Generic Structure Analysis of Anthems of Selected Universities in Nigeria: A Genre Based Approach

Moses Olusanya Ayoola

ABSTRACT

This study examines the Universities’ Anthems in Nigeria as a distinct Genre. The present study analyzes a corpus composed of ten (10) anthems texts belonging to six federal Universities, two State owned Universities, and two private Universities in Nigeria. This study seeks to establish University anthems in Nigeria as a sub-genre of anthems by identifying the Generic structure Potential (GSP) of the selected university anthems as permitted by their contextual configuration (CC) following the theory of Halliday and Hasan (1985) as a theoretical framework for the study. The analysis in this study intends to come up with the total range of optional and obligatory elements in the University anthems analysed which are the possibilities of text structure for every text that can come up under the Genre of University anthem. The analysis revealed two obligatory elements -Identity/Orientation IO* and Mission/Vision MV*- and five optional elements- Ideology (ID), Evocation/Eulogy (EE), Prayer (PR), Exhortation (EX), and Pledge/Allegiance (PA). The study concludes that even though University anthems, as a form of poem seemingly appear in different structures, there is a certain pattern of a Generic Structure that construes the purpose the anthems are intended to serve for the institutions; that is to communicate the identity of the institution.

Keywords: Anthem, Genre, Generic structure, University.

I. INTRODUCTION

Anthems play important role in showcasing the identity, mission as well as ideology of any given institution or people. It is the image maker for the country or institution. According to Wikipedia, anthem is a musical composition of celebration, usually used as a symbol for a distinct group. In another definition, “an anthem is defined as a piece of music intended to be sung to express patriotism, love, or commitment” (www.yourdictionary.com). To Forth (2012, p. 150) ‘an anthem as well as a hymn is a song of praise made for communal singing’. He goes further to state that anthems should preferably be easy to remember sing, there by becoming “tempting or even irresistible to join in singing”, and participation in singing of the anthem is aimed at to spill over into some level of identification with what the anthem stands for. In this way, anthems are constructed to emotionally boost collective identification, through the medium of voice and sound’. In another view, Kellen (2003, p. 166) defines anthems as “the words that must always be sung, that have always been sung whose words and tune seem like permanent signs thereby making entities like nations appear permanent”. Every institution and organisation such as Universities has an anthem as a symbol of the institution’s identity. While defining institutional anthem, Mwinwelle (2020, p. 15) views Institutional anthems as lyrical and rhythmic renditions that are symbolic which also portray the uniqueness and identity of the institutions. University anthems as a form of institutional anthems, therefore, is a sub-genre of anthems in general. Mwinwelle et al. (2019, p. 163) explain university anthems as a patriotic song recognised by the people of the university community and are granted privileges and recognition by the laws of the university which has a standard duration and dignity representing the identity of university.

Mwinwelle, Amoakahene and Agyekum (2020) explain that rendering of these anthems has a major emotional effect upon masses in that, it enhances and reinforces institutional commitment and bonding. The singing of the anthems takes place during official ceremonies of the universities such as graduations, matriculations, conferences, and other university programmes. These anthems represent the universities’ identity by indicating the names of the universities, their core mandate, their vision and mission as well as their ideology. (Mwinwelle, Amoakahene and Agyekum 2020; Mwinwelle, 2020; Mwinwelle et al., 2019).

Thus, staff and students at universities are always enthusiastic whenever their universities’ anthem is being sung on any occasion as a way of identifying with their universities. In the words of Alabi (2020, p. 154) A university anthem often gives information about the university: its name; the city where it is located; its motto, vision, and mission; and, sometimes, the qualities that position it as an enviable
institutions of learning.” Thus, the structural pattern of such text is worth studying from different linguistic perspectives. Therefore, this study is set out to analyse the generic structure potential of the selected University Anthems Using the theory of Halliday and Hasan (1985).

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

In recent time a number of studies had been carried out on the use of language in anthems. Scholars had over the years taken different linguistic approaches to examine and analyse the importance of anthems to countries, institutions, and organisations. A number of them focus on linguistic resources used in national anthems while others use institutional anthems as corpus for their linguistic analysis. All these and other studies on uses of song in human institutions constitute the existing literature for this study. Souza (2006) presents an Appraisal analysis of twenty four national anthems that are written in English. The study was to identify and analyse the major attitudinal resources used in the anthems to construe and negotiate feelings with the audiences. Thus, the main focus of the study was on appraisal resources in the Anthems. The findings of the analysis reveal that values of affect and appreciation are used by the composers of the national anthems to make their audiences share feelings of love for the nation grounded on a recontextualization of the field of national identification with respect to evaluations of familial sentiments.

The study of Mwinilaaru (2012) is on the metafunctional analysis of the national anthems in four English speaking African countries. He carries out transitivity, mood, and thematic analysis of the identified anthems. The transitivity analysis reveals material, verbal, and causative processes as the most frequently used process types. The analysis of mood choices identifies declaratives and imperatives as the preferred mood choices where declaratives appear as dominantly used. The thematic analysis, however, reveals that the themes are used with consideration of poetic and musical tones.

The study of Amenorvi and Grumah (2019) is a thematic analysis of the national anthems of Ghana, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Liberia, and The Gambia. The study investigates major themes espoused in the national anthems of Anglophone West Africa countries and further seeks to find out how these themes are projected linguistically and literarily. The findings reveal the preference for content lexical items such as nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs over non-content words, in projecting the themes and that literally, the anthems employ figures of speech such as repetition, apostrophe, oxymoron, imagery, rhythm, and metaphor to convey the various themes.

Mwinwelle et al. (2019) studied the communicative implications encoded in the use of lexical cohesive devices in selected Ghanaian university anthems. The study came up with the conclusion that the university anthems’ composers employ repetition, synonymy, antonymy, collocation and superordination as lexical cohesive devices in their use of language to achieve directness, emphasis, rhythm and appeal in the process of meaning negotiation.

The study of Mwinwelle et al. (2020) is a qualitative analysis of transitivity of process types and their encoded implications in selected Ghanaian university anthems following the transitivity framework of Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) as a framework. The corpus for the study is composed of anthems of four traditional universities in Ghana. The result of the analysis reveals a prevalent use of material processes to spell out the actions expected to be taken by members of universities’ community for the progress of their institutions. There is also a minimal use of other process types such as relational, mental, and verbal processes to establish relationships, eulogize and personify the universities as important institutions worthy of praise. The study further reveals the importance of university anthems in the representation of the goals, visions and missions of universities.

Alabi (2020) carries out a stylistic analysis of the anthems of five Nigerian universities. He examines the functions of phonological and lexical repetition, and graphological deviation in the anthems of selected Nigerian Universities using foregrounding as a stylistic framework. The results of the study indicate the use of lexical repetition, phonological repetition, punctuation and capitalisation to portray the universities as centres of knowledge and excellence and that students and staff of these institutions love and take pride in the anthems.

The gap that is there for this study to be filled is in both the theoretical approach and the data for analysis. This study seeks to establish University anthems in Nigeria as a sub-genre of anthems by identifying the Generic structure Potential (GSP) of the selected university anthems as permitted by their contextual configuration (CC). In the next section, the theory of Genre is examined for its relevance to the study.

III. GENRE THEORY

A Genre, according to Swales (1990) is a class of ‘communicative events’ commonly used by the members of a given community who share some set of ‘communicative purposes’ characterized by various patterns of “structure, style, content and intended audience” (Swales 1990: 58). To Swales, it only members
of the professional community where the genre occurs that recognize the communicative purposes, and this is what constitute the rationale for the genre. To Bhatia (2004), Genre means language use in a conventionalized communicative setting in order to express a specific set of communicative goals of a discretionary or social institution, that give rise to stable structural forms by imposing constraints on the use of lexico-grammatical as well as discoursal resources.

The study of genre has over the years been carried out by scholars following three different theoretical approaches. The three approaches are: English for Specific Purposes (ESP); Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) and the Rhetorical Genre Studies (RGS).

The Rhetorical Genre Studies (RGS) approach to genre studies is mainly influenced by the developmental psychology and meta-cognitive science which have their focus on the social purposes of genre. This approach is otherwise known as the North American Genre Theory. Genre analysis within RGS begins with the understanding of the contexts of genres and their performance. In doing this, the common trajectory of genre inquiry is an ethnomethodological approach rather than text analysis which focuses on detailed analysis of social and cultural contexts of the genre being investigated emphasising on the social purpose or actions in which the genre fulfils (Fakhruddin & Hassan 2015).

The second approach to Genre theory is English for Specific Purposes (ESP). ESP is used to refer to various areas of English studies for special and specific purposes such as English for business purpose, English for medical purpose, legal English, and English for academic purpose, to mention few. Swales, (1990) regarded Genre as “a class of communicative events, characterised both by their communicative purposes and by various patterns of structure, style, content and intended audience”. This definition of Genre by Swales is from the perspective of ESP, and it captures the central focus of ESP which lies in the analysis of formal features of language of genre and the communicative purpose in its context of use that is aimed at providing language learners with apt language resources and skills in their efforts and attempt to have access to the English language needs in their various studies or professions. (Bhatia, 1993; Swales, 1990).

The third approach in the study of genre is Systemic functional Linguistics (SFL). The SFL view of genre is based on Hallidayan systemic functional linguistics and works of other systemic functional linguists such as Halliday and Hasan (1985); Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) and Martin (1992). The theory of Systemic Functional Linguistics a linguistic explanation of operations of language in society and how meaning is created by the members of the society through their specific language choices. According to Eggins (2004), SFL provides a model of language as a functional semantic resource; This is a model that emphasizes the social functions of language and describes grammar in terms of structures that are hierarchically organized and in terms of systems of mutually exclusive choices available to the language user under specified conditions. (Halliday & Hasan 1985, p. 8).

Halliday identified the three metafunctions: textual metafunction which recognizes clause as message; interpersonal metafunction which sees clause as exchange and ideational or experiential metafunction which sees clause as representation. Textual metafunction is represented by the systems of theme; the ideational / experiential metafunction is represented by the systems of transitivity while the Interpersonal metafunction is represented by the systems of mood. (Ayoola & Babatunde 2021).

Concepts of language description/analysis within the framework of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) include meta-function, text and context, genre analysis and generic structure potential (GSP) analysis. However, in this study, we shall focus on generic structure potential (GSP) (Halliday & Hasan, 1985) as the theoretical framework for the analysis of data.

IV. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A. Generic Structure Potential within the Framework of Systemic Functional Linguistics

The concept of Generic Structure Potential (GSP) was introduced by Halliday and Hasan (1985, 1989) and the concept is particularly for the study of intertextual links between texts. The GSP describes the range of obligatory, standard set of features in a text that essentially makes it to be classified to a particular genre (Halliday & Hasan 1985; 1989:66).

The framework of a Generic Structure Potential denotes the optional and obligatory elements: the sequence and recursion of the elements within a genre. What determines the generic Structure potential of a text are the obligatory elements involved. A text can be ascribed to a particular genre only if it attests to all the obligatory elements required by that genre type. Thus, GSP is used to describe a particular type of text which is different from any other text. According to Halliday and Hasan (1985) texts of the same genre may have different optional structures.

Halliday and Hasan (1985) built the GSP on the assumption that Contextual Configuration (CC) of the text “permits statements about the text structures” to be made (Halliday & Hasan 1985:56) Contextual Configuration (CC) refers to specific set of the values which can be used to specify the field, tenor and
mode of a given text. These context variables always go together with any social activity that occurs. A particular communication/social activity embodies what the social function is about (field), who she is being communicated (tenor) and how she is communicating with (mode). Therefore, as contextual configuration (CC) exists where the social activity occurs, it is also regarded that the structure of the text can be predicted and measured using the CC. Thus, according to Halliday and Hasan (1985), Contextual Configuration can predict the following about a text structure:

1. Obligatory elements – What elements must occur?
2. Optional elements – What elements may occur?
3. Sequencing of elements – What arrangements of elements are obligatory and optional?
4. Recursiveness – How often may what elements occur?

In Halliday and Hassan (1985) some symbols were given, with which a text can be written and interpreted genetically. These symbols of generic structure potential include: ^, [ ], { }, / and <->.

^ caret sign: indicates relative sequence
/ slant sign: indicates a complementary distribution of the two elements occurring preceding and following the slant sign.

Superscript N: indicates the possibility of several occurrences for that element.

Superscript R: indicates the possibility of iteration for the element

Hasan (1985:68) explains that what is essential to ‘moving a text along’ with regard to its social purpose are the crucial semantic features of an element. As suggested by Hasan (1994:146) the optional elements of structural potential of a genre have relation to the tenor and mode of the discourse. The GSP as a framework gives allowance for the explanation of variations within a genre, i.e., in what ways individual texts can vary around (as it were) those crucial elements and still be regarded as belonging to the same genre. The GSP approach to text analysis deals with the ordering and recursion of the generic elements in texts. There are different obligations in the sequencing of the generic elements in any text. According to Hasan (1989) the degree of mobility of a pair of elements varies from the other pairs of elements. According to her, a certain element may occur in a fixed sequence compared to another specific element but not in relation to some other(s). According to Hasan (1989), the completeness and appropriateness of texts is determined by the permissible sequences of the obligatory elements. This study, therefore, is set to identify the set of obligatory elements in University anthems as a sub-genre of anthem.

V. PURPOSE OF STUDY

This study seeks to establish University anthems in Nigeria as a sub-genre of anthems by identifying the Generic structure Potential (GSP) of the selected university anthems as permitted by their contextual configuration (CC) following the theory of Halliday and Hasan (1985) as a theoretical framework for the study.

VI. METHODOLOGY

The present study analyzes ten (10) anthems belonging to ten different Universities in Nigeria. The Universities comprises six Federal Universities, two States owned universities and two private Universities in Nigeria. The federal Universities are University of Ibadan (UI), Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU), University of Lagos (UNILAG) University of Ilorin (UNILORIN), University of Uyo (UNIUYO) and Federal University, Lafia (FULAFIA). These universities represent first-, second-, third-, fourth-, and fifth generations of federal universities in Nigeria. The state Universities are Lagos State University (LASU), Ekiti State University (EKSU), The Private Universities are Afe Babalola University (ABUAD) and Joseph Ayo Babalola University (JABU). The Anthems were obtained from both printed sources and the websites of the various Universities The study is set out to identify the Generic structure Potential (GSP) of the selected university anthems as permitted by their contextual configuration (CC) using the theory of Halliday and Hasan (1985) as a theoretical framework for the study. The analysis in this study intends to come up with the total range of optional and obligatory elements in the University anthems analysed which are the possibilities of text structure for every text that can come up under the Genre of University anthem.
VII. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONAL AND OBLIGATORY ELEMENTS IN THE ANTHEMS

The following elements were identified in the Anthems that were analysed:

1) Identity and Orientation (IO)

This element introduces name and the attributes of the university. It gives the location of the University as well as the background information on the founding fathers or proprietor as the case may be. Examples from the selected anthems are given below:

Great Ife! Great Ife!
Africa’s most beautiful campus.
There’s only one Great Ife in the universe
Another Great Ife is a counterfeit
Great! Great! Great! Great! Great (OAU)

Uniben, fountain head of true learning
Deep and sound soothing spring for all who thirst
Bounds of knowledge to advance
Uniben, first and best (UI)

University of Lagos, the shining sun
A fountain of excellence…
University of first choice, The nation’s pride
Rich in Knowledge and Character
Producing Nigeria’s Great Ambassadors
We hail Unilag (UNILAG)

In love, peace and harmony,
We shall build the tower
Unilorin!
Ilorin, Unilorin,
Your torch has guided us
Upwards and onwards, (UNILORIN)

FULafia where dreams come true
A citadel of learning
A center for great minds and a place for strength and peace… (FULAFIA)

The citadel our great forebears
Raised from nursery to its apogee
Now stand like a giant
In the African sun (UNIUYO)

ABUAD we come, oh oh oh ABUAD we come;
Founded by Afe Babalola;
Shine with your light our great citadel, in truth and service, in truth and service.
Lagos State U-ni-ver-si-ty…
We are LASU and We are proud!

We are blessed with culture and arts so great
As created in Eyo masquerade
Plus the fishing and countless boat regattas,
And make do with wine botas (LASU)

Hail! Hail!! Ekiti State University,
This lofty vision, which our fathers bore…
Hail! Hail!! Ekiti State University,
The fountain from which we all draw with joy, (EKSU)

A unique environment;
With aesthetic structure (ABUAD)
All hail our JABU, citadel of Knowledge, wisdom
Spiritual prowess endowed with faith and grace… (JABU)

2) Mission and Vision (MV)
This element expresses the objectives and goals set for the university by the founding fathers as well as approaches for achieving them.
Examples

Raise true minds for a noble cause:
Social justice, equal chances
Greatness won with honest toil
Guide our people this to know:
Wisdom’s best to serve turned
Help enshrine the right to learn (UI)

Forward ever, backward never
For learning and culture, sports and struggle… (OAU)

Learning, winning, building, praying,
Showing the way for all who yearn;
Making a future for the ones who follow,
Rising high we must never turn, (UNILORIN)

Our mission is to uphold our Great vision
Arise, Arise, Great Uniuyo
We shall arise and shine
And take our place in the firmament
Of cultured men and women
Blest with wisdom, depth and vision
And leave behind traditions
For generations to come UNIUYO

Equipping for Nigeria a people of knowledge and skills
FULafia where dreams come true FULAFIA

There’s a citadel founded with great vision,
where character and learning’s the mission
It’s fountain for all who thirst for knowledge. (LASU)

The goal is clear,
To birth the best brains,
For strength that builds our Nation (EKSU)

Delivery unequalled;
Designed for high quality education;
To mould character and infuse knowledge
Out to lead others (ABUAD)

Godliness, integrity and industry our goal

3) Ideology (ID)
This element expresses the ideological stance of the university; the virtues and attributes the university believes as an institution
Example

Self-reliance, Unity
That our nation may with pride
Help to build a world that is truly free…
For a mind that knows is a mind that’s free (UI)

Conscious, vigilant, progressive
Aluta against all oppression (OAU)
In unity we grow,
Committed to the seat of our learning,
Our hearts from vanity,
Standing firm in wisdom, in knowledge and in truth,
We honour your virtues;
Unilorin, you stand in strength and pride, (UNILORIN)

Blessed be thy diligence
Mustered by great dedication and passion
For Knowledge, Honour and Service (EKSU)

Faith in ABUAD’s philosophy of industry, service and character,
Our future for greatness and excellence is assured (ABUAD)

Faithfulness to our nation and holiness we’ll live (JABU)

4) Evocation and Eulogy (EE)
This element praises the University. It extols the greatness of the University
Samples are given below:

Ilorin, Unilorin,
Your torch has guided us
Upwards and onwards,
Ilorin, Unilorin.
Our Alma Mater,
We sing! (UNILORIN)

EKSU! EKSU!! EKSU!!!
Shine in all spheres,
I say shine, (EKSU)

Proud of ABUAD;
The launching pad to excellence (ABUAD)

All hail our JABU, our place of glory… (JABU)

5) Prayer (P)
This element expresses wish and prayers for the University

Blessed be thy diligence…
Great may you remain forever and ever.. (EKSU)

6) Exhortation (E)
This element exhorts the staff and students on the necessary actions expected to be taken in order to
achieve the goals of the institution; in most cases it expresses the need to be diligent and be good
ambassadors of the institution.

Example
In love, peace and harmony,
We shall build the tower
Unilorin!
Hear the clarion call,
In unity we grow, (UNILORIN)

Let us all arise as one
And light up wisdom’s path
Arise, Arise
Arise and shine forth, Great Uniuyo (UNIUYO)

To-gether, lift high the ban-er.
Joining hands, every thought to gar-ner
In radiance, bar-ring eve-ry shroud
We are LASU and we are proud! (LASU)

Light to all nation, Yes JABU shine on! Shine on! (JABU)

7) Pledge and Allegiance (PA)
This element expresses the allegiance of the students to their alma mater.
Example

Pledge to serve our Cherished goals… (UI)
Great Ife! I love you… (OAU)
FULafia beacon of hope we pledge allegiance
Innovation, transformation, integrity our pledge (FULAFIA)
Faithfulness to our nation and holiness we ‘ll live
Great JABU, My ledge I give to thee (JABU)

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B. Sequence of Obligatory and Optional Elements
The focus of GSP analysis is to express the total range of optional and obligatory elements in any given text and possibly their order in such a way that the possibility of text structure for every text that can be appropriate to that particular Contextual Configuration (CC) will be exhausted. The analysis in this study so far has come up with the total range of optional and obligatory elements in the University anthems analysed which are the possibilities of text structure for every text that can come up under the Genre of University anthem. The obligatory elements in the analysed University anthems are two: Identity/Orientation and Mission/Vision while the optional elements are Ideology, Evocation/Eulogy, Prayer, Exhortation and Pledge/Allegiance. The obligatory elements are present in all the anthems analysed.

The elements, however, have no regular order of occurrence in the anthem but they are attested to in the anthems as elements that make the anthems anthem. Thus, the Generic Structure Potential of University Anthems in Nigeria can be given as:

IO* MV* (ID)* (EE)* (PR)* (EX)* (PA)*

The implication of the above is that any University Anthem in Nigeria should contain the following structural elements IO* MV* (ID)* (EE)* (PR)* (EX)* (PA)* The round bracket indicates the optionality of the elements enclosed in it. Therefore Ideology (ID), Evocation/Eulogy (EE), Prayer (PR), Exhortation (EX) and Pledge/Allegiance (PA) are optional structural Elements while IO* MV* are obligatory structural elements. * is used to express the unordered stage of the elements. There is no restraint on the sequence of any element as well as iteration. This is another peculiar feature of Anthem as a Genre. An Anthem is just like a poem; there is possibility of repetition and refrains. Thus, the identified elements can appear at any position and as many times as possible without any specific order of occurrence.
VIII. CONCLUSION

This Study tried to establish the generic structure of selected Nigerian university anthems. The analysis revealed two obligatory elements - Identity/ Orientation (ID) and Mission / Vision (MV) - and five optional elements- Ideology (ID), Evocation/Eulogy (EE), Prayer (PR), Exhortation (EX) and Pledge/Allegiance (PA). From the findings of this study, it can be concluded that even though University anthems, as a form of poem seemingly appear in different structures, yet there is a certain pattern of a Generic Structure that construes the purpose the anthems are intended to serve for the institutions; that is to communicate the identity of the institution. This actually corroborates the assertion of Alabi (2020) that ‘a university anthem often gives information about the university: its name; the city where it is located; its motto, vision, and mission; and, sometimes, the qualities that position it as an enviable institution of learning.’ The findings of this study, however, can serve as a guide for whoever wants to compose an anthem for newly established university by getting acquainted with the features of a University anthem.

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Moses O. Ayoola was born in Omuo-Ekiti, Ekita State Nigeria. He attended University of Ado-Ekiti, Ekita State, Nigeria for his bachelor of Arts degree in English and Literary studies and University of Ilorin, Nigeria for both master of Arts and PhD in English language.

He has taught English Language at various levels of education. He is currently a Lecturer at Department of languages and Linguistics, Bamidele Olumilua University of Education Science and Technology (BOUESTI) Ijero-Ekiti, Nigeria. He has many publications in reputable international Journals.

Dr. Ayoola is a member of English Scholars’ Association of Nigeria and many other academic /professional bodies.

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