

## A SOCIOLINGUISTIC EXPLORATION OF LANGUAGE AND THE NARRATIVE OF PERSONAL EXPERIENCE IN ROY C'S "PEEPING THROUGH THE WINDOW"

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### Abstract

From a sociolinguistic perspective, this paper analyzes language and the narrative of personal experience in Roy C's "Peeping through the Window". Through the grammatical patterning of words, the study shows, first, that Labov and Waletzky's (1967) oral narrative schema is a relevant linguistic framework for analyzing diverse narrative types. Second, it unveils the linguistic choices deployed by the narrator in recounting experience through the schemas. With this, the schemas become substantial linguistic frames on which the writer's personal experience of marital perfidy is reflected in the music genre. Findings indicate that actions, behaviours and situations are driven by diverse linguistic choices such as deixis, verbs, phrasal verbs, and metaphors among others to foreground a sexually pervaded setting as well as impart us with semantic knowledge of diverse contextual discontents. Sixty-nine texts were selected for analysis using Labov and Waletzky's sociolinguistic model of the oral version of personal narrative. The study deployed 'slanted lines' and 'numerals' to indicate units of clauses meant for analysis and to convey a logical account of the narrative structure that underscores the significance of clause-level grammatical choices. The analysis of texts cuts across different narrative units such as the orientation, the complication, the evaluation and the coda characterised by actions and events appropriated to enhance meaning construction. The model proved to be insightful in advancing readers' knowledge of the form and functional properties of a narrative genre of this kind.

**Keywords:** Language, Narrative of personal experience, Roy C, Labov and Waletzky Sociolinguistic Model,

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## INTRODUCTION

**Music** as an artistic genre is an indispensable human function; hence, its interface with humans is unavoidable. Its societal role cannot be undermined; thus, there is the desire in humans to create and recreate experiences however miniscule or magnificent. Two things propel the present study: first, to prove that music is an artistic work that is rich with experiences, especially, the ones deployed to shape a personal experience as found in Roy C's "Peeing through the Window". The genre is known for its capacity to deploy certain grammatical patterns in shaping personal experiences in a short space. For instance, in Roy C's discourse narrative, one's understanding of the world of the narrative is shaped by the different grammatical patterns that represent unsavoury experiences of marital infidelity, and second, to validate the relevance of Labov and Waletzky's (1967) oral narrative schema as a linguistic tool in this wise. To a large extent, therefore, this study is a focus on language use.

The principal function of language is to convey information, and word patterning is predominantly significant in this direction. Words enrich our knowledge of a context. To this end, a writer can construe his world through the choice of words and peculiar grammatical structuring. The choice or pattern of words a writer employs in a narrative can give us a semantic knowledge of the context or event. It then follows that the description of any event can only be meaningful when language is functionally used to suit the occurrence of the event, thereby, necessitating the relationship between language and context. Context in communication points to language expressions or a group of words that frame any part to enhance the reader's perception of the meaning of the on-going discourse.

A narrative is a discourse that is distinct from other genres that tell stories. This unique trait is not far from the special features that a narrative employs both at structural and functional level. In other words, any attempt to adequately define a narrative would be to describe it from a narrative form as well as its function. A personal narrative, then, is any description of a series of related events or experiences. A narrative is prominent in all forms of art such as literature, speech making, visual art, music, song and so on. This characteristic of narrative corroborates what Hymes (1966, p.115) refers to as "a universal function." A personal narrative has been described as a distinctive genre or form of communication that is poised to make meaning through the sculpting of

experiences. It is these experiences that in turn activate the potentialities of a speaker can and enable him to garner diverse resources of the language in various conditions to make sense of his world.

## 2.0 Methodology

The focus of the study is on Roy C's oral narrative of personal experience crafted through music. Sixty-nine texts are extracted from the clause-level grammatical pattern of the narrative using Labov and Waletzky's (1967) sociolinguistic model of the oral narrative of personal experience to vividly ascertain how each clause-level is consciously crafted to represent a coherent narrative. The analysis cuts across, first, the textual structure which accounts for the way individual narrative units such as the orientation, the complication, the evaluation and the coda are appropriated to enhance meaning construction, and second, the actions and events which describe how the characters in the narrative advance and connect through some kinds of semantic processes such as 'doing', 'thinking' 'saying' and 'attributing'. To this end, the study employs M.A.K. Halliday's (date?) transitivity processes - material, mental, verbal and relational - to enable the analysis of our text.

The evaluation is not discussed as a separate schema because it can occur through the narrative unlike others; hence, the device is underlined wherever it occurs in the narrative. slanted lines and numerals are also employed in the study to showcase units of clause meant for discussion. The essence is to first, convey a logical account of the narrative structure and to underscore the significance of clause-level grammatical choices; how the clause-level patterns signal the structure to show that all the clauses initiate one event/experience to the other.

## 3.0 Theoretical Framework

The study adopts Labov and Waletzky's (1967) sociolinguistic model of the oral narrative of personal experience. Labov and Waletzky's model provides the study with functional idyllic narrative schemas to account for Roy C's musical narrative of personal experience. The functionality of the schemas connects the relationship between the structure (form) and function through patterns of linguistic choices. This implies that the study is not only concerned with the

particular structural form that Roy'C's narrative takes but also how this form correlates with the narrative function. The model offers an insightful narrative framework that has advanced the knowledge of the formal properties of narratives. It comprises six schemas considered as the abstract, orientation, complicating actions, evaluation, resolution and coda, which seem to be different, formally and functionally. Labov (1997) further explains that each level of schema is "a group of clauses of a common functional type," and is identifiable by its use of specific lexical and grammatical devices, which form distinct sections in the narrative (Lambrou, 2005).

To Labov and Waletzky (1967), an abstract is an optional schema in a narrative and it is initiated at the beginning of the story by an initial clause, indicating what the story is all about. The orientation sets the scene and it is signalled by a series of clauses that give the background information on the time, place, and identities of the participants as well as their initial behaviours in the narrative. In situations or contexts where the abstract is not used in the narrative, the orientation tends to give a clue to the intention of the story. The complicating action signals to the listener 'what happens next'. The evaluation is the information on the consequences of the narrative event. Labov and Waletzky (1967) see evaluative clauses as linguistic items that point to the narrator's assessment of events and can be signalled by diverse linguistic units such as intensifiers, explicative, comparators, moods and on.

Labov (1972) which is an improved version of his earlier submission concerning the evaluation schema indicates that the evaluation can be entwined throughout a narrative, most especially between the complicating action and the resolution. The resolution tends to be the last of narrative clauses of complicating actions that terminate events. In other words, it is a structural closure to the narrative; finally, the coda which is an optional schema is often seen as that part that seals up the end of the story, simply put, in the words of Labov (1972, p.365) "close off the sequence of complicating actions." A foray into the schemas validates a narrative as a typical example of a well-formed speech event.

The model, however, has been heavily criticized by some linguists on the ground that the schema reduces narratives to a default pattern structurally organized in a fixated order; thus, codifying a listener's schematic expectation (Lambrou, 2005). This criticism seems to imply a

general notion that gives the schema a universal status applicable to narrative interpretation even though Labov and Waletzky (1967) and Labov (1972) did not make a general claim concerning their narrative schema towards a universal application without due consideration to the speech community. The aim of this study, therefore, is not to attest to the universality, rather, it shows how the schematic framework provides a foundation for making sense of Roy C's oral or musical narrative by integrating the entire oeuvres of the schemas to create an overall coherent narrative that is comprehensible. To further complement the narrative comprehensiveness, the study substantiates the relevance of the schemas by drawing one's attention to how the structure of the narrative correlates with the linguistic choices to meet contextual expectations.

#### 4.0 Analysis and Discussion

This section attempts a description of the linguistic structures that play significant roles in the writer's crafting of the narrative of personal experience, taking cognizance of Labov and Waletzky's narrative schemas. The essence is to give the textual analysis a structural fitness. If coherence has a crucial place in a narrative for it to function as a unified whole in terms of meaning, then Labov and Waletzky's narrative schemas become imperative in this study for a reader to intelligibly comprehend Roy C's "Peeping through the Window" as a narrative of personal experience. Kintsch and van Dijk's (1983) proposal further validates that a narrative comprises a macrostructure made of different representations or schemata that are meaningfully patterned. However, the evaluation schema will not be discussed as a separate schema since it can be found in any part of the narrative. Efforts, however, will be made to underline evaluation devices in any part of the narrative in the cause of the analysis.

##### i. The Orientation

(1) //Oh I woke up this morning// (2) //got into my car to go for a morning drive. // (3)//As I was driving down the main street, there was my best friend and my wife in front of me // (4) // As I was driving behind them, they pulled into the holiday inn // (5) // went around // and (6)//packed in the backyard of the hotel // (7) //got out // and (8) //went inside // (9) //picked up the key / (10) //went down the hall to a lonesome room//.

From the litany of clauses, the use of the I-narrator indicates that the narrative revolves around the teller. The recitation of the event shows that the narrator is looking back on past events but tries to represent them as if they were just happening. From the orientation schema, one perceives a narrative that strives to describe a social phenomenon or a momentous experience in a certain location and time through different linguistic choices that inform precision through a sequence of clauses. From the ten clauses, one discovers that the narrator initiates the narrative with an orientation characterized by sequential clauses whose narrative functions are to offer information on the time and place of the events of a narrative, the identities of the participants and their initial behaviour. The study has deployed 'slanted lines' and 'numerals' to showcase units of clauses meant for discussion. The essence is to first, convey a logical account of the narrative structure. That is, how the events are sequentially ordered to reflect the succession in which they happened. Second, to underscore how the clause-level patterns signal the structure, thereby, substantiating the significance of clause-level grammatical choices, and third, to show that all the clauses initiate one event/experience to the other.

From the structural patterns, sequential experiences are captured via various phrasal verbs and adverbs that are experientially dramatic; thus, orientating the reader with the context of the narrative. One unique thing about the phrasal verbs is that they make the actions vivid or graphical rather than dreary. They specify how the action is carried out. While phrasal verbs describe different actions or behaviour that are experientially grounded, the adverbs modify the phrasal verbs; articulating to the reader when (time) and where (place) the character(s) enact the actions. The use of these linguistic components makes the reader visualize not just the characters involved in the narrative but how their actions are enacted. Consequently, the choice of phrasal verbs and adverbs amongst other linguistic features in the narrative becomes paramount in making an impact on the reader.

Text 1 begins the narrative with an apprehensive textual thematic component /'oh'/ within a temporal setting - /'this morning'/, consequently, situating the reader within the time of the event. The apprehensive utterance /oh/ presupposes that what the writer intends to tell will

not be palatable. The linguistic item seems to externalize a response from a shocking stimulus as the narrator tries to recount an experience. As a considerable aspect of the orientation, the utterance implies that the narrative is going to be a horrid experience. As such, all the subsequent clauses are linguistically crafted to perform social actions that intensify this apprehensive or shocking experience.

Text 2 constructs a theoretical model of assumed routine experience.

Text 3, describes an unexpected phenomenon that existentially captures the writer's wife and his best friend as participants in the narrative.

With this, vivid phrasal verbs such as /'woke up'/, /'got into'/, /'was driving down'/, /' was driving behind'/, /'pulled into'/, /' went around'/, /' packed in'/, /' got out '/, /' went inside'/, /'picked up '/, /' went down'/ within the clausal patterns become functional constituents substantiating what is graphically happening as well as what the characters are doing in the narrative. Halliday's (1985) describes this as a material process of the ideational function where a process is understood through its associated participants. Such a process establishes the common expectation of a narrative that is often characterized by events or actions. Texts 4-10 are packed with deictic expressions that point not only to the movements of the narrator's wife and his best friend as suspicious but also reinforce the contextual locations. The texts raise and intensify our curiosity about the social actions of the participants through the deictic elements that point to the unusual movements and locations as a phenomenon that elicit curiosity as captured in -

(4)//...they pulled into the holiday inn // (5) // went around //; and. (6)//packed in the backyard of the hotel // (7) //got out // and (8) //went inside // (9) //picked up the key// (10) //went down the hall to a lonesome room//.

Thus, deictic expressions that point to the graphic or striking movement and space become functional in the narrative as they underscore the roles of participants as well as situational contexts. This implies that the interpretation of some clauses depends on the deixis. According to

Levison (1983), deixis involves how language encodes the grammatical choices or features of the context of utterance. Yule (1996) sees deixis as linguistic elements that point via language. The deictic expressions in terms of movement and space or locations are meant to augment the narrator's suspicion, hence, making the listener comprehend the social meaning of the musical discourse. More so, considering what words mean to a physical context, the spatial elements, for instance, tend to negate the activity of the writer's wife and best friend as nonsexual when further conceptualized. Hence, the orientation schema becomes a trajectory to pursue knowledge of the narrative. Most important to the contextual meaning is the descriptive metaphorical collocate- 'a lonesome room'. The collocation automatically validates the intention of the participants spoken about. The choice of the adjective 'lonesome' is not for creativity but a preference that is borne out of the writer's curiosity to explain a situational experience that is disturbing.

ii. The Complicating action [entwined with Evaluation devices]

This schema showcases when the state of normalcy is interrupted. Hence, in Roy C's "Peeping through the Window", one finds clauses that instantiate dilemma as the narrator tries to get his curiosity satisfied. Labov and Waletzky's schema of complicating action has been underlined by this study as the narrative crisis which captures the confounding action that does not only satisfy this curiosity but damned his expectations. A clause of complicating action according to Labov and Waletzky (1967) is a sequential clause whose narrative function is to describe what happened next in the story via a series of clauses characterized by verbs in the simple past or present or past continuous. The schema establishes the curiosity in the point that the orientation schema tries to paint.



It is seen as the crux of the narrative. It is that part of a narrative that makes it worth telling. As Lambrou (2005) is of the opinion that what makes a personal experience primarily worthy of narrating is dependent on what is and what is not acceptable in a particular culture, or else, why would the danger of death experience be worthy of recounting if it is not newsworthy at all. Similarly, an experience that is characterized by marital perfidy as Roy C attempts to convey through the unit of clauses tends to be outside the norms of acceptable behaviour in that given

context. Hence, one sees the writer externalizing a chain of events wrapped by an affective experience as well as his reactions to the complication. The following texts are illustrative

(11). //You know what I did// (12). //I went around to the window// (13).// got down on my knees where I could peep in and see // and (14).// as I was looking in, I saw my wife took off that lovely dress I bought her last week // (15). //..she reached down // and (16). // took off those pantyhose // (17).// A pain hit me in my heart // (18). Tears came in my eyes // (19). All I could do was stand there and cry. (Refrain----1)

(20) . Peeping through the window ooh lord I was peeping, hey peeping through the window Lord I was peeping, peeping through the blinds.

Complicating action is often characterized by a high degree of detail. Text 11 captures the writer's internal response to affective events; theoretically establishing text 11 as a clause of complicating action, which does not only indicate the thought of the writer but seeks the attention of the listener and his involvement in the narrative. It serves as a clause that reports the next events that are triggered by sequences of clauses that incorporate interesting experiences. While texts 12 and 13 employ a material process instantiated by verbal phrases such as /'went around'/ and /'got down on/' to convey the writer's desire to gratify curiosity enhanced by the modality '/could /'; texts 14-16, with process shifts deploy material and mental processes propelled by verbs and verbal phrases such as --/'was looking in'/, /'saw'/, /'took off'/ and /'reached down'/ interconnected via subordinate and compound connectives diffuse a repulsive incident that dashed this curiosity or quest. By deploying a process shift in expressions such as //I saw my wife took off that lovely dress I bought her last week//, //... she reached down // and //[she] took off those pantyhose// respectively, the writer is not only portraying the event cognitively or mentally but affords listeners or readers the leeway to capture the scene as a sexually pervaded one via material processes of doing that are

occasioned by corporal or bodily concepts, which broaden one's semantic knowledge of the contextual event.

Through a material process, texts 17 and 18 enact emotional discontents that confront the narrator as a result of the repulsive as well as an atrocious scene that has violated a social norm. They metaphorically communicate the affective nature of the abhorrent scene as emotionally

torturing - //A pain hit me in my heart// and //Tears came in my eyes// respectively. Thus, in the context, / hit/ and /came/ become vivid verbs deployed by the narrator to empty his frustration. Text 19 unveils the narrator's incapacitation characterized by emotional debility to change the situation. Text 20, which serves as a refrain of the narrative augments this emotional debility through a material process as well. The emotional debility is textually reinforced by phonological features /ooh / and /'hey'/. The refrain is characterized by a lexical reiteration that grounds this act of marital perfidy as detestable. The aim of the refrain, then, is not just for its lyricism but to contribute to the burning experience of the narrative as it affects the narrator. The scene further transfuses how language is used not only to construe experience but to represent personal and social relationships via a dialogical interaction between the narrator and a policeman. This aspect of the narrative is represented by verbs and verbal phrases that are related by connectives as illustrated below:

(21).// Bout that time, the police walked up and tapped me on the shoulder // (22). //said son, I'm gonna lock you up // (23). //I said why? // (24). // He said you are a peeping Tom.// (25). I said no sir,// (26). // come here office // (27). //take a look through the window, // (28). //come on tell me what you see.// (29). //He peeped in and looked at me,// (30). //he said uh is that your wife? // (31).// I said yes sir, // (32). // he said you got trouble in your home // (33). //I said ah all the troubles I got tonight, um hm, is right here in this hotel room. // (34). // Bout the time I looked down at the policeman, his thang was hard // and (35). //my thang was hard // and (36). //We standing side by side hey hey tears in my eyes.

(37). //I said I'm going home, // (38). //I went on home with tears in my eyes // and (39). //after I got there a few minutes later my wife walked in // (40). //She had a smile on her face

like she never had before // and (41). //she looked at me // and (42). //she told me // (43). she says oh I'm leaving. (44). //Leaving in the morning.// (45). //She told me she was leaving // and /(46). all I wanted to know was why?/ (47). What's wrong with me ? // (48). //She looked at me // and (49). she said I don't wanna hurt your feelings but if you wanna know, I'm gonna tell you now. / (50). //She looked at me // (51). She said, Roy, oh Roy listen to me , // ( 52). //I gotta tell you oh before I go.// (53). //She looked at me / and ( 54).// said, Your Thang is Too Short! // (55). //Ow, I fell out on the floor // ( 56). //I couldn't take it no more. // ( 57). I said I know what I'm gonna do,/( 58).// In the morning I'm going down to see Dr John to get some pills to make this Thang grow // . (59). All I need is just a few more inches and everythang will be alright.

Text 21 -22 deploy a process shift to describe the policeman's intrusion in the state of affairs. While text 21 uses a material process to indicate the policeman's participation in the event; text 22 uses a verbal process that projects direct speech to establish this participation. While text 23 employs a verbal process to seek information via an explanation for such intrusion by the policeman, text 24 deploys the same verbal process to convey the officer's reason for interfering in the event. This is signalled by a metaphorical expression foregrounded as a defining feature in --/'you are a peeping Tom'/. One needs to comprehend the derivativeness of the expression to appreciate the narrator's negation of such a defining concept in text 25 via a verbal process. The meaning of /'a peeping Tom'/ is conceived not just from a linguistic perspective but also from a historical sense. It is often attributed to a person who derives sexual pleasure by secretly watching people undress or involve in sexual activity. With this, the concept becomes an element of evaluation and a semantic property for underlining the truth value of the context. According to Labov (1972), the evaluation in a narrative in addition to the narrative clause is conceivably the most imperative element. The schema provides a platform where a narrator, as well as a listener, can evaluate the narrative via information consequences of the event. Keeping that in mind, different linguistic constructions can serve as components or evaluative materials such as mood, modality, repetition, parallel structures, comparatives etc.

Along these lines, texts 26-30 project interesting dialogical responses where language facilitates how evaluation is elicited in the exchange. This social situation exhibits evaluation as a narrative element that can find itself throughout a narrative. Its function is to state or underscore what is

unusual in the narrative. As a response to an assumed accusation, texts 26 and 27 express the narrator's reaction through the imperative mood clauses with zero subjects that tend to invite and request /direct in----- //  $\phi$  [[come here office // and //  $\phi$  [[take a look through the window, //]. The structures have a lot of communicative functions. The first is used as summon, while the second structure which is text 28- // come on tell me what you see// is expended as evaluative contents. The essence is for the officer to properly evaluate the event, perhaps by so doing, it will disabuse his mindset or mind construction concerning the narrator and the peeping accusation. This authenticates Labov's claim that mood structures as linguistic resources can function as evaluative elements in a narrative. Propelled by the intonation of emotion from the narrator, text 29 conveys the officer's concession to evaluate the event by peeping in. However, text 30, in addition to the interrogative mood expended by the officer to elicit clarity concerning the situation, uses a discourse filler /'uh'/ to foreground the perplexity and complication of the entire event.

Thence, the interrogative functions as an evaluation that is implicitly codified. It overrules the woman as a decent wife. Inevitably, this establishes a kind of deviation in the narrative where the wife is viewed extremely as violating a social norm. With this, the narrative discourse seems to have assigned blame to the wife via the implied question in text 30---/'... uh is that your wife'/ . While text 31 is meant to affirmatively accede to this implied question; text 32-- // ...you got trouble in your home// is an evaluative clause deployed to further augment text 30 via a declarative mood structure that communicatively situates the complicated action of the wife as a precursor of an unsettled discord between the narrator and the wife. Like texts 17 and 18, text 32 is a language used from a sociocultural perspective. They are language patterns that raise awareness of the sociocultural context of the discourse in terms of norms and beliefs. Text 33 is psychologically driven. It conveys the torturous effect of the situation on the narrator. On that account, discourse fillers that are phonologically foregrounded such as /'ah'/ and /'um hm'/ in the context do not only attempt to intensify the torturous effect of the situation but instantiate the narrator's ignorant of any past problem with the wife.

Texts 34 and 35 --- // his thang was hard // and // my thang was hard // are evaluative clauses that convey not just the affective nature of the event on the narrator and the officer but a lexical chain that signals attention to a specific stimulus foregrounded by a 'thang-hard' metaphor. Such stimulus enhances the semantic perception of the narrative. 'Thang', on one hand, is a relatively informal word for 'thing' and it is normally inferred to be something related

to someone. 'Hard', on the other hand, is a common word prone to diverse interpretations, especially in the narrative sense in which it is deployed to derive a body part metaphor that conveys a field of experience.

Metaphors that are derived via body parts tend to be exceptional because of their physicality. To this end, Wierzbicka (2007, p.17; p.58) describes them as fundamental to human beings' existence in as much as they offer people references from which the world can be interpreted and also orientate ourselves in it. Therefore, the perspective of sexual pervasion is further diffused through this relational 'thang-hard' concept. The metaphor--/'tears in my eyes'/ in text 36, further foregrounds the narrator's incapacitation.

Texts 37 and 38 are clauses marked by verbs that characterize verbal and material processes to score the narrator's frustration with the complicated action, while text 39 underscores or draws one's attention to the sequence of evaluative clauses that follow it. Text 40 is an evaluative clause devised to achieve some level of comparison. The expression --/'she had a smile on her face like she never had before'/ is initiated by the narrator to evaluate the action of his wife. Meaning is derived via the facial expression --'/a smile on her face /'. This is necessitated by what a smile signals in communication. A smile communicates all kinds of social meanings or

feelings such as aversion as in this study, attraction, happiness, etc. For that reason, as a body metaphor, the narrator uses it to initiate aversion, contempt or derision. This means that the writer has effectively used it to assess the psychosomatic consequence or effect of a depraved activity already perpetuated. It communicates the level of the wife's satisfaction with infidelity.

Considering the way speech and thought processes are denoted in a narrative, texts 41-54 convey a narrative shift from the narrator to a conversation between the narrator and his wife to achieve some kind of evaluative feat. The shift in narrative mode attempts to ground not just the correlation between the actions and events of the narrative but to unveil other perspectives of how narrative evaluative function can be achieved. Texts 41, 42 and 43 are used to achieve information function instantiated by interactions marked by mental and verbal processes to convey a disconnected intimacy between both parties. The use of the verbal process with a direct speech in texts 43, 44 and 45 is to achieve an evaluative function that gives the participant a voice in the narrative for readers to get her side of the story and her reasons for taking such action. This ascertains the causative factor.

Text 45 re-echoes or emphasizes what text 43 has remarked to convey the seriousness of an intended action. Texts 46 and 47 -- and // all I wanted to know was why?// and // What's wrong with me ?// are evaluations of embedded comments marked by the interrogative mood

structure to elicit information by the narrator. The question forms are deployed as evaluative components that elicit the causative factor; thus leaving the wife to do the evaluation. A close study of texts 48- 51 indicates that there seems to be a communication breakdown between the spouses. The texts imply that there is no previous information concerning body dysfunction. In other words, the narrator has no prior knowledge that there is a problem. This is what instigated the question in text 47----/‘what is wrong with me?/.

Texts 50 and 52 further determine this mind-body disconnection between both parties. In other words, she is ready to end this communication problem by letting out the factor behind this mutual disconnection between them----/‘ she looked at me; she said Roy, oh Roy listen to me, ‘I gotta tell you oh before I go’ /. The facial expression--/‘she looked at me/ ‘ in text 53 does not signal sympathy but derision or contempt because the metaphorical expression in text 54, which follows suit explicitly as a defining element unearths this by spelling out the causative factor for which the facial expression is anchored-- /‘Your thang is too short!’/. In language, feelings and assessment of others’ physical or body conditions are often represented in relatively concrete terms. For this reason, the body metaphor /‘Your thang is too short!’/ is used in the context to (a) spot a problem (b)spike the cause of an action (c) motivate an action (requesting the narrator to do something about the condition) (d) express frustration (e) prioritize herself and happiness as well as an outlet for an offence done.

By implication, the metaphorical expression--/‘Your thang is too short!’/, turns out to be an embedded evaluation to apportion blame from a dispositional attributive sense. Dispositional attribution infers to internal attribution that tries to point out a person’s trait or dispositions as a cause for their actions. Thus, the ‘thang-short’ metaphor explicitly exemplifies this. The metaphorical expression shows the woman’s level of frustration with the narrator. It implicates the level of hurtfulness whenever she considers the state of sexual intimacy with the narrator or spouse. This presupposes that to her, ‘sexlessness’ is an utter or a total defeat to intimacy. It registers both partners as being on a different page on a sensitive matter such as sex. To her, it is this lack of sexual intimacy that negatively imparted or exposed her to start longing for something different.

Texts 55 and 56 are clauses that signal the narrator’s height of frustration. The height is motioned by the phrasal verb ‘fell on’ and the verbal phrase ‘couldn’t take’ respectively to serve as evaluative actions that physically react to the statement in text 54 rather than in stated terms. Texts 57- 59 are deployed as self-evaluative clauses by the narrator to attend to the problem or shortcoming. They are expended as situational attribution since they convey the

narrator's willingness and steps to handle the damage or shortcoming. While texts 57 and 58 announce the intended action of the narrator marked by a sequence of resolves formed in the mind of the narrator as a result of the effective remark uttered by the wife, text 59 is used as a psychic reboot by the narrator to eradicate tension and to show commitment to achieving the goal. --- // All I need is just a few more inches and everythang will be alright //. The modal auxiliary 'will' automatically signal the situation as one that hypothesizes.

### iii. The Resolution

This narrative schema functionally releases the tension and conveys what finally happened at the end of the narrative. This aspect seems to be wittily achieved in Roy C's narrative because of its terseness. The resolution is often crafted in a narrative in a way that story creates a feeling of completion in readers. The following clausal texts are illustrative.

(60). //Got those pills, // (61) // but you don't know what I found when I looked down //

(62). Hey hey hey, my Thang was still Short !!! (Refrain—2)

(63). Peeping through the window, Peeping through the blind, peeping through the window, peeping through the blind... peeping through the blind.

Texts 60 and 61 as elements of the resolution convey the non-attainment of the narrator's goal to modify his relationship and to make it work. The clauses become evaluative responses or outcomes of the attempt made by the narrator. The texts are couched by a contrasted element

but' in text 61 to negate expectation and to convey shock, helplessness and disappointment. This shock is further intensified via the phonological features/discourse fillers -- /'hey hey'/ in text 62 to establish this frustration as he sees the problem unresolved. It is taken as an evaluative element which conveys that his expectation of repairing his marital relationship is defeated; hence has to recourse or resort to fate. . Text 63 as a refrain is not only lexically used by the narrator to gain emphasis but to re-echo the frustration of a defeated dream as he reflects in the scene at the hotel.

### v. The Coda.

Most narratives end with an effective coda that furnishes them with credible or believable endings. An effective coda tells whether a narrative ended sadly or happily. Thus, the narrative coda in this discourse tends to complement the resolution where the final status of the narrative is conceived properly by the reader. Texts 64-69 exemplify the Coda because it is a



section that does not only end the narrative as a sad one but conveys the effect of the event on the narrator via diverse processes that are interconnected. This is vividly illustrated by the clauses or texts below.

(64). //She didn't know I was peeping, // (65). She didn't know I was peeping // (66). I was standing outside the holiday inn, // (67). //She was inside with my best friend // (68). //Me and the policeman standing there peeping, // (69). Oh peeping through the blind.

Text 64- 69 is deployed as an epilogue that strengthens the conclusion of the narrative. The texts show that the story ended sadly. The texts, though used by the narrator to recast or reflect what happened in the hotel implicitly convey how the entire event between the narrator and his wife ended. The sad imports are conveyed, first, by cognitive verbs --/ didn't know/ in texts 64 and 65-- //She didn't know I was peeping// The structural remark is reiterated not for accentuation purposes but to convey the affective nature of the event on the narrator, and second, by phrasal verbs that foregrounds the estrangement between the narrator and the wife via the opposition--/outside/ vs /inside/ in texts 66 and 67 respectively--//I was standing outside the holiday inn// and // She was inside with my best friend //. Through this opposition, one comprehends the narrator's contextual anguish. With this, the reader assumes that the narrator may have learnt a bitter lesson as it has to do with trust, be it for a woman or a friend. The events in the coda seem to strengthen the resolution as the non-attainment of the narrator's goal to modify his relationship is deliberately projected again as a sum-up for readers' knowledge.

## Conclusion

Bruner (2003, p.7) remarks that narrative models of reality are clung to because of their ability to shape humans' everyday experiences. However, such narratives must meet with narrative exegesis or demands; and one of such demands is coherence. With Labov and Waletzky's narrative schema, one tends to observe that a narrative needs to be coherent to aid not just comprehension but meaningfulness. A close study of Roy C's "Peeping through the Window" indicates that clausal coherence is formidable in this regard as proposed by Labov and Waletzky (1967). With it, the narrative events tend to be meaningfully ordered for easy comprehension. The schemas foreground the succession in which Roy C's narrative events happened; thus, showcasing the significance of clause-level grammatical choices that are deployed in the narrative discourse. The discourse of marital perfidy has been meaningfully constructed via the contextual import of deictic elements, which help to relate the grammatical text to the contexts,



metaphors, which are deployed as defining features or evaluative remarks to convey derision or contempt as captured in /you are a peeping Tom/, /your thang is short/ and so on. The narrative discourse is equally saturated with phrasal verbs that are graphically striking. They specify how the actions are carried out. These phrasal verbs alongside some generic verbs are used by the narrator in the narrative to instantiate and evaluate different experiences that are worthwhile in the context.

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