical phrases associated with a particular artist, presenter or individual as his/her unique style. While signature tunes are identified as a result of deviation in the language and approach of the artists to his performance, there tends to be conformity in the language of the artists judging from how the similarity occurs in signature tunes of some oral artistes. The reason why this occurs, how it manifests and where it occurs constitute our quest in this study. This study, therefore, investigated the conformity in deviation of signature tunes in order to establish language interactionism from certain point in linguistic reservoirs. Data for this study are sourced from Yorùbá chants of: Ìjálá-ọ̀dẹ̀, ẹ̀sà-egúngún, Sàngó-pípẹ̀, ẹ̀kún-iyàwó, iyèrẹ̀-Ifá, èlè-orò, and subjected to Roman Jakobson's approach to structuralism and principle of Transformational Generative Grammar. Findings revealed that signature tunes are actually markers of identity of artists which is commensurate with style as deviation in stylistics. Furthermore, conformity in the language of artists which suggests the interpolation or interactionism at the linguistic reservoir is inevitable across the variety of genres, therefore, signature tunes that are not supposed to conform to one artist/work is now conforming. This indicates that though oral artists are unique in their respective renditions of signature tunes but there are places where uniqueness matches one another and it proves that signature tunes are both created and learnt. The study concluded that though signature tunes earmark deviation, the interactionism of genres in the linguistic lexicon causes conformity in the signature tunes of genres that are not of the same variant. The study recommended that signature tunes which project individualism rather than collectivism, be adopted as another critical paradigm for indigenous criticism of Yorùbá oratures for it indicates language dexterity of the chanters. Conformity in presentation of idea and approach rather than only unit is recommended as well for objective indigenous criticism of Yorùbá oral performance.

Keywords: Conformity, Deviation, Oral genres, Signature Tune, Style...

Introduction

Style as a deviation is one of the popular concepts in stylistics. It involves departure from the norm in the manner of approach through which a particular vocation, work, or artistic works is done. For example, the manner of approach of Ìjálá-ọ̀dẹ̀ chanter and that of ẹ̀kún-iyàwó chanter cannot be the same. The way chanter of Iyèrẹ̀-Ifá starts or ends his/her performance is not the same with ẹ̀sà-egúngún chanter. In fact, situation sometimes determines the variation that results in deviation in style. In the midst of deviation established in stylistics of Yorùbá oratures, there are

possibility of having conformity where the language approach used in Sàngó-pípè for example, will conform to that of èsà-egúngún or ẹkún-iyàwó signature tune will be almost synonymous to what is obtainable in ìyèrè-Ifá when they are actually not genres of the same variant. This is what we refer to as conformity that occurs in the midst of deviation in this study. Having adopted the principle of paradigmatic and syntagmatic axes (axis of connection and axis of combination) to identify signature tunes among the four components of Yorùbá oratures, theory of transformational Generative Grammar is used to account for shift in deviation of everyday's to poetic language as contained in Structuralism.

Theoretical Framework

Two theories underpinned this study. The two theories are Structuralism and Transformational Generative Grammar.

Structuralism

The advocates of structuralism include Ferdinand De Saussure, a linguist who champions the advocacy for this theory in his popular book *Course de Linguistic Generals* in (1916). Aside from Saussure, other proponents of this theory are: Jan Mukarovsky (1960), Roman Jakobson 1960) Riffatarre (1970), Jonathan Culler (1975), Terry Eagleton (1983), Òpèfèyítímí (2014) among others. The theory is popular among the literary stylisticians because of its quest to unravel the unparalleled work language does in the composition of structures rather that contents or sociological background of literary works.

Principles of Foregrounding as a Tenet of Structuralism

Roman Jakobson was an influential figure in communication study, language, Stylistics, Semiotics and other Social Science fields. The model which was based on the intuition of a linguist Karl Buhler organon model (1934) who identified main functions and constituents of human communication in a comprehensive way. Jakobson (1960) established six pillars and components that make up model of verbal communication are shown below:

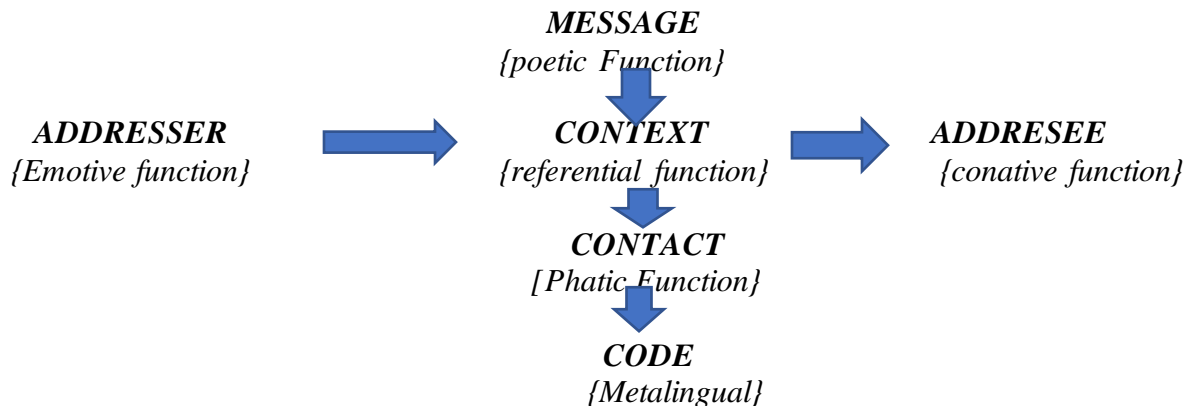


Fig. 1: Jakobson six Model of Communication adapted from Hebert Louis (2019) 'The Function of Language'

This theory goes a long way in helping us to select foregrounded elements at *paradigmatic axis* because all elements found in our text are not equally treated functionally some are texts, some are extra-text while the rest might be either signature tune or intra-textuality. This area of Structuralism by Jakobson enables us to identify types of signature tunes, though textual and artistic signature tunes are our concerns here. Others are transitional, contextual, geographical signature tunes.

Langue and Parole

The concept of parole and langue are parts of tenets of structuralism as put forward by Saussure in his “Course in General Linguistic”. James (2013, p. 287) reiterates that:

Langue is the structure or system of language which is in the mind of the people and in which all members of a language community share. But parole is the actual speech utterances of an individual language user. A member of a language community can generate countless examples of utterances.

The existing structures that a language has exists in the mind of the people of the speech community. Langue is everyday’s language while parole is meaning in the context. Thus, structuralism helps in analysing *parole* and *langue* in this study for meaning relation of such controversy are inherently obtainable in signature tunes. In this study, we examine one of the types of signatures tunes textual signature tune which amounts to style as deviation with obvious signs of conformity. This aspect of Structuralism accounts for deviation in the language of signature tunes from standard language to poetic language. The principle of foregrounded and unforegrounded elements in Structuralism helps in identification of signature tunes among other components of orature when we approach texts from *paradigmatic axis* called *axis of connection*.

Transformational Generative Grammar

The Theory of Transformational Grammar was introduced by Noam Chomsky in *Syntactic Structures* [Chomsky 1957] and revised in *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax* [Chomsky 1965]. “Transformation is a device used to change the form of one linguistic structure to another. Transformational Grammar derived from phrase structure grammars, generalizing the notion of rewrite rules in order to handle the problem of discontinuous dependencies in a precise, uniform manner. A phrase structure grammar generates tree diagrams by a series of rewrite rules which indicates what lexical categories (parts of speech) make up larger categories (Anthony S, 1988). The important difference is that phrase structure grammars treat rules as constraints on the structure that can be assigned to a sentence; whereas, transformational grammar allows the application of new kinds of rules which transform structures in the course of a derivation, thereby creating new structures. Transformational Generative Grammar accounts for encapsulation of more structures beyond the existing traditional grammar that operates on mere surface level of simple constructions. For example, active sentence can be changed to passive one...”(Làmidì, 2000). Basic phrase markers where (A) are the only possibility as thus:

(1a) S -- NP (Aux) VP

In A above, S principally occurs in the initial position to and NP and other optional elements complement. But in TGG, there is provision for other possibility that may occurs at deep structure level. Hence, we can have:

(1b) NP-N

(1c) VP -- V (S)

(1d) VP - V (NP)

The PS (phrase structure) rule for (1a) expands to include a VP; rule (1c), in turn, may include S as a constituent. Thus, an infinite set of structures can be generated from a finite set of rules. The examples discussed thus far suggest that some properties of sentences in natural language cannot

be accounted for by single phrase markers alone, that is, in terms of relations between immediate words in a sentence that are connected in some sense but which, nevertheless, are not contiguous in the linear ordering of the words. One way to account for discontinuous dependencies of this kind is to come up with a way by which two or more phrase markers can themselves be related to each other in some specified way (Anthony S., 1988).

The transformational component is used in a derivation process by which a deep structure is converted to a surface structure, which can then be used to produce an actual sequence of sounds or words in a sentence. Operation of Transformational Generative Grammar in Yorùbá has been accounted for from angles of basic deep structure of S -- NP (Aux) VP transformed into; interrogation, passive voice, focusing, relativization and topicalisation. Universally, even if the individual elements in the languages are not the same unitarily, they are structurally uniform in the case of basic to non-basic sentences as stipulated above. In Yorùbá poetic genres, the use of surface structure is more dominant than basic, hence the use of transformational Generative Grammar which account for language deviation of textual signature tunes.

Literature Review: Signature Tunes

While no overt and comprehensive exploration of signature tunes in literary works has been identified, various references to the concept exist, particularly in Yorùbá studies and stylistics. The term “signature tune” originates from communication and music but it has been broadly incorporated to analysis of literary works and stylistics. Noteworthy observations by scholars such Babalọlá (1966, p. 23), Mustapha (1989, p.43), Ajíbádé and Rájí (2011, p.49) and Adéléké (2020) who acknowledge the occurrence of distinctive features that mark the identity of a poet or genre. Babalọlá (1966) proposes the term "introductory formulaic" while Mustapha (1989) identifies the recurring occurrence of signature tunes or “call tones” at the start of concerts or èṣà recitals. Ajíbádé and Rájí (2011) refer to this feature as "ì-fì-ara-ẹni-hàn" (introduction) while Adéléké (2020) refers to signature tunes as homage. However, this study challenges the limited perception that signature tunes occur only at the beginning of performances and asserts their broader significance throughout a text open up greater appreciation and identification of signature tunes initially, medially and terminally.

Babalọlá (1966, p. 23) proposes a term used to describe the distinctive feature that distinguishes a poet from another poet. He called it *introductory formulaic*. While his observation is apt for the purpose of homage and sparing introduction of chanters at the beginning of Ìjálá-ọḍẹ, it confines this concept to the mere introduction which defeat what signature tune ought to be.

Similar to the assertion of Babalọlá (1966, p. 23) is the assumption put forward by Mustapha (1989, p. 43) who authoritatively says:

The start of any concert or èṣà recitals always begins with signature tune or call tune of the chanter or egúngún. Each chanter or egúngún has his/her own peculiar call tone or signature tune ... the signature tune or call tones is just to call or attract the attention of the audience, it may be repeated twice or thrice. Immediately the chanter gives the call, the chattering and other forms of noise making will stop.

One beautiful thing about Mustapha’s (1989) thought above is the overt reference to signature tunes and its synonym and the admittance that, signature tune is peculiar to each chanter. Although, identification with a chanter is apt and relevant to our study, his reiteration that, it is mere for

attracting the attention of the audience is limited and contradicts our appraisal of signature tunes in this study. Yet, a unique signature tune pacifies the audience to give attention to the chanter whether it is repeated or not. In fact, signature tune evokes a great emotion and creates a brand recognition for the artiste that uses it. In the same vein, Ajíbádé and Rájí (2011, p. 49) are also aware of a significant feature that marks the uniqueness of Àlàbí Ògúndépò, a veteran Yorùbá Ìjálá chanter. We agree with the fact that the quoted feature (ifí-ara-eni-hàn) which Ajíbádé and Rájí (2011) opine is unique to Àlàbí Ògúndépò and the fact that it has become his style but disagree with the notion that it is called a mere introduction that must come before the commencement of the main contents of his work. Therefore, signature tune is a marker of identity for people who are involved in the oral rendition, songs, radio presentation, television programme and others. ‘‘a melody, passage, or song chosen by an orchestra or musical entertainer as a means of identification and played at the opening or close or both of each program’’ (<https://www.merriam.webster.com/dictionary/signature/tune>).

The inadequacies highlighted in the previous works above are the gaps this study intends to fill so as to redefine what signature is, asserts its positions in Yorùbá oratures, adopt it as a genre-specific identity and documents its occurrence sporadically in Yorùbá oral genres. In addition, we intend to show signature tunes as unique identity of artist or literary work, it also projects deviation of language from deep to surface structure yet, there is conformity in the said deviation when a wide range of artists, works or oral discourses are surveyed.

Style as a deviation: Textual Signature Tunes

Style as a deviation account for departure of a work, artiste or chanter’s approach to a specific situation different from how others. It implies the intrinsic features that distinguish one artiste from others in approach and language (Òjó, 2020), (Òjó and Bólárínwá, 2021) and (Òjó, 2023) Style as a deviation here establishes that there is difference between one oral genre and others judging from their signature tunes that contains their identity. It also has to do with the exploration of variation that exists in the literary language (poetic language) and standard language taking into consideration the observation of Mukarovsky (1960). The signature tune happens to be one of the demarcating lines that distinguish one oral genre from another and this further proves that *literatumost* which is the mainstay of the formalist also manifests in Yorùbá oral poetry because it is through that we are able to see the level of conformity and variation. This is part of what stylisticians seek to examine under style as deviation. Shaw (1991, p. 23) opines that:

Style as deviation from the norm language is a behaviour governed by rules and norm. When something is done in a quite different way from how it is usually done, then that is said to be deviation from the norm. This is achieved by reconstruction from the structural resources of the languages. This concept is the most common at both the lexical and syntactic level used mostly for effective communication.

The idea here is very clear, style as deviation from the norm looks into what sets aside one genre from another and that is the same thing signature tune is doing. The logical construction both as a whole and construction in units are our focal points in this section of the work. In other words, variation to be examined in literary works under consideration might be in any components of language, phonology, morphology, semantics or syntax. Ọlátẹ́jú (2016, p. 10) is also of the opinion that:

Those who believe in this approach see deviation as intentional departure from the rules of language and they consider using language this way as stylistics. Style as deviation from the norm tends to be more apparent in poetry than other literary genres because Yorùbá literary artist employs linguistics deviation in order to achieve aesthetic and stylistic goals.

Deviation from norm in this study may be departure of one text or oral rendition from another one or departure of language use in signature tunes from standard language at deep structure. So, we want to see the style categorised as signature tunes, we have in *Èkún-ìyàwó* for example, that cannot be seen in *Ìyèrè-ìfá*, the language in *Şàngó-pípè* that are not found in others and of course the deviation of language from artist to artist after which the linguistic deviation will now be examined, they all constitute style and stylistics.

Baxhoe (1998, p. 61) on his takes on style as deviation from original norm, expressively states thus:

Deviation in stylistics is concerned with the use of different styles from the expected norm of language used in a given genre of writing. It is departure from what is taken as the common practice. Language deviation refers to an intentional selection or choice of language use outside of the range normal language. Language is a system organized in an organic structure by rules and provides all rules for its use such as phonetics, grammar, lexical etc. thus any pieces of writing or materials that has intentional jettisoned the rules of language in some ways is said to have deviated from. Stylistics helps to identify how and why a text has deviated.

It can easily be deduced here that deviation occurs not only from linguistics point of view but also in the language use and manner of approach the artiste chooses. In this study, the departure of chanter or oral genres from another is examined, we also explore how the language of the signature tunes departs from everyday's language and cap it all with how deviation, why deviation and where conformity occurs in the signature tunes of artists or genres.

Deviation of Genres

In Yorùbá oral genres, there are some identifiable features that mark uniqueness of some genres that make them different from others. They form the basis and central to the communicative influence of the genre that harbour them. Just like *a díá fún is* (cast divination for) an identity of *Ifá* and *àyájó* (Ifá-verse and incantation), the feature we are talking about too cannot cease to appear in their composition too. Judging deviation from this sense, we can easily say that Yorùbá oral genres are identifiable by their signature tunes. For example, the signature tunes:

| | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| È bá káalẹ̀ o | (Good evening o |
| È bá káalẹ̀ | Good evening o |
| È bá káalẹ̀ o bàba mi | I say good evening, my father |
| È bá káalẹ̀ o, iyá mi | Good evening, my mother) |
| Àtìjẹjọ mi rẹ̀ ¹ | This is my eighth day |
| | Èkún-ìyàwó i, ll.1-5 |

¹ This èkún-ìyàwó was collected in year 2022 during the 409 (Creative and Oral Performance presentation)

The signature tune cannot cease to appear in *ẹkún-iyàwó* and it's solely meant for it. If it occurs in another genres, it is logically concluded that it is borrowed to beautify the host genre. Still in *ẹkún-iyàwó* is another signature tune that tells us the motive behind the genre. The artists bridge the gap while chanting *ẹkún-iyàwó* with:

| | |
|-------------------------|--|
| Ìre ẹja n bẹ nínú ibú | Success of Fish lies in the water |
| Ìre kònkò n bẹ lálẹ odò | Success of frog lies beneath the river |
| Ìre lónií | Success follows me today |
| Orí mi àfire | My head deserves success |

The two signature tunes are paramount to *ẹkún-iyàwó* and any genre that contains them cannot be mistaken for another thing but *ẹkún-iyàwó* but if it surfaces in another genre, it is safe to say that conformity has taken place. Also, when we talk about *Şàngó-pípè*, it also has its own peculiar signature tunes, in that, some utterances are unique to it. The signature tune that emanates from *Ọyó*'s *Şàngó-pípè* is a kind of signature tune is found only in *Şàngó-pípè* as thus:

| | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Olówó mi ò jùire bí o? | My benefactor, do you wake up well? |
| Wèrè Ọyèkú ará Ọyó | The mad man of Ọyèkú, native of Ọyó |
| Bó o bá jùire, èmí sùn gbare | If you wake up well, I am blessed sleeping |
| Bó bá wẹmọ kó jùire lópòò ilé o | If emo rat likes it should wake up well in its lines |
| Bó bá wáfèbòjò kó jùire nísà rẹ | If àfèbòjò rat likes it should wake up well in its hole |
| Kábíyèsí, bó o bá jùire èmí sùn gbare | Your highness, if you wake up well, I am blessed in sleeping |

(*Şàngó-pípè* i, ll.31-37)

We cannot find it in *ijalá-ode*, *ẹsà egúngún* or other oral genres even when they are from *Ọyó* region of Yorùbá. This is how textual signature tune and by extension, deviation in style operates. They form part not the identity of the poet this time around but the identity of the genre itself. Similarly, *iyèrè-ifá* has its own signature tunes that are hardly found in other genres. Although, these signature tunes are many, the most acceptable and foregrounded one is *hin-in-in* as the response of the chorus while chanting. Aside from this, we still discover that some language uses are limited to *iyèrè-Ifá* chanting, not even extended to *Ifá*-verses where the *iyèrè-Ifá* stems from. Example of such textual signature tune that project deviation is given below:

| | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Lile: Mo ní bẹẹ ni o | (Call: I said its indeed like that |
| Írá írá mi isòwò ọpẹ | My people in Ọpẹ's deal |
| Írá írá mi isòwò ẹdú | My fellow servant in worship of Ẹdú |
| Ègbè: Hin in | Hin in |
| Lílẹ: Ifá kí yín meréntélú | Call: Ifá greet you from Meréntélú |
| Ọpẹ Ọpẹ yin yin o | Ọpẹ praises you |
| Mẹsẹlarè oo | From Mèşẹlarè |
| Ọrunmilà kí yín ọmọ ará ikeyin | Ọrúmilà salutes you, the one from Ikeyin |
| Ọmọ Ajagunra ni | He hails from Ajagunra) |

(*Íyèrè-Ifá* I, ll. 1-9).

We can easily conclude here that all oral genres of Yorùbá, mostly *chanting mode*, have these unique features but adaptation in environment from natural to refined has caused the eclipse of such tone.

Similarly, the *Íjalá-ode* as one of the oral genres is laced with series of textual signature tune that distinguish it from others. The said style is unique and hardly found in other oral genres. The signature tunes include: *Ìbà n lẹ n tó máa lọ*. This is peculiar to *ijalá-ode* and cannot be taken

away from many *ijálá* chanters. It appears in *ijálá* as well as in its sub-genre, *irèmòjé*. But while *irèmòjé* is seen as the kind of *ijálá*, *ijálá* is not the same as *irèmòjé* because of the contextual use and thereby has distinct signature tune from other genres. The dominant signature tune in *irèmòjé* as a sub-genre of *ijálá* is:

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Ara mo jí eléree | (One's body is the soul of performance |
| Eléree, baba Ara mò jí èlè | Performer, body is the soul of performance |
| Àdá ọdẹ nàà rẹ é o, | Here is the hunter's cutlass |
| Ara mò jí èlè o | Body is the soul of the performance |

Àjùwòn (1981, p.15)

This marks the end of any demonstration of ritual materials, especially the one the deceased hunter liked and used when he was alive. This is how textual signature tune operates in any oral genre; it is recurrent used frequently in the genre. Most importantly, this signature tune is restricted to only *irèmòjé* and cannot be found in other genres, hence, it is a textual signature tunes, termed style as deviation from norm in this study.

Deviation in Language Use

This segment of the paper is devoted to analysing the fringes of language deviation from the norm and how language of signature tunes displays great level of transformation from deep structure to surface structure in the areas where the flowering language of the signature tunes manifests and departs from everyday's language to poetic language. This is in tandem with Baxoe (1998) who posits thus:

Language deviation refers to an intentional selection or choice of language use outside of the range normal language. Language is a system organized in an organic structure by rules and provides all rules for its use such as phonetics, grammar, lexical etc., thus any pieces of writing or materials that has intentional jettisoned the rules of language in some ways is said to have deviated from. Stylistics helps to identify how and why a text has deviated.

This implies that language use in this regard shows how there is variation of language in poetry from the language of day-to-day communication. For example, in *èlè-orò* signature tunes here:

| | |
|-------------|-----------------|
| Mo ríbà oo | I pay homage |
| Mo ríbà oo | I pay homage |
| Ìbà IÉkòó | Homage from Eko |
| Mo ríbà ooo | I pay homage! |

In *èlè-orò*, the standard language for act of paying homage is supposed to be *Mo júbà*, deriving through coalescence from *mo jé ibà* (I pay homage) but changed to *mo ríbà* (I see homage) as against the standard language. Certainly, this is not a dialectal change but the intentional violation of the norm to suit poetic context. It is analysed as:

| | | | | | |
|----|-----|--------|----|----|-----|
| Mo | rí | ibà/ | Mo | jé | ibà |
| N | V | N/ | N | V | N |
| I | pay | homage | | | |

Syntactically, there is no difference but semantic substitution to *jé* (answers) is *ri* (sees) and *ri* (sees) in *ibà* (homage) is rare in day-to-day conversation of Yorùbá. So, it's the pattern of language use in style as against standard language which suggest deviation from the norm of language. Still in *èlè-orò*, there is another foregrounded language use in the signature tune that serves as answer to any prayer. It goes:

Kò gbáìṣẹ̀ oo

It goes without coming to pass

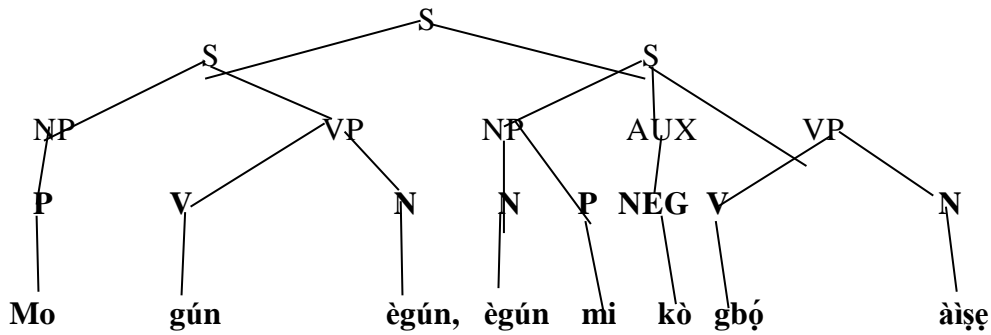
Ègún mo gún ò gbáìṣẹ̀

Whatever I decree goes without coming to pass.

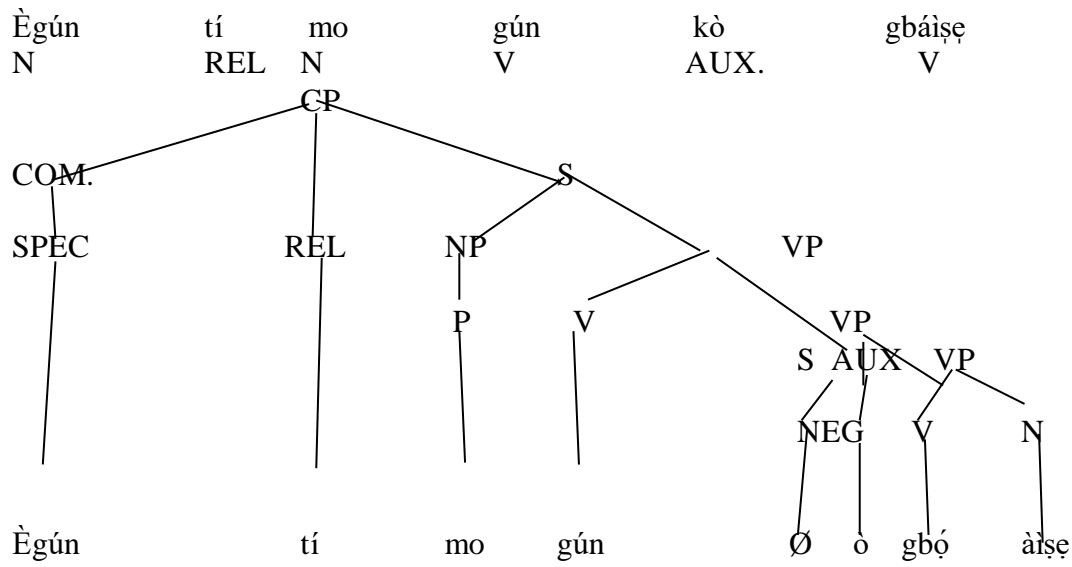
This signature tune is used in *èlè-orò* when the lead chanter is praying for the addressees. Semantics plays an important role here, in that; *ègún* is substituted with *ìwúre/àdúrà*. *Ègún* is too concentrated and used for curse or spell in normal language use. But when it comes to *èlè-orò*, it is used as the prayer just to show that may be in the hypothetical beginning of the language, *ègún* is the same thing as prayer but the gravity in *ègún* relegates it to only poetic language. So, the choice of *ègún* does not agree with *gbà* that goes with *ìre/ìwúre àdúrà*, it agrees with *gún* (cast) which showcases the phonological aesthetics in the context because the last nasal vowel in *ègún* matches that of *gún* - (*un*). Also, in term of syntax, the formation is also changed from basic simple sentence to non-basic compound sentence in that the surface structure is; *mo gún ègún, ègún mi ò gbáìṣẹ̀* as analysed below:

Deep structure

| | | | | | |
|----|------|------------|----|-------------------------------------|---------|
| Mo | gún | ègún, ègún | mi | kò | gbáìṣẹ̀ |
| N | V | N, N | A | AUX. | V |
| (I | made | a decree | my | decree goes without coming to pass) | |



Surface structure



(The decree that I made goes without coming to pass)

This highlights the departure of language from everyday's communication due to projected aesthetic purpose targeted by the chanters. The simple negative basic sentence is transformed to relativisation as a result of need for change from deep to surface structure needed in poetic language. Also, in *ìyèrè-Ifá*, there is syntactic repetition that calls for attention of the stylistic exploration. During the chanting of *Ìyèrè-Ifá* at the graveyard of the deceased, the chanters inquire that:

| | | | | | | |
|--------|------|-----------|---------|-------|------|-----|
| Ibo | ni | onílé | káà | yíí | wa | lọ? |
| S | V | A | O | A | AUX | V |
| (Where | does | the owner | of this | house | go?) | |

This sentence results from the surface structure:

| | | | | | |
|------------|-------|-------|------|---------|------------|
| Onílé | káà | yíí | wá | lọ | ibìkan |
| O | ADJ. | ADJ. | AUX. | V | N |
| (The owner | house | ART | has | gone | somewhere) |
| Onílé | káà | yíí | lọ | ibo? | |
| N | ADJ | ADJ | N | N | |
| (The owner | this | house | goes | where?) | |

| | | | | | | |
|--------|------|-----------|------|------|-------|------|
| Ibo | ni | onílé | káà | yíí | wá | lọ? |
| N | FOC. | V | ADJ. | ADJ | AUX. | V |
| (Where | do | the owner | of | this | house | go?) |

There is need for chanter to transform the sentence obtainable from signature tune of *ìyèrè-Ifá* here from basic simple sentence to surface structure of focusing, one of the surface structures in Yorùbá syntax. The same thing is found in Àjùwòn (1981, p. 33) as thus:

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Mo ṣàgò tíí | I greet to crave for excuse for so long |
| Ilé ò fòhùn | The house speaks not |
| N bo lonílé ń wà? | Where is the owner of this house?) |

So, the foregrounded question departs from original basic declarative sentence to non-basic complex interrogative sentence when it gets to deep structure and by extension poetic language.

The change in semantic meaning sometimes brings about change in phonology, morphology and of course syntactic variation of poetic language. According to Jakobson (1960), the intentional deviation is aimed at achieving aesthetic dexterity.

Similarly, in *èlè-orò*, the contextual use of signature tune foregrounds aesthetics in the utterances used below:

| | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Ọdọdún là á rórógbó | Every year we see bitter-kola |
| Ọdọdún là á ráwùsá | Every year we see walnuts |
| Ọdọdún là á rọmọ-obì lóri àtẹ | Every year we see bitter kola nuts) |

This signature tune is used recurrently when the chanter is praying for addressees that they will be alive till next year. The selection of *orógbó* (bitter kola) brings about *awùsá* (walnut) and *ọmọ-obì* (kola nut) and to lace it with linguistic coloration, the morphological process contraction happens between the verb *rí* (see) and *orógbó*, *awùsá* and *ọmọ-obì*, as thus:

| | | |
|--------------|----------|------|
| rí+ orógbó | rórógbó | HHH |
| rí+ awùsá | ráwùsá | HLH |
| rí + ọmọ-obì | rọmọ obì | HMML |

To further foreground it, the syntactic form is also change from surface structure:

| | | | | | |
|-----|-------|----------|-------------|--------|-----------------------------------|
| À | ń | rórógbó | ní | ọdọdún | We see bitter kola nut every year |
| À | ń | ráwùsá | ní | ọdọdún | We see walnut every year |
| À | ń | rọmọ-obì | ní | ọdọdún | We see kola nuts every year) |
| À | ń | rí | orógbó | ní | ìgbà wo? |
| N | AUX | V | N | PREP. | N |
| (We | Prog. | see | bitter-kola | PREP. | When?) |

to deep structure as thus:

| | | | | | |
|-------------|-------|------|------|-----|--------------|
| Ọdọdún | ni | à | á | rí | orógbó |
| N | FOC | N | AUX | V | N |
| (Every year | prep. | 1sp. | Aux. | see | bitter-kola) |

Syntactically, in everyday's language mostly in basic form of language, *à ń rí orógbó ní ọdọdún* is the base or deep structure, however, in poetic language, the selection favours focusing hence, *ọdọdún là á rórógbó*. This is how deviation in form of language use occurs in signature tunes in addition to the collective deviation of genres from other genres observed earlier.

Conformity in Deviation

There seems to be variation in the language of one oral genre from another. While it is possible to have feature juxtaposition of language because the choice is made from the available similar lexicon, we still believe that some features are hardly found in other literary genres. To ascertain the conformity in language use of the signature tunes of oral artist, we see some features that serve as ingredients in more than one genre though with little variation due to creativity and context. For example, the signatures tune in *ẹkún-ìyàwó* below appears twice because it is chanted by two people. The same signature tune can appear in many oral genres though there might be slight variation because anything oral cannot be 100% accurately replicated; hence it still in operation in *ìyẹrẹ-Ifá*. Let's see the example below:

Àní, a júwejúwe, ẹ lé ò mọ baba t'ó bí mi l'ómọ
A s'ájúwe tíí, ẹ lé ò m'òdèdè
B'èè m'érin, lóníí, mo léè gb'òhùn erin
E ò m'òsà, mo lé ò j'iyò l'óbe?

<https://ekjolalic.org>

Nígba, àní, t'ẹ̀ ò ti'ẹ̀ mọ̀ mí, 'mọ̀ Kúlúkúọ́lá.

Èmi ni jón p'ẹ̀ e gb'òhùn mi ni?

Àwa la f'ẹ̀yinkùlé kan Kúdẹ̀fù,

Àwa la mú 'lé kan 'Lúsìnmi, t'Ọ̀bákáyéjá

Tààrà, àní, ní gèégèé,

Èyàn tí ò mọ̀ mí, onílù ni bàbàà mi...

(Despite the description, you say you don't know my father

Despite incessant description, you don't know our household

If you don't know elephant you hear its voice

If you don't know the lagoon you take salt in soup?

If at all you don't know me, Kúlúkúọ́lá's daughter

I am sure you hear my voice?

We are the one that share boundary with Kúdẹ̀fù

We are the one that share compound with Lúsìnmi of Ọ̀bákáyéjá)

This is the first instance in *ẹ̀kún-iyàwó*, to stylistically tell people of her background and lineages. This is an example of artistic signature tune. However, to ascertain the occurrence of conformity to what is obtainable in other artists works, it re-surfaces in line 89-95, of another artist of *ẹ̀kún-iyàwó* thus:

È ò merin, e ò gbóhùn erin? (If you don't know elephant, don't you hear its voice?)

È ò m'òsà, lóní, mo lé ò j'iyò ? If you don't know ocean, don't you hear the voice

B'ẹ̀ẹ̀ ò mọ̀ mí, ng ó mà t'ie sọ If you don't know me, I will surely say it

Èmi, Dúró-bí-ẹ̀ni-rí-i, m'Eríadé I that stand like who is erected Orí-adé's daughter

Ìse-ò-gbékú, mo lé è gbóhùn mi? Ise-o-gbeku, I suppose you hear my voice?

Èjídé ng ò rẹ̀ 'lúú mi. Ise-o-gbeku, I suppose you hear my voice?

Ng ó rẹ̀ 'lú nílá I will go to a big popular town.

The underlined sentences in the first example have its variant in the one above which is fair, given that they are from the same genre, *ẹ̀kún-iyàwó*. To demonstrate that it can actually appear in multiple places across other Yorùbá oral poetry, we still see it in *iyèrè-Ifá* with little linguistic manipulation as thus:

| | | |
|-------|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| Lílé: | È ò merin | If you don't know elephant |
| | È ò gbóhùn erin | Don't you hear its voice? |
| | È ò mọ̀sà | If you don't know Ocean |
| | È ò jiyò lóbẹ̀ ooo! | Don't you salt in soup? |
| | Bí ẹ̀ ò bá mọ̀ mí | If at all you don't know me |
| | Şebí ẹ̀ gbóhùn ẹ̀nu mi? | I suppose you hear my voice. |

We can easily see the linguistic manipulation that comes to play here. This is to show that the contact has happened somewhere in language reservoir where the three artists select their language from though with great deal of manipulation due to creativity. To stylisticians, this is called conformity not expected in deviation. One will expect style in *ẹ̀kún-iyàwó* to be different from *iyèrè-Ifá* but when the same feature occurs in the two, it is obviously conformity in the midst of deviation which suggests that, they have met at a point in the language lexicon. Invariably, deviation and conformity are not restricted to only linguistic unit as linguistic stylisticians would make us believe, conformity or deviation occurs in the idea and approach towards a particular dispensation.

Similarly, in Fóyèké Àjàngílá's ẹ̀sà-egúngún and Şàngódàrà's Şàngó-pípè, the point of contact that brings about the conformity is also foregrounded, but the vibrancy of the two artists

occasions the slight variation. Yet, a literary-stylistic conscious critic would have seen the point of conformity in the linguistic contact probably at the same lexical reservoir. Example is given below:

| | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Ó tóóó! | Its okay! |
| È má jẹ onlù ó pò jeni tí n kòrin lọ | Drummers should dominate the singer |
| Ajánásì: Káàbò Àyòkà | Welcome, Àyòkà |
| Mo yí bírì mo porin mi dà | I turn sharply to change my song |
| Bé mìn tí pasẹ mi dà ẹ ni | The way I usually change my works. |

This is a transitional signature tune that the artist uses to indicate his readiness to transit from one phase to another. This is style as a deviation in approach of Fóyèkẹ Àjàngílá to that situation. The signature tune in question here becomes her style and distinguishes her from others. However, the same thing is found in Şàngódàrà as seen below. But what do we call this? Is it a coincidence or it is the norm? This is what we try as much as possible to portend here that conformity occurs in deviation.

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Mo yí bírì, mo porin mi dà | I turn sharply to change my song direction |
| Bémi tí pasẹ mi dà ẹ | The way I usually change mu work |
| Mo fèyún lẹní òré o | I drop that on òré mat |
| Mọ̀rẹ̀nikẹ̀ Àwẹ̀ní | Mọ̀rẹ̀nikẹ̀ Àwẹ̀ní |
| N ó mọ-ọn fàtín-in le | I will couple it with àtín-in mat |

From the foregoing, it is apparent that the possibility of feature running through more than one genre is possible. What we just demonstrate above can happen in more than five oral genres and we termed it conformity in deviation.

Furthermore, in *ẹkún-iyàwó*, where the signature tune is attributed to the time the bride is seeking blessing of the parents as follows:

| | |
|--------------|--------------------------|
| Ìre lóní | Success follows me today |
| Orí mi àfire | My head deserves success |

This is known and attributed to *ẹkún-iyàwó* as a genre and hardly surfaces in others but due to conformity under discussion, Délé Tòmọ́rí, a erstwhile presenter on OSBS was known for a signature tune that is manipulatively borrowed from *ẹkún-iyàwó* to his *ẹ̀şà-egúngún* recital which is the voice he adopted for his delivery on radio as thus:

| | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| <u>Ireeeee</u> | <u>(Goodness</u> |
| <u>Ireeeee oooo</u> | <u>Goodness</u> |
| <u>Ìre lóní orí mi àfire</u> | <u>Goodness surely today for you my destiny</u> |
| <u>Ìre lóní Olódùmarè</u> | <u>Goodness for me, O God</u> |
| Èmi Ìşòlá òpó ọmọ Olódùmarè | I Ìşòlá, Òpó, the child of God |
| Níbi ni n ó gbé dúró, | I am quitting here, |
| Kí n má bá a jẹkọ tó léegun | So as not to eat pat that has bone |
| Agbé şetán, ó n relé idáró | Blue turaco is set to go to his abode to make dye |
| Àlùkó şetán, ó n relé ikosùn | Camwood-cock is going home to make camwood |
| Lèkélèké şetán n ó máa relú ikẹfun | Egret is heading home to prepare chalk) |

The first four line of signature tune of Délé Tòmọ́rí on the programme *Gbàgede ọ̀rò* (Open Forum) is aesthetically derived from *ẹkún-iyàwó* to *ẹ̀şà-egúngún* and finally to beautify his verbal discourse on the radio. There is an obvious case of conformity where feature juxtaposition occurs across the genres.

In the same vein, in *iyèrè-Ifá*, the chanters use the signature tune:

Lílé: Ìbò lonilé káá yíí wa lọ? **Call:** Where is the owner of this house

Ègbè: Ìbo lonilé káà yí wa lọ ooo? Call: Where is the owner of this house?
Ìbo lonilé káà yí wa lọ? Where is the owner of this house?
Ìbo lonilé káà yí wa lọ?² Where is the owner of this house?

The owner of the house is being asked after, knowing quite well that he cannot answer them but just to show futility of life where the owner of the house cannot answer anyone again after his death. They ask *Ibo lonilé káà yí wa lọ?* (Where did the owner of this compound go) with the expectation of no reply from anyone. While this is known in this context for *iyèrè-Ifá* because of the mourning conditions the chanters are, in the same mourning context where the chanters of *Ìrèmòjé* are, the variant of the same features is found in Àjùwòn (1981, p. 33) as thus:

| | |
|-------------------|------------------------------------|
| Mo şàgò tíí | I greet for excuse for long |
| Ilé ò fòhùn | The house speaks not |
| N bo lonilé í wà? | Where is the owner of this house?) |

This goes against the general assumption that it is only the element under intra-text that runs through other poetic genres because this cannot be called proverb or aphorism. There is possibility that the linguistic reservoir where they meet is Ifá-verse, folklore or proverb. Whatever it is, the point we are raising here is crystal clear already that there tends to be conformity in the midst of deviation as exemplified in Yorùbá oral genres.

Conclusion

It is indisputably obvious that signature tunes are the unique identity of artists and genres which signifies deviation of a literary works and literary artists. However, the fact that signature tunes can be used or seen cross-literarily posits that there are flexible and inflexible signature tunes. Flexible ones are borrowed from one genre to boost the contextual structure of the host. This further proves that mastery of other's signature tunes is not out of place because it helps to boost linguistic competence of others who adopt them for linguistic competence. Therefore, deviation in genres features and linguistic deviation buttress style as a deviation while incongruous occurrence of features cross-literarily signifies conformity. This can antithetically possible because all the genres, even the verbal discourses have the link or contact at certain point in time probably in Ifá verses, proverbs, incantation, panegyrics or Yorùbá have main linguistic reservoir where they all draw from in the hypothetical beginning of things. Moreover, poetic language observable in signature tunes tends more toward surface structure of relativisation, focusing, interrogation and topicalisation syntactically as accounted for in transformational generative Grammar, even if we are unable to analyse them one by one.

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² The question being asked here are not expected to be answered by anyone. They are used during the chanting at the graveyard to posit the ephemeral of life

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KEY ABBREVIATION AND THEIR MEANING

FOC: Focusing

S: Sentence

REL: Relativiser

N: NOUN

COMPL: Complementizer

VP: Verb Phrase

AUX: Auxiliary

P: Pronoun

NEG: Negation

ADJ: Adjective