

An Experiential Metafunction Analysis of Chinua Achebe's *No Longer at Ease*

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doi: <https://doi.org/10.37745/ejells.2013/vol12n61937>

Published August 12, 2024

Citation: Djimet I. (2024) An Experiential Metafunction Analysis of Chinua Achebe's *No Longer at Ease*, *European Journal of English Language and Literature Studies*, Vol.12, No.6, pp.19-37

ABSTRACT: *The purpose of this study is to analyze Chinua Achebe's No Longer at Ease from a systemic functional linguistic perspective, focusing notably on Transitivity or the grammar of experiential meaning. The linguistic data are analyzed on the basis of the mixed research method approach, which combines both qualitative and quantitative findings. The results have revealed that the main experiences in terms of happening, doing, sensing, saying, being or having are essentially ascribed to Obi Okonkwo, Mark, Mr. Green, Clara, Miss Elsie Mark, and Miss Tomlinson. The description of these experiences corresponding processes and their distribution among the main participants have definitely clarified the real causes of the social unrest emphasized by the author. The new systems introduced by Europeans have completely turned African experiences upside down. It is therefore time to redefine and adapt them to this new environment.*

KEYWORDS: *No Longer at Ease*, processes, the grammar of experiential meaning, social unrest, Europeans.

INTRODUCTION

Some people are too optimistic about Africa, for they focus their analysis on some statistics related to economic growth rate or some other factors such as life expectancy, electricity coverage rate, infant mortality rate, etc. which have somehow improved in some rare African countries. But actually, after more than half a century of independence, these indicators are not sufficient; they hide a shabby reality. The continent faces many crises and this is characterized by two distinct features: economic crisis in an era of globalization; and political weakness caused by centuries of oppression, exploitation, bad governance, and marginalization (Olaniyan, Ifidon & Contributors, 2018). Despite its huge natural resources, Africa is the less developed and the most indebted continent; the majority of Africans are considered among the world's poorest, earning less than one dollar a day; the continent suffers from infrastructural deficit: poor road network, poor

communication facilities; and poor access to electricity and potable water, the list is very long. This situation was deplored by the former French President Nicolas Sarkozy (Djimé & Alladoum, 2020). He provided gloomy figures that caused African scholars to react, accusing him of dishonesty or mockery towards the continent his forefathers colonized formerly. They blamed him for having a neocolonialist attitude.

African writers are rightly concerned by these sad figures about Africa, and they have often novelized them, using fiction as the vital record of what they have seen in life, what they have experienced of it, what they have thought and felt about those aspects of it which have the most immediate and enduring interest for all of us (Pradhan, 2019). Achebe's *No Longer at Ease* is one of the best records of Africa's post-independence experiences. What he experienced sixty years ago is surely going on nowadays. Analyzing the novel critically, Das (2022) contends that the main theme of this novel is corruption which is actually part of European cultural values. By trying to adopt European lifestyle, African elites finally ignore their ancestral values to make money. Put another, Africans' morals forbade things like corruption, embezzlement, denouncing, etc. Wilson & Madhavan' (2018) work puts an accent on acculturation and alienation in *No Longer at Ease*. They argue that Obi undergoes a double colonization: one from European influence and the other from the neocolonial elite. This means that the main character is completely confused, for he loses his cultural bearings, which results in a professional and social failure. Moreover, Onuekwusi & Dickson (2020) apply the theory of deconstruction in the assessment of the character and conclude that the protagonist starts off as a hero and eventually ends up as an antihero on account of high-handedness, dishonesty, corruption, violence, sexual promiscuity, ill temperament, etc.

This work suggests a different analysis based on Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics theory (1973, 1978, 1985a). In fact, the work uses the theory of Transitivity which views language as representation of human experiences through the different process types. The postulate behind such an approach is that the analysis of the characters' actions, attitudes, behaviors, attributes, sayings, etc., can reveal why Africa is no longer at ease. Thus, this study is about the analysis of Transitivity patterns and their distribution among participants so as to figure out the deep causes of the social disruption in Africa.

Theoretical Background

Clause as Representation

The term clause refers to a linguistic unit with a multifunctional construct consisting of three metafunctional lines of meanings: a message or a quantum of information, an exchange or a transaction between speaker and listener, and a representation of some process in ongoing human experience (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004). Here the clause is analyzed as Representation, that is,

a flow of events or goings-on. This level of language use is actually about human experience in terms of happening, doing, sensing, saying, being or having, which corresponds to six process types: material, behavioral, mental, verbal, relational and existential (Eggins, 1994). Systemicists label it as the grammar of Transitivity, which construes the reality into a manageable set of process types. According to Halliday et al. (2004), the theory of Transitivity clarifies three components in a clause as representation:

- ✓ process unfolding through time
- ✓ the participants involved in the process
- ✓ circumstances associated with the process

Circumstantial elements are optional components of the clause whereas participants are obligatory components, for they are directly related to the process. Each clause must have at least one participant. Either they cause the occurrence of the process or they are affected by it in some way (Eggins, 1994). Participants are represented by nominal groups.

METHODS

The methodology adopted in this work is the mixed-method approach, that is, a research methodology which combines multiple methods to tackle research issues in a suitable and rational manner, and this involves gathering, scrutinizing, explicating and enunciation both qualitative and quantitative data (Dawadi, Shrestha, & Giri, 2021, Doyle, Brady & Byrne, 2009). The mixed-method is more and more used in discourse analysis, for it consists in combining qualitative and quantitative linguistic findings in order to get more insights. Two extracts are therefore qualitatively selected from Chinua Achebe's *No Longer at Ease* and split into linguistic units referred to as clauses in which Transitivity elements are thoroughly identified on the quantitative basis. These are tallied and figures are ascribed to them. This allows to have exact statistics on the occurrence of each linguistic item and facilitates the interpretation of the findings overall.

RESULTS**Quantitative Transitivity Analysis of Extract 1**

This section is about the quantitative analysis of Transitivity elements in Extract 1. Table 1 provides statistics related to the occurrence of the six process types in the Extract.

Process types	Number	Percentage
TMP	153	28.43%
RP	122	22.67%
IMP	107	19.88%
MeP	71	13.19%
VP	69	12.82%
BeP	9	1.67%
EP	7	1.30%
Total	538	100%

Table 1: occurrence of process types in Extract 1

The table above shows that TMPs outnumber the other process types, with a figure of 153/538, representing 28.43%, followed by RPs (122/538, that is, 22.67%) and IMPs (107/538, corresponding to 19.88%). MePs rank fourth, with a number of 71/538, equivalent to 13.19% whereas VPs occupy the fifth rank, with a number of 69/538, corresponding to 12.82%. The table also reveals that BePs (9/538) and EPs (7/538) are few in number, with a percentage of 1.67% and 1.30%, respectively. This means that various experiences are represented in the extract: doings, happenings, sayings, beings, havings, etc.

Table 2 analyses the occurrence and distribution of TMPs among participants in Extract 1.

Actors	Process number	Total
The prospect of working with Mr. Green and Mr. Omo; One; someone; a man; you; the inexperienced kite; a duckling; the trouble; a “brother” or a “friend; it; a boa; each occupant; those upstairs; taxi drivers; The incident; it; A university degree; Another car	1;19; 133; 195; 196; 199; 201; 203; 206; 211; 214; 216; 217; 218; 220; 221; 225; 229;; 232; 251; 265; 268; 271; 293; 325; 338; 402; 406; 419;	29

He(Obi); I; you; let's(Clara and Obi); we; they	5; 6; 9;33; 43; 72; 78; 86; 151; 158; 161; 173; 184; 191;195; 237; 239; 240; 244; 245; 246; 249; 252; 253; 254; 285; 294; 303; 308; 335; 337; 350; 352; 355; 356; 357; 358; 395; 445; 447; 448; 451; 468; 475; 478; 500; 501; 504; 516; 517; 528; 533; 535;	53
He(Mr. Green);	25;	1
Miss Tomlinson; she;	32; 48; 60; 131; 160; 172;	6
the receptionist downstairs;	55;	1
The gentleman (Mark); They(Mark and Okonkwo); sister; he; I; Mr Mark;	64; 68; 71; 75; 98; 101; 106; 108; 110; 117; 129; 140; 146;	13
the tall P.W.D. man;	264;	1
Joseph; he;	275; 279; 292;	3
He (The President);	281;	1
Clara; She; you; I	286; 422; 423; 427; 431; 432; 433; 436; 439; 453; 454; 455; 458; 459; 462; 493; 497; 523;	18
I (Elsie Mark); She; The girl; you; none of the girls in our school; a relation of yours;	298; 310; 326; 327; 329; 330; 339; 354; 366; 367; 368; 375; 393; 394; 410; 412; 429;	17
Our father(Miss and Miss Mark); He;	376; 378; 379; 380;	4
You (Mr. Okonkwo); I;	135;409; 411; 418;	4
his steward(Samson);	508; 513;	2
Total		153

Table 2: Distribution of TMPs among actors

As it can be inferred from table 2 above, there are basically four actors: *Obi Okonkwo*, the representatives of the colonial administration *Mr Green*, *Miscellaneous actors (Clara and Elsie)*. *Obi* is the participant in 53/153 TMPs (34.64%), meaning that he is at the center of the most relevant experiences described in the Extract. *As for Miscellaneous actors*, they are involved in 29/153 TMPs (18.25%). This implies that some actions are ineffectual, that is, they are simply cited. *Clara* is the participant in 18/153 (11.76%) TMPs almost the same number (17/153, that is, 11.11%) as those ascribed to *Elsie*. These actors' doings clarify *Obi's* failure in dealing with Nigerian post-colonial challenges.

Table 3 below summarizes the distribution of IMPs among participants in Extract 1.

Actors	Process number	Total
He(Obi); Obi's guard; John's school fees; we(Obi and Elsie mark); Master and Madam;	2; 27; 44; 126; 144; 150; 152; 155; 165; 174; 242; 248; 300; 306; 470; 507; 511; 512; 514; 518; 519; 525; 527; 538;	24
many of these secretaries; he;	16; 21;	2
It; It(tactic);The telephone; nothing; conversation; the day; the duck; the matter; a man; the bribe; you; the temptation; the soup; A car; light; that; the car;	26; 29; 49; 50; 51; 52; 53; 118; 157; 166; 180; 193; 200; 204; 210; 215; 222; 223; 234; 238; 247; 255; 269; 324; 347; 408; 505; 524;	28
Clara; you; her proprietary; they(Obi, Miss Mark and Clara);	35; 39; 420; 438; 444; 461; 477; 480; 482; 484; 492;	11
I(Miss Tomlinson); you; she;	40; 54; 88; 90; 149; 153; 171; 175; 189;	9
I(Mr. Okonkwo); Let's(Okonkwo and Mark)	62; 70;	2
I(Mark); You; he, She(Mark's sister); my brother; the man;	69; 73; 79; 80; 82; 83; 102; 107; 142; 145; 147; 332; 383; 385; 386; 388;	16
the tall P.W.D. man; his speaking;	261; 262;	2
He (Joseph);	276;	1
her words(Elsie Mark); I; you; people with Grade One; you; our father; she;	328; 342; 344; 345; 372; 373; 377; 384; 387; 465; 471; 473;	12
Total		107

Table 3: Distribution of IMPs among participants

Table 3 uncovers that the majority of IMPs are ascribed to *miscellaneous actors* (inanimate or abstract things) such as *bribe*, *the car*, *the temptation*, etc. These are involved in 28/107 IMPs, corresponding to 26.16%. *Obi*, the main character is the actor in 24/107 intransitive clauses

whereas *Marck* and *Elsie* are the participants in 16/107 (14.95%) and 12/107 (11.21%), respectively. *Clara* actualizes 11/107 (10.28) TMPs, and *Miss Tomlinson* is the actor in 9/107 (8.41%). These participants are the main actors of the new system of administration imposed by the English colonizers.

This section is about the quantitative analysis of experiences related to *beings* and *havings* or Relational Processes. Table 4 below synthesizes their distribution in Extract 1.

Types of relational process	Number	Percentage
Circumstantial	61	50%
Intensive	32	26.22%
Attributive	21	17.21%
Possessive	08	6.55%
Total	122	100%

Table 4: Occurrence and distribution of RPs in Extract 1

As mentioned earlier, the analysis highlights a significant number of RPs in Extract 1. Table 4 reveals that Circumstantial RPs rank first, with a number of 61/122, representing 50%; that Intensive RPs rank second with a number of 32/122, corresponding to 26.22%; that Attributive RPs rank third with a number of 21/122, that is, 17.21%; and finally, that Possessive RPs are few in number: 8/122, equivalent to 6.55%. These clauses of beings and havings are basically about the main actors who are attributed certain qualification or who are simply defined. Some circumstances related to how, when, why, etc. are also construed in the extract under analysis.

Table 5 below gives the statistics about what characters want, feel, think, perceive, etc.

Sensors	Processes number	Total/Sensor
He (Obi); I; you; Let us;	4; 7; 8;15; 34; 42; 45; 57; 77; 94; 95; 128; 138; 159; 167; 181; 182; 186; 190; 198; 224; 250; 256; 258; 266; 267; 283; 284; 287; 288; 301; 305; 317; 319; 321; 359; 363; 391; 414; 415; 440; 457;	42
Mr. Green;	22; 23; 24;	3
Miss Tomlinson; she; We(Obi and Miss Tomlinson)	31; 188; 207;	3
Mr. Mark; I; He;	79; 92; 114; 115; 119; 121; 123; 136; 148;	9
The man; A man; Every Nigerian;	125; 212; 399;	3
Clara; I; you;	289; 430; 460; 485; 529; 532;	6

She (Elsie Mark); Miss Mark;	360; 464; 474;	3
They (the girls in our school);	371;	1
Okonkwo;	417;	1
Total		71

Table 5: Distribution of MePs among sensors

As it can be noted from Table 5 above, Obi Okonkwo is the main sensor in Extract 1; he is the participants in 42/71 mental clauses, that is, 59.15%, whereas *Mr. Mark* and *Clara* are the sensors in 9/71 MePs (12.67%) and 6/71 MePs (8.45%), respectively. This means that some experiences related to consciousness are construed in the Extract.

Processes of psychological and physiological behaviors like breathing, coughing, smiling, dreaming, staring, etc. are detailed in table 6 below.

Behavers	Processes number	Total/behavers
She (Miss Tomlinson);	179;	1
She(mother kite); One;	208; 233;	2
She (Elsie Mark);Miss Mark;	309; 353; 361; 472;	4
She (Clara);	487; 536	2
Total		9

Table 6: Distribution of BePs among participants

The statistics in Table 6 above emphasize that the main behavers are *Elsie* (4/9, that is, 44.44%), followed by *Miss Tomlinson* (2/9, corresponding to 22.22%) and *Clara* (2/9, representing 22.22%). This signifies that some physiological and psychological experiences are construed in the extract under consideration.

Existential Processes are actually not very common in discourse; however, they serve to introduce important participants in the placement (Halliday et al., 2004). These are summarized in Table 7 below.

	Process number	Total
There	104; 139; 205; 295; 311; 456; 506	7
Total		7

Table 7: Occurrence of EPs in Extract 1

Table 7 highlights 7 EPs in the extract. The Existents are *some words, any point, some grave danger, a girl, a little gap, bottle of ginger beer, a cabinet meeting*. These experiences are part of things that allow to understand the whole post-colonial happenings.

The last type of process that needs to be taken account of in this analysis are Verbal Processes, the process of sayings and their synonyms. They are synthesized in table 8 below.

Sayers	Process number	Total/sayer
Miss Tomlinson;	11; 36; 163; 170; 178; 187;	6
Obi; you;	14; 74; 109; 130; 141; 154; 176; 260; 282; 296; 297; 318; 323; 343; 469; 495; 496; 498; 520; 522;	20
One; they; the man; everyone; the duck; mother kite; you; a Minister of State; someone; the disparity in salary and amenities; you;	20; 28; 124; 192; 194; 202; 209; 213; 219; 226; 230; 235; 243; 312; 403; 435;	16
Clara we(Obi and Clara);	30; 481; 490; 499; 502; 515; 526;531;	8
He(A gentleman);	61;	1
He (Mr. Mark); we (Mr Mark and Obi); I;	84; 85; 89; 91; 103; 105; 112;	7
Joseph (Joseph);	278; 280;	2
She (Elsie Mark); She (Miss Mark); I;	299;320; 333; 336; 341; 365; 426; 466;	8
Samson;	510;	1
Total		69

Table 8: Distribution of VPs among sayers.

As it can noticed from the above table, *Obi Okonkwo* is the sayer in the majority of verbal clauses. He actualizes 20/69 VPs, that is, 28.98% while his collaborators or colleagues are involved in 16/69 VPs (23.18%). Clara and Elsie are the participants in the same number of VPs: 8/69 (11.59%.) This implies that some experiences are not actually carried out but simply verbalized; however, these experiences clarify characters' intention, projects and ambitions.

Quantitative Transitivity Analysis of Extract 2

This section is about the quantitative Transitivity analysis of Extract 2. Table 9 below recapitulates the occurrence of process types in the extract.

Process types	Number	Percentage
TMP	234	41.34%
IMP	104	18.37%
RP	97	17.13%
VP	65	11.48%
MeP	52	9.18%
EP	12	2.12%
BeP	1	0.17%
CP	1	0.17%
TOTAL	566	100%

Table 9: process types occurrence in Extract 2

The statistics in the above table show that TMPs are dominant in Extract 2, with a figure of 234/566, representing 41.34%, followed by IMPs which score 104/566, that is, 18.37%, and by RPs which crop up 97/566 times, corresponding to 17.13%. VPs rank fourth, with a number of 65/566 equivalent to 11.48% whereas MePs rank fifth, with a figure 52/566, which gives 9.18%. The other process types are few in number: EPs occur 12/566 (2.12%) and there are only one BeP and one CP in the Extract. Therefore, it can be inferred that lots of happenings and goings on as well as beings and havings are represented in the Extract. The analysis also reveals that a significant number of things are ineffectual, that is, they simply verbalized or thought of.

Table 10 below emphasizes the distribution of TMPs among participants or actors.

Actors	Processes number	Total
It; The talk; someone; the special conditions; the allowance; a man; they; it (envelope); a dead man; Writing letters; The air; Dis kind; dey; hot water; children(of bedbug); whatever; one day; who; On top of it all; Lagos; the story; a man; a bird; tears; such a thing; something; Shame and guilt; in spite of	009; 016; 030; 055; 102; 105; 111; 129; 141; 152; 160; 169; 187; 192; 221; 223; 233; 235; 251; 253; 255; 258; 259; 260; 268; 285; 308; 309; 310; 311; 337; 353; 354; 356; 384; 388; 396;400; 461; 513; 518; 519; 525; 540;566; 469	46

everything; his people; his father's palm tree; The peace; the mist;

an African;	015;	1
people like you(Obi); a few of us; you; a person in his position; His decision; his anger; I; Obi's plan; that beast;	022; 048; 067; 070; 074; 090; 108;107; 112; 113; 114; 116; 117; 118; 127; 130; 131; 132; 133; 134; 136; 137; 138; 139; 144; 149; 150; 151; 155; 161; 164; 165; 166; 167; 170; 171; 174; 176; 177; 184;189; 190; 193; 194; 195; 197; 200; 202; 205; 209; 210; 211; 213; 214; 215; 216; 219; 244; 247; 256; 257; 263; 264; 267; 269; 270; 283; 286; 294; 324; 327; 363; 367; 368; 373; 374; 375; 377; 382; 390; 393; 397; 398; 399; 401; 403; 414; 415; 418; 419; 420; 421; 423; 424; 435; 444; 457; 468; 470; 471; 475; 476; 545; 546; 548; 553; 554; 556; 557; 559;	110
I (Marie); that osu woman;	037; 052; 061; 262; 290; 291;	6
I (Mr Green); you;	040; 045; 050; 051;	4
Mr. Omo; he;	082; 084; 085; 086; 115; 122; 123; 125;	8
She (Clara);you;	093; 094; 184; 204; 208; 237; 238; 239;	8
He (The messenger);	173;	1
Two ward servants; the other; he;	227; 231; 232;	3
He (Christopher);	248;	1
a woman (Obi's mother); she;	273; 275; 276; 379; 402;	5
One Umuofia man; Someone; the older members of the meeting; I; everyone; a number of Umuofia people; The President of the Umuofia Progressive Union; no one; the Minister of Land; he; everyone in the crowd; they; you;	279; 282; 295; 299; 315; 320; 338; 339; 340; 413; 445; 448; 451; 453; 458; 477; 482; 489; 492; 495; 499; 500; 501; 502; 505; 506;	26
His father (Obi's father);	331; 335;	2
Those (okonkwo);	344;	1
Sebastian;	431; 432; 441;	3

Joseph;	440; 462; 464;	3
Nathaniel; King David;	531; 533; 534; 560; 562; 563;	6
Total		234

Table 10: Distribution of TMPs among participants

It can be deduced from Table 10 above that the majority of actions are taken by *Obi Okonkwo*, the main character. He is, indeed, involved in 110/234 TMPs, that is, 47.00%. Miscellaneous actors actualize 46/234 TMPs, corresponding to 19.65% whereas *the people of Umuofia* are the participants in 26/234, that is, 11.11%. *Clara* and *Mr. Omo* score the same number of TMPs: 8/234, corresponding to 3.41%. The other actors' roles cannot be considered here. These actions are part of the experiences that prevent Africa from making progress as it will be discussed in the section on interpretation.

Table 11 is about the distribution of IMPs among participants. Not only does it give the statistics on the occurrence of IMPs, but it also provides details about their distribution among participants.

Actors	Process number	Total
You(Obi); he; you; his eyes kept; his mother; His hand; the effect of his tears; yesterday's thought; his words; it (Obi's feeling of guilt);	001; 005; 006; 007; 059; 062; 078; 080; 099; 109; 146; 191; 196; 217; 218; 225; 226; 243; 317; 326; 358; 362; 376; 380; 385; 386; 395; 425; 426; 427; 428; 434; 459; 491; 493; 498; 538; 539;	38
It; local leave; a slight; they; whatever; what; it; the return journey from Lagos to Umuofia; the door; large; one Umuofia man; something; another thing; A man; The thought; the blow; Tortoise; something new under the sun; his mother; breakfast; a little garri;	004;019;066;087;088;089;097;104;119;162; 198; 261; 277; 300; 303; 304; 352; 381; 394; 412; 510; 511; 514; 515; 516; 521; 528; 529; 552; 555;	30
no single Nigerian;	027;	1
You (Mr. Green);he;	029; 031; 42	3
Marie; I;	034; 039; 049; 076;	4
a messenger;	163; 172;	2
She (Clara);	182; 186; 245;	3

Large numbers of patients; a pregnant woman;	220; 224;	2
She (Obi's mother);	278; 287;	2
I (one of the older members of the meeting);he;	319; 322;	2
Those(Okonkwo);	345;	1
a post office messenger;	360;	1
His thoughts (Obi's father);he;	405; 406;	2
Obi's married sisters; Esther; they;	408; 409; 410;	3
Joseph; he;	429; 430;	2
Some (Umuofia people);others; so many of his people; those; Everybody on arrival;	446; 447; 449; 460; 465; 472; 473;	7
he (King David's beloved son);	564;	1
TOTAL		104

Table 11: Distribution of IMPs among participants

Table 11 highlights three preeminent actors in Extract 1 as regards IMPs: *Obi Okonkwo*, the main character, the *society in general* and *the people of Umuofia*. Indeed, *Obi Okonkwo* is the actor in 38/104 IMPs, that is, 36.53% while *the society* is involved in almost the same number of IMPs, that is, 30/104, corresponding to 28.84%. As for the people of Umuofia, they are participants in 7/104 IMPs, representing 6.73%. This means that the Extract puts an accent on some actions and reactions which account for the main character's misadventure.

The overall analysis reveals that Extract 1 construes a significant number of beings and havings the distribution of which is detailed in table 12 below.

Types of relational process	Number	Percentage
Circumstantial	40	41.23%
Intensive	27	27.83%
Attributive	25	25.77%
Possessive	05	5.15%
Total	97	100%

Table 12: Occurrence and distribution of RPs in Extract 2

As it can be noted from Table 12 above, the majority of beings are related to how, when, why, where, etc. Such beings occur 40/97 times, representing 41.23% whereas intensive identifying beings crop up 27/97 times, that is, 27.83%. As regards Attributive RPs, they are used 25/97 times, corresponding to 25.77%. Having RPs are few in number: they occur 5/97 times, that is, 5.15%. Therefore, it can be stated that the Extract under analysis contains some descriptions.

The overall analysis of process types accentuates the occurrence of some MePs in the extract under consideration. Table 13 below provides the statistics related to their distribution among participants.

Sensors	Processes number	Total/Sensor
He(Mr. Green);	003;	1
Government;	020; 023;	2
You (Obi);I;Obi;	057; 068; 079; 091; 098; 121; 142; 143; 148; 168; 175; 203; 206; 212; 228; 240; 288; 359; 361; 389; 390; 488; 542;	23
I(Marie);	077;	1
She(Clara);	092; 180; 183; 185;	4
most of them(Patients);	096;	1
Everyone;they;you;I;it;the voice of Nathaniel;	156; 156; 158; 289; 292; 305; 312; 313; 316; 318; 330; 341; 349; 350; 486; 509; 526;	17
Me I (Two ward servants);	230;	1
Christopher;	241;	1
Isaac Okonkwo;	342;	1
Total		52

Table 13: Distribution of MePs among participants

Table 13 highlights that *Obi Okonkwo* is the main sensor in Extract 2; he is the participant in 23/52 MePs, which gives 44.23%, followed by the people around him who are involved in 17/52, that is, 32.69%. Clara is the sensor in 4/52, corresponding to 7.69%. This reflects the main sensors' mental preoccupation as regards the challenges they face in the new system established by European colonizers, as it will be discussed later on.

According to Halliday et al. (2004), Existential clauses can be used to introduce phenomena into the material stream of narration. A few such clauses are used in the extract under analysis as it is illustrated in Table 14 below.

	Process number	Total
There	026; 032; 036; 038; 095; 298; 306; 332; 436; 450; 508; 530;	12

Table 14: occurrence of EPs in Extract 2

The existents described in Extract 2 are *no single Nigerian, a lot of truth, too many holidays here, other patients in the ward, one thing, nothing like it, some excitement at this, a dozen, over twenty-five, a lull in the bigger discussion, a long and embarrassed silence*. These are actually important factors which explain the new realities faced by Nigerians.

Processes of saying and their synonyms are synthesized in Table 15 below.

Sayers	Process number	Total/sayer
Mr. Green; I; he;	002; 025;; 033; 372;	4
Obi; you; they (Marie and Obi); he;	008; 017; 028; 044; 060; 126; 147; 153; 325; 404; 438; 443; 456; 466; 467; 547; 558;	17
Marie; she;	053; 069; 265;	3
your fiancée (Clara);	071;	1
Mr. Omo; he;	100; 103; 106;	3
Dey; the bedbug; she (the bedbug); it; our people;	234; 249; 250; 252; 272; 302;	6
Christopher;	246;	1
He (One Umuofia man); another; you; I; another old man; the first man; the President; The President of the Umuofia Progressive Union; Everybody; they; one of the men; another in Ibo; he (Tortoise)	281; 293; 297; 314; 329; 333; 334; 336; 346; 351; 454; 474; 478; 479; 484; 487; 490; 503; 512; 520; 522; 524; 527;	23
He (Isaac Okonkwo);	343;	1
the messenger;	365; 369;	2
He (Sebastian);	433;	1
Joseph;	439; 463; 496;	3
Total		65

Table 15: distribution of VPs among participants

Table 15 uncovers the principal sayers in Extract 2: *Obi Okonkwo*, the main character, *The people of Umuofia* or *the Umuofia Progressive Union* and *Miscellaneous sayers*. Indeed, *the people of*

Umuofia are involved in 23/65, that is, 35.38%; *Obi Okonkwo* in 17/65, corresponding to 26.15%; and *Miscellaneous sayers* in 6/65, which gives 9.23%. Here some conflicts and issues take the form of utterings which can be acted upon or not.

DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION OF THE FINDINGS

The purpose of this section is to interpret characters' actions, attributes, havings, behaviors, etc. in the light of the statistics presented earlier, in order to answer the critical question raised in the introduction about the social unrest caused by the western civilization introduced in Africa. Indeed, the results reveal that TMPs are predominant in Extract 1 with a number of 153/538, representing 28.43%, followed by RPs (122/538, that is, 22.67%) and IMPs (107/538, corresponding to 19.88%). MePs occupy the fourth position, with a number of 71/538, equivalent to 13.19% whereas VPs occupy the fifth rank, with a number of 69/538, corresponding to 12.82%. Moreover, the analysis shows that BePs (9/538) and EPs (7/538) are few in number, with a percentage of 1.67% and 1.30%, respectively.

The statistics are slightly different in Extract 2. Just like in Extract 1, TMPs are dominant in Extract 2, with a figure of 234/566, representing 41.34%; but they are followed by IMPs in Extract 2 which occur 104/566 times, that is, 18.37%, and by RPs which crop up 97/566 times, corresponding to 17.13%. VPs occupy the fourth position, with a number of 65/566 equivalent to 11.48% whereas MePs rank fifth, with a number of 52/566, which gives 9.18%. The other process types are rarely used in Extract 2: EPs occur 12/519 times (2.12%). There are only one BeP and one CP in Extract 2.

In both Extracts, the main actors, carriers, tokens, agents, possessers, sensors, sayers and clients are *Obi Okonkwo*, *Mark*, *Mr. Green*, *Clara*, *Miss Elsie Mark*, and *Miss Tomlinson*. *Obi* is the participant in the majority of TMPs and IMPs (53 out of 153 TMPs in Extract 1 and 110 out of 234 in Extract 2); for example, in Extract 1 he is the actor in clauses such as *He rose to his feet. Mr. Mark also rose muttered a few apologies, and made for the door. He's forgotten his umbrella, remarked Miss Tomlinson as Obi returned to his seat. "OH, dear!" He took the umbrella and rushed out* (144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152). He rejects *Mark's* offer of bribery, showing his firm determination to combat corruption, which is a new reality introduced in African political, administrative and even social environment. He also shows this attitude when he refuses *Miss Elsie Mark's* offering her body in order to get the scholarship in clauses (416, 417, 418). But his determination seems to be doomed to fail as it is illustrated in the following material and attributive clauses: *You may cause more trouble by refusing a bribe than by accepting it. Had not a Minister of State said, albeit in an unguarded, alcoholic moment, that the trouble was not in receiving bribes, but in failing to do the thing for which the bribe was given. And if you refuse how do you know that a "brother" or a "friend" is not receiving on your behalf* (216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225).

Furthermore, in Extract 1 Obi Okonkwo faces real challenges regarding his responsibilities towards his family and the society in general, for example in clauses (237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242). This is described through material clauses such as *send, paid, find, come from*. Indeed, he must satisfy many social requirements and demands, which finally prompts him to accept bribery. Put another way, he is somehow forced to forego his ambitions to change things in his country. To crown it all, he has to organize his mother's funerals appropriately, that is, as a junior civil servant. The funeral service must be grandiose in terms of expenses and meal. The people who demand favors and financial helps are the same who blame him for having not complied with the norms as it is illustrated in the following verbal clauses in Extract 2: *so they told him that his father's palm tree had borne a fruit at the end of its leaf. When tortoise heard this, he said he must return home to see this great monstrosity. And so his bid to escape the burden of his mother's funeral was foiled* (524, 525, 526, 527, 528, 529). The description of the main character's inner experiences also confirms this dichotomy: *decide, see, understand, sympathize* in clauses (143, 148, 156, 157). Additionally, the description of the contradictions takes the form of relational clauses both in Extract 1 and Extract 2: *His crime was that he had told the President in confidence of Obi's engagement to an outcast girl; Obi was sometimes amazed and terrified at the intensity of her hate, knowing how much...* (277, 278, 287, 288). It is therefore worth mentioning that things seem to be upside down, and that what was normal is now abnormal and vice versa. Obi's engagement to an outcast girl is clearly a metaphor which illustrates confusion due to the loss of cultural references. Mr. Green's remarks (Extract 2) pertain to this new situation: *It often amazes me how you people can have the effrontery to ask for local leave. The idea of local leave was to give Europeans a break to go to a cool place like Jos or Buea. But today it is completely obsolete. But for an African like you, who has too many privileges as it is to ask for two weeks to go on a swan, it makes me want to cry* (09, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16). The representative of the colonial administration accusing Obi of not doing his duty is a paradox. Actually, he plays the fireman after having caused the fire. African people have generally copied their masters' behaviors. The new African clerks are just preoccupied by their privileges: big salaries, big cars and houses, travelling opportunities, etc.

CONCLUSION

After more than half a century of independence, Africa is still struggling to find its references economically, politically and culturally. Chinua Achebe's *No longer at Ease* perfectly describes this social unrest in Africa on the eve of the independence, which is unfortunately still going. The thorough analysis of this novel, emphasizing the experiential metafunction, has revealed the main causes of the social disruption: loss of cultural references, greed, irresponsibility, the lack of adaptation and wisdom and hypocrisy. The idea is not to encourage Africans to get back to their ancestral values, but to call for the change of habits and behaviors. Deviances such as corruption, intolerance and cultural fantasies need real political and cultural actions. The analysis has also revealed that the reading of literature allows to feel, to touch, to see these issues more than any

other material; African leaders take no heed of the warnings, reflections and teachings especially conveyed through literary metaphors. Thus, they often make the same blunders, which naturally cause the same problems ever since Africa become independent.

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