

# The Research Faculty

## Sentence-length analysis of the document authored by Siziwe Sotewu

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### **About the source document**

Published masters dissertation from a South African university (2016). PDF document sourced from the university's website.

Only three items per list retained in this sample. Some opening general guidelines have been removed. All quoted text is reproduced verbatim.

This document presents an analysis of the length of your sentences, with an emphasis on long sentences. It lists your long sentences in each of two categories: 35+ and 50+ words and your short sentences in one category (less than 8 words). The purpose is to reduce your long-sentence use and to encourage you to vary your sentence length.

## GENERAL GUIDELINES

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### AVOID LONG SENTENCE OVERUSE

The use of long sentences is not wrong. On the contrary, your academic text will not strike the right tone without long sentences. The problem is typically that writers overuse long sentences and this makes for difficult and tedious reading.

Most writers err on the side of too many long sentences. A common guideline is to aim for an average of no more than 20-25 words per sentence. Furthermore, a sentence length of 25 words is often proposed as a benchmark.

### ADD VARIETY

Vary your sentence length. Include the occasional very short sentence. You can use the list below, 'Sentences under 8 words', as a measure of whether you have done so or not.

Please, do not apply this advice by the simple act of chopping up some of your long sentences. You need to keep the narrative thread. One sentence must follow on logically or reasonably from the sentence before it.

In addition, your text should flow smoothly. A tip: read it out aloud. If you find yourself struggling or reading in a halting, broken way, your text lacks flow.

## YOUR SENTENCE LENGTHS

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### SUMMARY

The numbers of long and short sentences in your document are:

Sentences over 50 words: 19

Sentences over 35 words: 120

Sentences under 8 words: 10

Total number of long sentences: 397

The total number of sentences in your document is 1181. Thus, the percentage of long sentences is 12% and your average sentence length is 18.8 words. Note that these figures should be taken as approximations, due to complexities in the way Word counts words and sentences.

The lists below show the number of words in the sentence, followed by a copy of the sentence. The preamble (title page, abstract, etc), appendices, and footnotes have been excluded from this analysis.

### SENTENCES OVER 50 WORDS

- 74 In her earlier works she presented human figures in an erotic position depicting female figures in a vulnerable state as seen in *Mediterranean Affairs III* (1982) (Figure 3.3), an untitled enamel on paper painting with a nude female sitting on a bed covered with red and white linen while a male figure stands naked on the same bed in front of the female figure, and in *Awakening the Motherland* (1989) (Figure 3.4).
- 74 It is hoped that the artworks, discussions, different views, and resolutions that have resulted from this research could be helpful to the Xhosa community, both nationally and internationally, because readers and viewers who are exposed to this information get to know more about what was done in the past and can decide to make informed choices and take relevant parts of this custom and implement those positive aspects of the practices in present times.
- 64 This installation with a tree carrying objects becomes a symbol of contemporary women who are willing and capable of adding value to all social, religious and cultural aspects of the society and not to be seen as subsidiary to men as both *intonjane* (rite of passage for girls) and *ukwaluka* (rite of passage for boys) customs are still entrenched within a patriarchal belief system.

### SENTENCES OVER 35 WORDS

- 49 Based on the information emerged from this research the practical works focus mainly on the developmental stages of a girl from infancy right through the events leading to the *intonjane* custom up to the graduation ceremony as well as what happen after the girls return from this initiation school.
- 49 She defends herself by stating that the cultures she looks at ...all “share the notion that art has the power to influence and change the world” and that she “is not interested in narrative, or political commentaries or satire, but in the physical presence of these works” (2011: 17).
- 49 Likewise, in the researchers work, *intonjane* is currently rarely practiced as a rite of passage in urbanised Xhosa societies, while *ukwaluka* which is a similar traditional ritual for boys is still widely practiced as one of the few traditional legacies that stood against “western influences” among the Xhosa people.

## SENTENCES UNDER 8 WORDS

- 4 We rejoice, we rejoice.
- 6 All these inspired the researchers interest.
- 6 Ancestors retain their relationships and characteristics.