

**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF LANGUAGE STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE
(GRADUATE PROGRAMME)**

**APPLICATION OF MAJOR NARRATIVE TECHNIQUES: A
COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF CHINUA ACHEBE'S NOVELS**

**BY
TESFAMARYAM G/MESKEL**

June, 2008

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ABSTRACT

This thesis tries to investigate the application of major narrative techniques used in Chinua Achebe's novels. The main objectives of the paper are identifying the narrative techniques used in Achebe's novels and pointing out the strengths and weaknesses of the novels in relation to the use of narrative techniques.

In accomplishing the aforementioned objectives, the writer of this study tries to review relevant literatures in relation to narrative techniques. Then an attempt is made to go through Achebe's five novels in accordance with the reviewed literatures by focusing on point of view and narrative time.

In the analysis, it is pointed out that Achebe's first three novels are written in the third person omniscient point of view. This perspective made the reader a passive recipient of information since he/she expects everything from the narrator. Achebe's fourth novel, 'A Man of the People', is written from the point of view of a first person narrator. With all its subjectivity and unreliability, this novel is appealing to readers because of the narrators' humanly appearances. Achebe's fifth novel 'Anthills of the Savannah' employs the third person omniscient and the first person point of views. The use of the two points of views helps the author to minimize the gap that can be created due to the limitations of both points of views.

On the other hand, no relevant difference can be observed among the five novels in terms of narrative time, except the second novel 'No Longer at Ease'. The story in this novel is presented in the form of a long flashback. Because of this, the reader might find him/her self, connecting pieces of information in the process of reading. There are also deviations from the chronological order in the other four novels. Similar presentations can be observed when we look at the five novels in terms of duration and frequency.

From the analysis of the five novels, it is concluded that considerable attention is not given to the way the stories in his first three novels are presented. On the other hand, in 'A Man of the People', the author used the limitations of the first person narrator to foreground the overall cynicism that existed in the country. In 'Anthills of the Savannah', the author succeeded in overcoming the limitations of the first person and the third person points of views by substituting the two points of views in presenting the story.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

When writers think about writing a certain text, they have a definite purpose to accomplish. Through their work they have a mission of conveying important messages to their readers. This message can be conveyed by a certain representative. This representative is the narrator. He/ she is a fictitious person who is characterized by the writer of a given text.

With the issue of the narrator, there comes the writer's use of narrative techniques. Many theoreticians in the field defined a narrative as a form of communication, which presents a sequence of events caused and experienced by characters. To build the narrative framework of a given text, authors need to choose narrative techniques. This is related with the authors' decision of 'who' tells a story, 'how' and 'why' it is told. In relation to this, Jeremy Hawthorn in the book Studying the Novel (1985:64-65) states “‘who’ tells us a story, and ‘how’ make a very big difference.” This statement can clearly illustrate the importance of the choice of narrative techniques to the authors, in presenting the story to their readers.

However, the above discussion does not imply that writers need to restrict themselves to certain narrative techniques in presenting their stories. They have the right to choose appropriate narrative techniques that can convey a message to their readers. They can make a choice of what kind of narrator, which narrative situation, what kind of narrative mode to use. The question that needs to be raised here is the appropriateness of their choices, and it is the major issue which is addressed in this study.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Edgar (1968:19) pointed out that "the method of telling a story in most constant use is the third person method." This shows us that the third person is the widely used narrative situation. Hailu Abebe (2001:2) proved the existence of the above fact in our country by taking the works of Bealu Girma, Haddis Alemayehu, and Birhanu Zerihun.

At this point, what I need to raise is the prevalence of the aforementioned facts in novels written by African writers. Chinua Achebe is one of the major African novelists who wrote about five novels, i.e., *Things Fall Apart*, *No Longer at Ease*, *Arrow of God*, *A Man of the People*, and *Anthills of the Savannah*. In this study, the researcher saw the novels in relation to the use of major narrative techniques, i.e., point of view and narrative time, by posing the following questions.

- ◆ What kinds of narrative techniques are used in these novels?
- ◆ What particular difference of presenting a story can we see in these novels as compared to the facts mentioned above?

1.3. Objectives of the Study

The major objectives of this study are:

- ◆ Identifying the narrative techniques used in the novels of Chinua Achebe.
- ◆ Pointing out the strengths and weaknesses of the novels in relation to the use of narrative techniques.

1.4. Significance of the Study

Diyanni (1998:1927) states that, "one reason to do research about the literary works you read and study is to understand them better." He also states that scholars who do research in literature provide insights that can develop pupils' understanding and appreciation of literature. Accordingly, the writer of this study tries to give insights about narrative techniques to

students of literature. In addition, the study may also provide some important points, which can serve as a springboard for other in depth analysis on similar literary techniques.

1.5. Scope of the Study

Analyzing the uses of narrative techniques in the novels that are written by different authors can be taken as a difficult task to be carried out in a single study. Moreover, the study would be too broad and difficult to manage, if the writer tries to look into every narrative component used in Achebe's five novels. Due to these reasons, the writer wants to limit his study to the novels written by Chinua Achebe by focusing on the use of major narrative techniques, i.e., point of view and narrative time.

1.6. Methodology

As it is described in the scope of the study, the research is limited to the analysis of the narrative techniques that are used in the novels written by Chinua Achebe. And this clearly indicates that the work in the study is limited to library work.

The first step in this study is building the theoretical framework. To do this the researcher goes through different books that are related with narrative techniques. This includes using web sources.

Then, to identify the narrative techniques that are used in the novels under the study, the researcher makes in-depth reading of the five novels. He also identifies the narrative techniques that are used in the novels by making reference to the theories that are related with narrative techniques. Based on the analysis a comparison is made among the five novels in relation to the use of narrative techniques.

Finally, conclusions will be made and recommendations will be drawn based on the findings in the analysis of the four novels.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Hailu Abebe (2001) conducted research entitled 'A comparative Study of First Person Narrative Techniques in Four Amharic Novels'. The objective of his study is to analyze the first person narrative technique and to examine the advantages and disadvantages of this story telling. To accomplish this objective he selected four Amharic novels, which are written in the first person point of view.

On the other hand, Mersha Alehegn (1990E.C), conducted research on Hailemeleket Mewaele's 'Yewedianesh' and 'Gungun' as well as Yshitila Kokeb's 'Dossegnaw' and 'Wogegta'. Through the analysis of the aforementioned novels, Mersha compared the use of narrative time of the two authors. In addition, Agegnehu Tesfa (1984E.C) conducted research on the narrative techniques of Bealu Girma's novel "Oromay". The main objective of his study was to prove the comment, which says, "Ormay is readable for its content rather than its narrative technique".

What makes my study different from the aforementioned studies is that Hailu focuses on the first person point of view while Mersha focuses on narrative time. Agegnehu's focus was to prove whether 'Oromay' is readable for its content or narrative technique. However, my research attempts to analyze the application of major narrative techniques (by focusing mainly on point of view and narrative time) in the novels written by Chinua Achebe and to show the strengths and weaknesses of the novels in relation to the use of narrative techniques.

Other studies that are conducted in relation to narrative techniques are based on 'Geez' and oral narratives. Antench Awoke (1993) studied "The

Roles of Narrators in ‘Geez’ Narratives and Early Amharic Didactic Prose Fiction”. As it is described in the abstract, the aim of this study is to trace possible influences of ‘Geez’ narratives on early Amharic prose fiction in the roles of narrators. Similarly, with the aim of analyzing the narrative structure, characterization and narrative time; Ephrem Eshete (1999) conducted research entitled ‘Narrative Techniques of Three Selected Ethiopian Hagiographies’. In addition, Samuel Yalew (2000) made an investigation into the narrative structure of ‘Tamre Meleact’ (miracles of angels).

On the other hand, Abraham Alemu (2000) conducted a study entitled “Jimma Oromo Oral Prose Narratives: A preliminary descriptive analysis”. The major objective of this study is identifying and defining the various narrative genres prevailing among the Jimma Oromo and there by providing a description of the overriding social and expressive features underlying each genre.

In addition to the aforementioned works that are conducted on the narrative techniques of ‘Geez’ and ‘oral narratives’, there is Mehary Tadesse’s study entitled ‘Narrative Techniques in the Book of Acts’. The purpose of this study is to identify and analyze the narrative techniques used in the Book of Acts.

In this study Mehary analyzed the Book of Acts in relation to modes of narration and point of view. In the conclusion of his study, Mehary states that although the Book of Acts is a historical monograph and deals with events that occurred, it is also characterized by literary features. The use of narrative techniques like flashback, dialogue, speech, etc, helps the narrative of the Book of Acts to be interesting and lively.

Other studies that are given due attention in this review are conducted on Achebe’s novels. Deneke Assaye (1982) conducted research entitled “Socio Literary Study of Five African Countries”. In this study, Deneke tries to make

a survey of the socio-economic conditions and the literary productions of five African countries: Kenya, Nigeria, S.Africa, Ghana and Cameroon.

Chapter two of this thesis is about major preoccupations, merits and weaknesses of ten African novels taken from the aforementioned five countries. The novels that are taken from Nigeria are Achebe's novels 'No Longer at Ease' and 'A Man of the People'. In his discussion of the major merits and weaknesses of the two novels, Denekew points out that "both novels are not class conscious and in favour of the popular masses". In both novels, the major characters do not give special thought to the problems of the society. In these novels, the society plays a role of passive spectator. This is, according to Denekew, "a result of a mere periodical agitation". Denekew also points out that although these two novels reflect what actually exists in the society, they did not carry out their "sacred duty", i.e., the duty of pinpointing the solutions to the problems of the society.

On the other hand, Lemlem Gezahegn (1995) comparatively studied "A Man of the People" and 'The Beautiful Ones are not Yet Born'. In her study, Lemlem tries to compare the two novels in relation to character, attitude and major themes. And in her conclusion she points out that both novels clearly reflect the problems which newly independent nations faced.

According to Lemlem, the two novels present opportunistic characters and cynical attitudes in a very artistic way. They also treat the corruption that is found in the political, social and moral life of the people in detail by bringing different instances in focus. In addition, the two novels strongly assert the necessity of competent leaders by bringing the incompetent ones in the novels to our attention. Finally, as Lemelem points out, both Achebe and Armah tell us how corruption and dissatisfaction take place in a nation when power falls in the hands of incompetent people and how it affects the nation as a whole unless active part is taken by the people.

The other person who conducted research on Achebe's novel is Woubshet Tekle (1995). Woubshet studied 'Literary Techniques Used to Depict Minor Characters in Achebe's 'A Man of the People'. The purpose of this study is to deal with literary techniques used to reveal minor characters in 'A Man of the People'. To accomplish this purpose Woubshet analysed these characters in relation to figurative language, the use of proverbs, and their use of language.

In his conclusion, Woubshet points out that Achebe used figurative language to depict his minor characters in addition to creating special effect. Besides, he effectively employs proverbs and his characters' use of language to present his minor characters in his novel, i.e., 'A Man of the People'.

The other research which is conducted on Achebe's novels, is Abdu Delbar's study entitled "Contrast as a Literary Technique in Achebe's 'A Man of the People'". The major objective of Abdu's paper is "to examine one of the major literary techniques, contrast, as used in Achebe's 'A Man of the People'". To this end, Abdu tries to go through the novel in relation to social economical and political contrast.

In his conclusion, Abdu states that the novel gives us a clear picture of post independence African social, economic as well as political scene. To this effect, the author employs contrast as a literary technique, in order to ridicule, condemn and expose the malpractices of the politicians in addition to showing the nation wide cynicism of the masses.

The last study that is included in this review is Hanna Manyazewal's 'African Writers Talking Against Racial Discrimination'. Hanna's purpose is to show African writers' work in relation to racial discrimination. To this end she divides African writers regionally into South, West and East African writers

and took two to three writers respectively who can represent these parts of the continent.

One of the writers who represent West Africa in Hanna's study is Chinua Achebe. From Achebe's novels, she tries to go through 'Things Fall Apart'. In the conclusion of her discussion about 'Things Fall Apart', Hanna points out that Achebe is one of those African writers who wrote about the bad deeds of the aliens. In his novel, he tries to show the conflicts between the alien whites and the black Africans. He artfully and interestingly shows how the things of the Africans fall apart in 'Things Fall Apart'.

CHAPTER THREE

THEORETICAL FRAME WORK

In this chapter, different works in relation to narrative techniques are discussed. The part is divided into various subsections for the sake of discussing the prominent narrative elements clearly and briefly.

3.1. Narrator

A narrator refers to a fictitious person who presents a story. “He or she is a mediator who stands between the story and the reader ..., who controls what will be told and how it will be perceived.” (Martin, 1986:9)

Narrators differ in their types in different fictional stories, because of the narrative level they belong. Chatman (1975:213) in Hailu (2000) defined types of narrators as follows.

Narrators can be defined according to the narrative level they belong, their participation in the stories, the degree of perceptibility of their roles and their reliability. For instance, a narrator is said to be “extradiegetic” when he is above or superior to the story he narrates. A narrator may be “intradiegetic” when he is a diegetic character in the first narrative told by “extradiegetic” narrators.

On the other hand, based on the extent of participation in the story Rimmon-Kenan (1983:95) divides narrators into ‘heterodiegetic’ and ‘homodiegetic’. “A heterodiegetic narrator is a narrator who does not participate in the story, whereas a homodiegetic narrator is a narrator who participates in the story ‘at least in some manifestation of his ‘self’”. In addition, Hawthorn (2005:86)

presents a third category known as autodigetic. “An autodigetic narrator is him or her self the main character in the story he or she tells.”

These different types of narrators need to be recognized by the naratee while they are presenting a certain story. For this purpose, authors use different techniques to depict their stories’ narrators. Authors may characterize their narrators as human beings or may make them remain anonymous. Concerning this, Jeremy Hawthorn states the following in her book ‘Studying the Novel’.

... an author can have a story told through the mediation of a personified narrator ... some narrators may even have names and detailed personal histories. Other narrators merely indicate to us that they are persons-perhaps by the occasional use of “I” in their narrative but tell us no more about themselves than this. We thus have a continuum of possibility: (i) personified, named, and with a full human identity; (ii) human but anonymous; (ii) not corresponding to any human perspective. (Hawthorn, 2005:82)

This extract can show us the possibilities, which can make the narrators to be recognized by the naratee in the story where they serve as narrators.

In relation to this, there is an argument on how to gender sexually indeterminate narrators. While discussing the issue, Jahn (2005) presents different ideas by different scholars. According to Jahn’s discussion, Bal (1985:119) suggested that it is better to refer to the narrator as ‘it’, ‘however odd it may seem’. Ryan (1999:141) considers this idea as “incompatible with consciousness and linguistic ability”. Jahn (2005) points out that by way of compromise most scholars follow Lancer’s rule. The rule states that if there is no text internal clue to indicate the narrator’s sex, use a pronoun appropriate to the author’s sex.

The other issue that needs to be raised in relation to narrators is the fact that they are taken as the voice of a narrative. As it is pointed out in Jahn (2005), a narrator is the speaker or voice of the narrative discourse. “He or she is an agent who establishes communicative contact with an addressee, who manages the exposition, who decides what is to be told, how it is to be told (especially from what point of view and in what sequence).” Similarly, Rimmon-Kenan (1983:87) points out that “the narrator can only be defined circularly as the narrative ‘voice’ or ‘speaker’ of a text; the implied author is in opposition and by definition voiceless and silent”. This implies that the narrator serves the author in voicing what is going on in the fictional world.

Jahn(2005) listed down the following as an incomplete list of textual elements which project a narrative.

- Content Matter: refers to the naturally and culturally appropriate voices for sad and happy, comic and tragic subjects.
- Subjective expressions: expressions (or ‘expressivity markers’) that indicate the narrator’s education, his/her beliefs, convictions, interests, values, political and ideological orientations, attitude towards people, events, and things.
- Pragmatic signals: refer to expressions that signal the narrator’s awareness of an audience and the degree of his/her orientation towards it.

Generally, a narrator is essential in the presentation of a certain story. He or she presents the events or actions of a story and is responsible for the overall narration.

3.2. Narrative

Jahn (2005) defined narrative in relation to story. According to him, ‘a story is a sequence of events which involves characters. Hence, a narrative is a form of communication which presents a sequence of events caused and experienced by characters’. Similarly, Rimmon-kenan (1983:3), defined narrative as “the narration of a succession of fictional events”.

From the definitions offered by the two scholars, we can understand that the term narrative involves a story. In discussing the idea further Rimmon-Kenan (1983:15) points out that, “the presence or absence of a story is what distinguishes narrative from non-narrative texts”.

On the other hand, Toolan (2001:1) defines narrative from a spatiotemporal perspective. According to Toolan “narrative typically is a recounting of things spatiotemporally distant: here’s the present teller seemingly closer to the addressee (reader or listener) and there at a distance is the tale and its topic”. Toolan also points out that “narratives always involve a tale, a teller and an addressee, and these can be placed notionally, at different degrees of mutual proximity or distance”.

Jeremy Hawthorn in the book studying the Novel (2005:7-8) states that narrative can be used with a narrow or specific meaning and also with a wider one: “The narrower meaning restricts narrative to the telling of events, the recounting of things that happen”. In discussing the point further she states the following.

As ‘tell’ is etymologically related to ‘tale’ we can say that behind the act of narrative itself lies the idea of communicating things that can be counted. If we limit ourselves to such a narrow

definition of narrative, therefore we must remember that not everything in a novel is narrative. Description (of a beautiful scene) or arguments (about, say, the existence of God) ... do not involve the telling or enumerating of discrete events or countable entities. However, the term 'narrative' is also used in a wider sense to include everything that comes within the purview of a particular telling or recounting.

Based on Hawthorn's discussion, we can conclude that a novel is a narrative though it includes elements, which do not involve the telling of events.

Michael Toolan in his book 'Narrative' listed down six typical characteristics of narratives. The characteristics are presented as follows, as they are stated in Toolan (2001:4-6).

1. A degree of artificial fabrication or contractedness not usually apparent in spontaneous conversation. Narrative is 'worked upon'. Sequence, emphasis and pace are usually planned.
2. A degree of prefabrication. In other words, narratives often seem to have bits we have seen or heard or think we have seen or heard before.
3. Narratives typically seem to have a 'trajectory'. They usually go somewhere, and are expected to go somewhere with some sort of development and even a resolution or conclusion provided. We expect them to have beginnings, middles and ends.
4. Narratives have to have a teller, and that teller, no matter how backgrounded or 'invisible', is always important. In this respect, despite its special characteristics, narrative is a language communication like any other, requiring a speaker and some sort of addressee.
5. Narratives are richly exploitative of that design feature of language called displacement (the ability of human language to be used to refer

to things or events that are removed, in space or time, from either speaker or addressee) ... arguably there has to be some removal or absence in space or time, for a discourse to count as a narrative.

6. Narratives involve the recall of happenings that may be not merely spatially, but more crucially, temporally remote from the teller and his audience.

According to Toolan, 'noting and inspecting' the aforementioned characteristics of a narrative is considered crucial in defining what a narrative is.

3.3. Point of view

M.H. Abrams in his book 'A Glossary of Literary Terms' (1971:138), defines point of view as "the perspective or perspectives established by an author through which the reader is presented with the characters, actions, setting and events which constitute the narrative in a work of fiction". Point of view is directly related with the authors' choice of the angle from which the story gets told. Romberg (1952) in Hailu (2001:18) defines it in relation to the author's standpoint as follows.

"Point of view" means in ordinary language "stand point", or "out look". These meanings are all contained in the critical term point of view, which refers to the stand point from which the author lets the reader see and follow the events of the novel. A good straight forward definition... is given as the position from which the story is presented.

Since point of view is one of the major components of a narrative, it can play a role in shaping the readers attitude towards the story they are reading.

This implies the fact that choice of point of view is one of the critical decisions that novelists made in writing their story. This leads us to the discussion of the different kinds of point of views.

3.3.1. First Person Point of View

First person refers to the situation where the narrator is also one of the characters in the story. In this point of view, the narrator plays two roles, i.e., narrating the story and acting as one of the characters in the fictitious world. If the first person narrator in the story is the major character, he or she is an autodiegetic narrator. “An autodiegetic narrator is a narrator who is the main character in the story he or she tells” (Hawthorn, 2005:86).

First person narrative has its own advantages and limitations. It is advantageous in that it “engages readers directly, creating a sense of intimacy. They can comment on their own experiences and emotions, and readers naturally feel “in the character’s head”. (Johnston, 2002:91). Johnston also pointed out that this point of view is very economical; “the writer can convey the main character’s thoughts and personality through the voice.”

On the other hand, first person point of view has its own limitations. First person narrators are subject to human limitations and thus they have limitations like subjectivity and limited range of vision. “This mode, insofar as it is consistently carried out, naturally limits the point of view to what the first person narrator himself knows, experiences, infers or can find out by talking to other characters” (Abrams, 1971:140). While discussing the limitations, Jahn (2005) states facts like first person narrators can not be in two places at the same time, they do not know what will happen in the future, they can not narrate the story of their own death, they can not know

for certain what other characters think or thought; as some of the limitations.

Since first person narrators are also characters in the fictitious world, they are subject to unreliability. While discussing this issue Rimmon-Kenan (1983:103) states, “[first person narrators] are subject to limited knowledge, personal involvement, and problematic value schemes, often giving rise to the possibility of unreliability”.

3.3.2. Third Person Point of View

Third person point of view “is a narrative told from a source external to the world of the novel by a narrator who is not one of the characters in the novel” (Hawthorn, 2005:82). In third person narrative, the narrator is some one who is not one of the acting characters in the story, and he/she refers to all the characters in the third person. According to Abrams (1971:139), third person narratives can be divided into subclasses “according to the degree and kind of freedom or limitation which the author assumes in getting the material of his story before the reader”.

3.3.2.1 Third Person Omniscient Point of View

Third person omniscient can be defined as a “technique in which the narrator is able to move in and out of various characters minds” (Johnston, 2002:97). Johnston also points out that it is easier to present a balanced picture through this technique. He also states that the omniscient narrators have absolute authority that can allow them to know everything about the story’s world as well as what the characters in the story are thinking.

Jahn (2005) called the third person omniscient point of view “authorial narrative” and defined it as a narrative, which involves “somebody who is not, and never was, a character in the story itself”. The narrator’s status of an outsider, as Jahn (2005) points out, enables him/her to have “God like abilities such as omniscience and omnipresence”. According to Jahn’s discussion, many authors allow their authorial narrators “to speak directly to their addressees, to comment on action and characters, to engage in philosophical reflection and to interrupt into the course of the action by detailed description”.

The main advantage of this point of view is its omniscience. Omniscience “is often used in a loose way to indicate any work in which the narrator has access to that which like character’s secret thoughts is normally concealed to observers in the real world” (Hawthorn 1985:59). As it is pointed out earlier, the term omniscience also refers to the fact that the narrator has a God like power. He/she has unlimited knowledge. This enables the narrator to provide a comprehensive view of the situation.

In her discussion of omniscience, Rimmon-kenan (1983:95) states the following as the characteristics connoted by omniscience.

... familiarity, in principle, with characters’ innermost thoughts and feelings; knowledge of past, present and future; presence in locations where characters are supposed to unaccompanied (e.g. on a lonely stroll or during a love scene in a locked room); and knowledge of what happens in several places at the same time.

Furthermore, as Friedman (1967) in Jahn (2005) puts it, “the prevailing characteristics of omniscience is that the authorial narrator is always ready

to intervene himself between the reader and the story ... when he does set a scene, he will render it as he sees it rather than as his people see it”.

On the other hand, Abrams (1971:139-140) states two types of narrators within the third person omniscient point of view. The first one is the intrusive narrator; “who not only reports but freely comments on his characters, evaluating their actions and motives and expressing his view about human life in general”. The other is the unintrusive, or impersonal narrator, who “describes, reports or “shows” the action in dramatic scenes, without introducing his own comments or judgments”.

3.3.2.2. Limited Omniscient Point of View

The limited omniscient point of view is categorized under the third person point of view. It can be defined as a narrative, which “present the story’s events as seen through the eyes of a third person reflector character” (Jahn, 2005). Abrams (1971:14) describes it as a kind of point of view in which the narrator limits him/herself “to what is experienced, thought and felt by a single character”, though he/she tells the story in the third person. “The narrator represents only what the character sees, as if looking through the character’s eye or, as an “invisible witness,” standing next to him” (Martin, 1986:133).

The limited omniscient point of view suffers certain limitations. Since it presents a story from the point of view of an internal character, it might provide a distorted or restricted view of events. This point of view also has little or no exposition. However, as Jahn (2005) points out, “to many authors, such a distorted perspective is far more interesting than an omniscient or ‘objectively true account of events”. In addition, it is free from the narrator’s

intervention and subjectivity, since the story is presented from the point of view of an internal focalizer. This point of view is limited “to the consciousness of a character within the story itself, aims at giving the reader the illusion that he participates in experiencing events that simply evolve before his eyes” (Abrams, 1971:140). This implies that the reader experiences the over all experiences of the internal focalizer. Therefore, this point of view has a great advantage in exposing readers directly to the character’s experience.

3.4. Narrative Time

Narrative time is concerned with the discussion of questions like ‘when?’, ‘How long?’ and ‘How often?’ an event has occurred. That is, order, duration and frequency.

Statements about order would answer the question ‘when?’ in terms like: first, second, last, before, after, etc. Statements about duration would answer the question ‘how long?’ in terms like: an hour, a year; long, short; from x till y, etc. Statements about frequency would answer the question ‘how often?’ in terms like; x times a minute, a month, a page. (Rimmon-Kenan, 1983:46)

This discussion can tell us that order, duration and frequency are major aspects of narrative time. Now let us move to discussing these aspects one by one.

3.4.1. Order

Order refers to “the relations between the assumed sequence of events in the story and their actual order of presentation in the text” (Toolan, 2001:42). The basic question in relation to order is whether the presentation of the

story follows the natural sequence of events. According to Jahn (2005) a deviation from a strict chronology in a story is known as ‘anachrony’.

Anachronies are divided into flash backs and flash-forwards. However, as it is described by scholars like Rimmon-Kenan(1983), Hawthorn (2005), Toolan (2001), etc; Gerard Genette prefers terms ‘analepses’ and ‘prolepses’ respectively, “to avoid the psychological as well as the cinematic-visual connotations of” flashback and flash-forward.

“Analepses involves the narration of a story-event after later events have been told.” (Talib, 2008). In other words, it is an achronological movement back in time, “so that chronologically earlier incident is related later in the text” (Toolan, 2001:45)

Rimmon Kenan (1983:47) points out that analepses can “provide information either about the character, event, or story-line mentioned at that point in the text or about another character, event or story-line”.

Prolepsis, on the other hand, is a technique of presenting a future event before its appropriate time. Michael Toolan (2001:43) describes it as “an achronological movement foreword in time, so that a future event is related texturally ‘before its time’, before the presentation of chronologically intermediate events”. Rimmon-Kenan (1983:48) points out that, prolepses are less frequent than analepses. ‘When they occur, they replace the kind of suspense deriving from the question ‘what will happen next?’ by another kind of suspense, revolving around the question ‘How long is it going to happen.’

Rimmon-Kenan(1983:47-49) also points out that both analepses and prolepses can refer to either the same character, event or story-line figuring at that point (homodigetic) or to another character, event, or story-line(hetrodigetic).

On the other hand, analepses can cover a period preceding the starting point of the first narrative. This is called external analepses. However, if the analepses refers to an event, which occurred after the starting point of the first narrative, it will be an internal analepses. “Such analepses often fill a gap which is not felt as such until it is filled-in in retrospect” (Rimmon-Kenan, 1983:48). Similarly, prolepses can either be external, covering a period beyond the end of the first narrative or internal, covering ‘period anterior to it but posterior to the point at which it is narrated’.

3.4.2. Duration

Howthorn (2005:188) defines duration as “relationship between the time covered by the story or part of it (such as an event) and the ‘time’ allotted to it by the text (story time and text time)”. Similarly, Ismail S. Talib (2008) [online source] described duration as ‘an important consideration in the study of events’. Talib (2008) also points out that story and discourse may have different effects on duration. Therefore, it is of paramount importance to make a distinction between story time and discourse time.

Story time is “the fictional time taken up by an action episode, or more globally by the whole action” (Jahn, 2005). In determining story time, ‘one usually relies on aspects of textual pace, intuition and text internal clues’. On the other hand, discourse time refers to “the time it takes an average reader to read a passage, or more globally, the whole text. Discourse time can be measured in the number of words, lines or pages of a text” (Jahn, 2005).

When we compare story time and discourse time to assess a text's speed, the following major types of relationships occur.

Isochronous presentation: it is a presentation of equal duration, i.e. "story time and discourse time are approximately equal or rhythmically mapped" (Jahn, 2005). This presentation happens in passages containing lots of dialogue or detailed action presentations.

Acceleration (speed up): it is an effect "produced by devoting a short segment of the text to a long period of the story, relative to the 'norm' established for this text" (Rimmon-Kenan (1983:53). It is a kind of presentation in which a text's discourse time is shorter than its story time. It "typically characterizes a 'summary' or 'panoramic' mode of presentation." (Jahn: 2005).

Deceleration (slow-down): this is an opposite presentation to acceleration (speed up). Here the effect is produced by "devoting a long segment of the text to a short period of the story" (Rimmon-Kenan, 1983:53). This shows us that discourse time is considerably longer than story time. "Ordinarily, the more important events or conversations are given in detail (i.e. decelerated), where as the less important ones are compressed" (Rimmon-kenan, 1983:56).

Ellipsis (omission): it is "the maximum speed... where zero textual space corresponds to some story duration" (Rimmon-Kenan, 1983:53). On the other hand, Talib (2008) refers to it as an event where "the story is deleted in the discourse". In this kind of presentation, there is 'a stretch of story time', which is not represented textually. "The discourse halts, though time continues to pass in the story" (Jahn, 2005).

Descriptive pause: it is a presentation in which “discourse time elapses on description or comment, while story time stops and no action actually take place” (Jahn, 2005). Similarly, Rimmon-Kenan (1983:53) describes it as a presentation in which “some segment of the text corresponds to zero story duration”. It is “where time in the story is stretched or suspended in discourse in order to describe something” (Talib, 2008).

3.4.3. Frequency

Frequency is one of the major narrative components which deals with the question ‘how often an event occurs’. “By the term ‘frequency’, we denote the business of repeated textual telling of a single story incident.” (Toolan, 2001:53). As Jahn (2005) points out “frequency analysis investigates a narrator’s strategies of summative or repetitive telling”.

Repetition relations between story events and their narration in the text can take the following three forms.

- i. Singulative: it is a frequential mode in which what happened once is recounted once. According to Rimmon-Kenan (1983:57), this is the most common narrative form. Rimmon-Kenan also points out that the less common phenomenon of narrating ‘n’ times what happened ‘n’ times belongs to the category of singulative narration. However, Howthorn (2005:113) formed another category called ‘multiple frequency’ for “a repeated event narrated the same number of times that it occurs”.
- ii. Repetitive frequency: it is a frequential mode in which what happened once is recounted several times. It is related with “telling ‘n’ times what ‘happened’ once” (Rimmon-Kenan, 1983:57).

- iii. Iterative frequency: it is a frequential mode in which “many events [are] narrated once” (Howthorn, 2005:113). It is a technique of recounting once what happened several times. Martin (1986:125) described it as “one description of an event that occurs repeatedly”.

3.5. Narrative Modes

Jahn (2005) pinpoints that narrative modes basically follow from the frequency and durational relationships. However, according to Jahn (2005), it is necessary to make the ‘traditional’ distinction between ‘showing’ and ‘telling’.

Showing is a mode of presentation in which “there is little or no narratorial mediation, overtness or presence. The reader is basically cast in the role of a witness to the events” (Jahn, 2005). Telling, on the other hand, is mode of presentation where “the narrator is in overt control (especially durational control) of action presentation, characterization and point of view arrangement.”

Based on the way events are presented, there are two major narrative modes: scene/scenic presentation and summary.

3.5.1. Scene/scenic presentation

It is a showing mode, which presents “a continuous stream of detailed action events”. Martin (1986:124) described it in relation to duration as a mode of presentation in which “the time period described and reading time are about equal”. As it is stated in Rimmon-Kenan (1983:54) dialogue is considered as the purest scenic form. “Although dialogue is the purest form of scene, a

detailed narration of an event should also be considered scenic... what characterizes a scene is the quality of narrative information and the relative effacement of the narrator”.

3.5.2. Summary

Summary is “a telling mode in which the narrator condenses a sequence of action events into a thematically focused and orderly account” (John, 2005). In summary the speed is “accelerated through a textual compression of a given story period into a relatively short statement of its main features” (Toolan, 2001:49).

According to Jahn (2005), there are supportive modes in addition to the two major narrative modes. The first is ‘description’, which is a telling mode in which “the narrator introduces a character or describes a setting”. The other mode is ‘comment or commentary’, which is also a telling mode in which “the narrator comments on characters, the development of the action, the circumstances of the act of narrating, etc. Comments are typical narratorial intrusions and often indicative of self ‘conscious narration’.

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS OF POINT OF VIEW AND NARRATIVE TIME USED IN ACHEBE'S NOVELS

This chapter deals with the analysis of point of view and narrative time used in Achebe's five novels. The chapter is divided into six sub sections. The first five sub sections are about point of view and narrative time used in the five novels. After the analysis, there is a comparative analysis on the five novels based on point of view and narrative time used in the novels. Points that are related with narrative mode are raised within the discussion of narrative time; since they are related with the kind of durational relationships existed in the novels.

4.1. Point of View and Narrative Time in 'Things Fall Apart'

4.1.1. Synopsis

'Things Fall Apart' is a story about a primitive society who lived in places called Umuofia and Mbanta. The protagonist of the novel is Okonkwo, who was a great wrestler in his youth, and one of the wealthiest, powerful and influential members of Umuofia.

The major conflict in the story is between the indigenous cultural tradition, which is represented by Okonkwo, and the new religion and government, which is brought by the Europeans.

The story in 'Things Fall Apart' is divided into three parts. Part one starts with introducing us with the protagonist of the story, i.e., Okonkwo. In this

part we are acquainted with Okonkwo's overall personality including his family background his place in the society and the like. Here we are also introduced with the different kinds of festivals like the New Year and wrestling matches. The traditional judiciary system is the other thing that we have noticed in this part.

Around the end of the part a great man in the society, Ezeudu had passed away. He was a man of honour so all the society members were at his funeral. However in the middle of the funeral Okonkwo's gun exploded and killed the dead man's sixteen-year-old son. Killing a clansman is considered a crime in the society. Therefore, Okonkwo and his family had to flee from the clan to his mother's village Mbanta. Despite his higher position in the society, this part comes to a disastrous end for Okonkwo.

Part two is all about Okonkwo's seven years in exile. Okonkwo and his family had started a new life in Mbanta. Though he was totally absorbed in going back to Umuofia he became prosperous in his mother land.

He heard about the coming of the white men when his friend, Obierika, visited him in the second year of his exile. Obierika had also paid another visit to Okonkwo after two years. At this time, Okonkwo had learned that the missionaries had come to Umuofia and Okonkwo's son, Nwoye, was among them. Okonkwo started to quarrel with his son. This was the time when things started to fall apart.

Despite the resistance they had faced from the society, the missionaries were able to build a church in Mbanta and to win some converts. Because of this

Okonkwo became upset and showed his disdain to his mother's clan. This part comes to an end with Okonkwo's farewell back to Umuofia from Mbanta. Part three begins with Okonkwo's return to Umuofia from his seven years exile in Mbanta. His return to his clan was not pleasing, as he had desired it to be. He became sad when he heard that the white men had built a church and brought a government with a district commissioner who judged in ignorance. He was disappointed because he saw the clan 'falling apart and breaking up' and 'a war like men of Umuofia, who had so unaccountably become soft like women'.

A great conflict between the church and the clan had started when one of the converts unmasked the masked spirits during the annual ceremony of the earth's deity. The leaders of Umuofia avenged this by burning the Christian church. The leaders were arrested and treated badly in the prison of the white men. Okonkwo was among the prisoners.

After the release of the leaders, there was a meeting in the village. The court messengers of the white men came to stop the meeting. Okonkwo faced the head messenger and killed him. But he knew that Umuofia would not stand by his side because they had let the other messengers escape. As the result, Okonkwo committed a suicide by hanging himself. When the district commissioner arrived at Okonkwo's compound to arrest him, he found the villagers in a state of confusion. They told him that committing a suicide is an abomination. The body of a man who took his own life is evil and only strangers can touch it. When the district commissioner was looking at Okonkwo's body, Obierika told him "[Okonkwo] was one of the greatest men in Umuofia. You drove him to kill himself; and now he will be buried like a dog" (Achebe, 1958:147).

4.1.2. Point of View in ‘Things Fall Apart’

The perspective in which the story in ‘Things Fall Apart’ is presented is the third person omniscient point of view. And the narrator is an anonymous narrator who tells the story without involving himself as one of the acting characters. Since the narrator is an anonymous narrator, I will be forced to use the author’s sex (following Lancer’s rule) to refer to the narrator in the entire analysis of this text.

As I have tried to discuss in the theoretical framework, the third person omniscient narrators have their own characteristic traits. The narrator in ‘Things Fall Apart’ exhibits these traits by focusing mainly on the protagonist, i.e., Okonkwo. It is from the narrator’s description that we are allowed to know what kind of person Okonkwo is. Let us take an extract from the text to prove what I have stated earlier.

Okonkwo ruled his household with a heavy hand. His wives especially the youngest, lived in perpetual fear of his fiery temper, and so did his little children. Perhaps down in his heart Okonkwo was not a cruel man. But his whole life was dominated by fear, the fear of failure and of weakness ... [Okonkwo’s fear] was not external but lay deep within himself. It was the fear of himself, lest he should be found to resemble his father ... (Achebe,1958:9-10)

This is how the narrator acquainted us with the protagonist’s personality. In the entire text, we do not see Okonkwo acting kindly and respectfully towards his family members as well as other people. However, the narrator provides us with the reason behind Okonkwo’s cruel and arrogant behavior

as in the above extract. Here he tells us what lies deep inside Okonkwa's mind, i.e., the fear of resembling his father.

The narrator's revelation of the protagonist's innermost feelings does not stop on telling us why Okonkwo became the kind of person he is. He also tells us something about Okonkwo's wishes and love for his children that we do not see him saying directly. Okonkwo's special feeling for his daughter, Ezinma, can illustrate this fact.

You have not eaten for two days, said his daughter Ezinma when she brought the food to him. 'So you must finish this.' She sat down and stretched her legs in front of her. Okonkwo ate the food absent mindedly. 'She should have been a boy,' he thought as he looked at his ten-year-old daughter. (Achebe, 1958:44)

This extract can clearly show us that the narrator is able to go through the protagonist's mind and tell us what he thought. By the narrator's revelation of Okonkwo's thought, we know Okonkwo's affection towards Ezinma as well as his out looks towards women.

The other thing that makes this narrator an omniscient narrator is his presence in locations where characters are supposed to be unaccompanied. The narrator tells us what the protagonist is doing when he is alone in his Obi (personal room). Let us prove this fact by taking an extract from the text.

For the first time in three nights, Okonkwo slept. He woke up once in the middle of the night and his mind went back to the past three days without making him feel uneasy... He stretched himself and scratched his thigh where a mosquito had beaten

him as he slept. Another one was wailing near his right ear. He slapped the ear and hoped he had killed it... (Achebe, 1958:53)

Okonkwo slept very little that night. The bitterness in his heart was now mixed with a kind of child like excitement. Before he had gone to bed he had brought down his war dresses, which he had not touched since his return from exile. He had shaken out his smoked raffia skirt and examined his tall feather head-gear and his shield. They were all satisfactory; he had thought (Achebe, 1958:141).

These two extracts can tell us something about the narrator's presence in a place where the protagonist is supposed to be alone. In the extracts the narrator tells us, what Okonkwo did when he is alone in his room.

The presence of the narrator in locations where characters are supposed to be unaccompanied is also exhibited in the parts of the story, which include other characters. For example the narrator tells us, on pages sixty seven to seventy, how Okonkwo's second wife, Ekwefi, and her only daughter Ezinma spent the night, whose turn is to tell a story, what kind of story is told and the like. These and other narrations in the text can make us say the narrator is present in locations where he is not supposed to be. And this is one of the characteristics of an omniscient narrator.

The other point that we need to raise in relation to the narrator's omniscience is the fact that the narrator plays a role of an all-knowing stance. This is to say that the narrator has knowledge of the past, the present and the future, as well as knowledge of what happens in several places at the same time. For instance at the beginning of chapter eleven, on pages sixty seven and sixty

eight, the narrator tells us what was happening in Okonkwo's Obi (room) and his wives huts simultaneously.

The narrator is also familiar with the overall activities of the society including its secrets. Let us demonstrate this fact by taking the following extract from the text.

Okonkwo's wives and perhaps other women as well, might have noticed that the second Egwugwu [a masquerader who impersonates one of the ancestral spirits of the village] had the springy walk of Okonkwo. And they might have also noticed that Okonkwo was not among the titled men and elders who sat behind the row of Egwugwu. But if they thought of these things they kept them within themselves. The Egwugwu with the springy walk was one of the dead fathers of the clan. (Achebe, 1958:63-64)

As it is clearly seen in the extract, Okonkwo's wives as well as other women might have noticed one of the masked spirits is Okonkwo. This implies that the identity of the people behind the mask is a top secret for the ordinary members of the society. However, for the narrator nothing is a secret. Through what he told us about Okonkwo's wives and other women, we can understand that he is telling us the identity of the people who are behind the mask.

The narrator also goes to the extent of telling the amount of food and drink that Okonkwo takes during feasts.

He was a good eater and he could drink one or two fairly big gourds of palm-wine. But he was always uncomfortable sitting

around for days waiting for a feast or getting over it (Achebe, 1958:27).

This shows us that the anonymous narrator has knowledge of detailed individual activities as well as societal practices. This can make the narrator to have a God like power. Therefore, from my overall discussion about the point of view used to present the story in 'Things Fall Apart', I can say that the story is presented from a third person omniscient point of view with a narrator who is able to move in and out of the characters minds, who knows a lot of things about the past, the present and the future, who is present in locations where characters are supposed to be unaccompanied, etc.

4.1.3. Narrative Time in 'Things Fall Apart'

Narrative time refers to 'when', 'how long' and 'how often' an event has occurred, i.e. order, duration and frequency. In analyzing the narrative time used in 'Things Fall Apart', an attempt is made to go through the novel in terms of order duration and frequency.

Reading the novel, 'Things Fall Apart', one can say that the story in the novel is written chronologically since a large portion of the story follows a chronological order. However, there are parts of the story, which deviate from the strict chronology used in the novel.

The story begins with introducing the protagonist, Okonkwo. The narrator tells us Okonkwo's personal achievements including how he brought honour to his village by throwing the great wrestler 'Amalinze the Cat'. However, soon after he introduced us with Okonkwo, the narrator starts telling us something about Okonkwo's father Unoka. This narration deviates from the

chronological order and tells us things about Unoka that happened ten years ago. I said ten years ago because Unoka had died ten years before the present story time. This is the part of the story, which presented many things about Unoka, Okonkwo's father. And this is a kind of presentation which narratologists call analepses or flash back.

Flash back is also used from pages twelve to eighteen when the narrator presented the fact that Okonkwo did not receive any heritage from his father. This presentation takes us back to the narration of what kind of person Okonkwo's father was.

By going back in time, the narrator tells us Unoka's laziness and his feminine acts. The narrator also tells us that unlike his son, Unoka was not a warrior and did not receive any titles in the community. Besides, he was 'afflicted with swelling in the stomach and limbs' which was considered as an abomination to the earth goddess. And because of this Unoka was not allowed to die in his house rather, 'he was carried to the evil forest and left there to die.'

The aforementioned deviations from the chronological order are used to foreground the strength of the protagonist, Okonkwo. By reading the stories that are presented after later events have been told, one can easily conclude that, it is Okonkwo's courage and strength that made him prosperous rather than a legacy that he had received from his ancestors.

The other part of narration which includes flash back (analepses) is found from pages fifty four to sixty (chapter nine). At this point, the narrator deviates from the main story line and takes us back in time to tell us

something about Okonkwo's second wife, Ekwefi, and her daughter Ezinma. This deviation helps us to understand the kind of problem that Ekwefi had passed. It is stated that she had borne ten children and nine of them had died in infancy. According to the narrator, this problem is considered as an 'Ogbanje', i.e. 'one of those wicked children who, when they died, entered their mothers' wombs to be born again' (Achebe, 1958:54).

This analeptic narration presents Ekwefi's sorrow, the societal belief about 'ogbanje' and the traditional solution that is used to avoid such a problem. Therefore, I can say that this achronological movement back in time is used to introduce us with the problems and the traditional practices that are related with an 'Ogbanje'.

The aforementioned three deviations from the chronological order are the major flash back presentations that are used at a level of a story. There are, of course, other flash back presentations, which are used to modify a character's behavior and other things.

The other achronological presentation used in this text is prolepses or flash forward. From pages thirty eight to forty, we are told what will happen in the future indirectly. Here we have learned about the coming of the locusts which settled on every tree and on every blade of grass, they settled on the roofs and covered the bare ground. Mighty tree branches broke away under them'.

It is also stated that locusts are very good to eat. This metaphoric presentation is used again on page ninety seven directly substituting the white men. Let me demonstrate this fact by taking an extract.

I forgot to tell you another thing, which the Oracle said. It said that other white men were on their way. They were locusts, it

said, and that first man was their harbinger sent to explore the terrain (Achebe, 1958:97-98).

This is what Okonkwo's friend told him about the coming of the white men. However, this is not the only time that we have learned about the coming of the white men. It is indirectly foreshadowed from pages thirty eight to forty with the coming of the locusts. The way the locusts descended on the ground on page thirty nine and the coming of the white men is similar. The locusts descended on the ground after their representatives explore the ground and here we have learned that the white men sent their representative to explore the terrain before their arrival.

The other thing that is stated from pages thirty eight to forty is the fact that the locusts had settled on everything. In part two and part three of the book we are told that the white men had controlled everything including the trade system and governance. The fact that the white men were able to win many converts is also foreshadowed with 'the mighty tree branches which broke under locusts'. We have also learned that people start to gain benefits with the coming of the white men. 'For the first time palm-oil and kernel become things of great price, and much money flowed into Umuofia'. This is also similar with the fact that locusts are very good to eat. Therefore, from the overall comparison of the coming of the locusts on pages thirty eight to forty and the coming of the white men in part two and part three we can conclude that locusts represent the white men and the narration about locusts on pages thirty eight to forty foreshadows the coming of the white men.

Though the story in 'Things Fall Apart' focuses on the life and experiences of the protagonist, i.e., Okonkwo, it tries to depict the overall aspect of the society in which he lived in. We are introduced with the culture and

traditions of the society including its way of celebrating festivals like New Year, wrestling matches and many others. So, when we look at the amount of information presented in the story in accordance with the number of pages the book constitutes, we can say that summary is the narrative mode in which the story is presented. This implies that when we assess the texts speed we found the texts discourse time shorter than its story time. The text presents the protagonist's entire life starting from his youth together with other details in not more than one hundred and fifty pages. And this can not take more than two or three days for an average reader to go through it carefully. Therefore, when we look at the overall duration that is used in the text, the text's discourse time is shorter than its story time; and this is what we call acceleration or speed up.

When we look at the text's three parts separately, we can notice differences in the tempo of the text. For example, part one of the text constitutes the large portion of the story time. It tells us a lot about the protagonist's entire life as well as the different cultural and traditional practices of the society. Therefore, when we look at the duration of part one in relation to the other parts; we can say that it is the part of the story which covers a long period of the story time.

Part two only covers seven years of Okonkwo's life in exile. This is the part of the story in which we are directly introduced with the coming of the white men. This is also the part of the story where things start to fall apart. This means it is the part of the story where the conflict has started. So, when we look at this part in relation to the first part, it is a bit slowed down. This is because it only covers seven years and things are presented in detail when we compare it with the first part.

The third part of the story covers the time from Okonkwo's return to Umuofia until his death. This is the section in which the conflict reached its climax and came to a resolution. This part of the story does not cover more than three years of the protagonist's life. This shows us that this part of the story is also a bit slowed down when we compare it with the other parts of the story.

What makes the story in 'Things Fall Apart' more accelerated is the presence of ellipsis. In some parts of the text, the story is deleted in the discourse. The beginnings of chapter fifteen and chapter sixteen can be examples for the presence of the aforementioned fact. Chapter fifteen begins with the following sentence. "It was in the second year of Okonkwo's exile that his friend Obierika, came to visit him." From this sentence, one can understand that two years of story time is not represented textually. Similarly, looking at the first sentence of the sixteenth chapter, one can see a similar happening. "When nearly two years later Obrieka paid another visit to his friend in exile the circumstances were less happy."(p.101). This also shows the fact that 'the discourse halts, though time continues to pass in the story'. This might be what the author intentionally did to cover a long period in a limited number of pages. Such happenings made the text more accelerated.

Generally, in the presentation of the story in 'Things Fall Apart', discourse time is shorter than the story time. However, the acceleration differs among different parts of the text.

When we look at the frequency of the text, we can find the different forms of frequency used in the text. Many events are recounted once as they happened or the number of times they happened in the text. For example,

there is a tradition of breaking Kola nuts whenever guests arrive at a certain household. This is the form of frequency, which is called singulative.

On the other hand, though it is not equivalent with things that are recounted once as they happen, there are things that happened once and recounted several times. For example, the heroism that Okonkwo performed when he was young is repeatedly addressed on pages three, eighty two, one hundred eight and one hundred thirty six. Like wise, Okonkwo's prosperity is also addressed several times. His wish that his daughter, Ezinma, should have been a boy is recounted on pages forty four, forty five and one hundred twenty two. Through the use of repetitive frequency, the author emphasizes the protagonist's heroic nature, strength and his outlook towards women.

As it is stated earlier, the tradition of breaking kola nuts is recounted the number of times it is performed. Guests are also required to draw lines on the floor before the breaking of kola nuts. This implies that the drawing of lines is performed in accordance with the breaking of kola nuts. However, unlike the breaking of kola nuts it is recounted once on page fifty one. This is what we call iterative frequency.

Telling us the breaking of Kola nuts whenever guests' arrive at a certain house, the author magnifies the respect among the members of the society. On the other hand, since the drawings of lines represent the number of guests who arrive at a certain household, it is given less attention and recounted once in the text.

4.2. Point of View and Narrative Time in 'No Longer at Ease'

4.2.1. Synopsis

'No longer at Ease' is a continuation from Achebe's first novel 'Things Fall Apart'. It is a story about Okonkwo's grandson, Obi Okonkwo. The major theme that the author tries to address is the corruption of the civil servants. The conflict in the novel is produced by the protagonist's moral awareness on the one hand and the societal expectations that led him to a total lack of moral courage.

The story begins with Obi's trial. Then it takes a form of long flash back to tell us about Obi's background and how he became the kind of person that we saw in the end.

Obi is a young man who is originally from a place called Umuofia in Nigeria. He was a brilliant student and won a scholarship offered by the Umuofia progressive union. After his studies in England, Obi was employed in one of the senior services of the country.

At the beginning, he was totally against corruption. And he was successful in refusing taking bribes from people who wanted him to do them favors. However, he had many responsibilities that he needed to take care of. The Umuofia progressive union required him to pay back the eight hundred pounds that he spent on his education in four years time. He is responsible for his brother's education fees. He was also responsible for providing a monthly allowance to his parents. There are also other responsibilities that came up with his position of a senior civil servant. He had to pay for insurance, fuel for his car and many other things that came up with the luxury of being a senior civil servant. Things got worse when he had

quarreled with his girl friend. Here she decided to abort the baby that she had conceived and asked him to pay thirty pounds for the abortion.

At this point Obi's stand against corruption started to erode. He started taking bribes from people. He even slept with girls who needed him do them a favor. Finally he was caught red handed when he was accepting a bribe. And he was arrested and brought to court. The case became the talk of Lagos. During his trial every available space was taken up. Every one was there to hear the judgment. "Some civil servants paid as much as ten shillings and six pence to obtain a doctor's certificate of illness for the day."(Achebe, 1960:1)

4.2.2. Point of View in 'No Longer at Ease'

The story in 'No Longer at Ease' is the continuation from Achebe's first novel 'Things Fall Apart'. 'No longer at Ease' is presented from the perspective of a third person Omniscient narrator, just like the first novel. The focus of the narrator in 'Things Fall Apart' was on Okonkwo. However, in 'No Longer at Ease' the narrator focuses on Okonkwo's grandson Obi Okonkwo, who is the protagonist of the story.

Let me illustrate the point of view in which the story in 'No longer at Ease' is presented. To begin with, the narrator has an all rounded knowledge about what was going on in the story. The narrator tells us everything about the protagonist. He tells us that Obi is the grandson of Okonwo, who was the protagonist in 'Things Fall Apart'. He also tells us about Obi's educational background, how he won a scholarship produced by the Umuofia progressive Union. It is from the narrator that one can learn about the kind of disorder

that Obi was in which made him to stay behind the bar. And this is one of the characteristics of an omniscient narrator.

The other feature that can make this narrator omniscient is his familiarity of the characters' innermost feelings and his ability of reading what is going on in the mind of the characters. Let us demonstrate this by taking an extract from the text.

Through out that morning Obi felt strongly elated. It was not unlike the feeling he had some years ago in England after his first woman ... she said she had been attacked by a tiger ... After his encounter with Mr. Mark he had felt like a tiger. He has won his first battle hands-down. (Achebe, 1960:80)

This is what the narrator tells us about Obi's feeling after he had refused accepting a bribe for the first time in his life. This extract can tell us something about the narrator's all knowing personality. He tells us about the protagonist's feeling through reading his mind. When he does this he compares the present feeling of the protagonist with that of his (the protagonist's) experience that 'he had some years ago in England after his first woman'.

The narrator's all knowing personality goes beyond telling us everything about the protagonist's life. This is to say that the narrator tells us many things about other characters as well as the society that is depicted in the novel. What the narrator tells us on page one can be taken as an example.

Every available space in the courtroom was taken up. There were almost as many people standing as sitting. The case had been the talk of Lagos for a number of weeks and on this last day

anyone who could possibly leave his job was there to hear the judgment. Some civil servants paid as much as ten shillings and six pence to obtain a doctor's certificate of illness for the day.

Here the narrator tells us about the atmosphere of the court during Obi's trial. The narrator gives us information about how the room was populated. He also tells us about the amount of money that some civil servants spend to obtain a doctor's certificate of illness. This presentation of the courtroom as well as the people who occupied it can imply something about the all-knowing personality of the narrator.

The other characteristic trait that omniscient narrators exhibit is the presence of the narrator in places where characters are supposed to be unaccompanied. In this story the narrator is present in positions where the protagonist is alone or with some one else. Let us demonstrate this by taking an extract from the text.

All night Obi rolled from one edge of the bed to the other in sympathy with the fitful progress of the little ship groaning and creaking in the darkness. He could neither sleep nor keep awake. But somehow he was able to think about Clara most of the night a few seconds at a time ... (Achebe, 1960:22)

In this extract, the narrator is able to get into Obi's room in the ship to tell us how he spent the night alone. The narrator also reveals what Obi was thinking when he was alone in that room.

Besides his presence in positions where the protagonist is alone, the narrator is also present in locations where Obi is with someone else. For

example, the narrator knows everything about Obi's relationship with his girl friend, Clara. The narrator was present when Obi kissed Clara on the boat for the first time (page twenty three), he is also present in positions where Obi and Clara were alone. These and other examples in the text can display the narrator's presence in positions where it is impossible for an ordinary human being and this is one of the characteristics of omniscient narrators.

Generally, the story in the text under discussion is written from the perspective of an anonymous third person omniscient narrator. He exhibits God like personalities by going in and out of different characters' minds, by being present in positions where characters are supposed to be unaccompanied, and the like. Therefore, the manifestation of these and other traits can help us conclude the kind of narrator that the author used to present his story is a third person omniscient narrator.

4.2.3. Narrative Time in "No Longer at Ease"

When we look at the story in terms of time, the story in 'No Longer at Ease' is not presented chronologically. The story begins with the present story time, i.e. Obi's trial. Right after telling us something about what is going on in the courtroom; the narrator goes back in time and started to present the story right from the beginning. Then in the end, the story comes back to what is stated at the beginning, Obi's trial.

This shows us that the major part of the story is presented in a form of flash back. However, this part of the story is not even chronologically presented. Within this part there are sub stories that are told after later events have been presented. An example that can illustrate the aforementioned fact can be found from pages fifty two to fifty six. At this point, the narrator was

presenting Obi's visit of his native land, Umuofia, after his return from England. Suddenly the narrator goes back in time and starts to tell us something about Obi's childhood education and his family life. This is an external flashback.

The other flash back is found from pages one hundred twenty five to one hundred twenty six. It is the point, which refers back to the time of Obi's grandfather who was the protagonist of Achebe's first novel, 'Things Fall Apart'. Here Obi's father told Obi about his childhood. He told him about Ikemefuna, a child 'who was given to Umuofia by her neighbors in appeasement'. He also told him about the kind of hardships that he had passed through, to be a Christian.

Therefore, when we look at the above points we can say that the presentation of the story in 'No Longer at Ease' does not follow a chronological order. By presenting later events at the beginning of the story, the author stresses the main theme of the story, the corruptibility of civil servants. Besides, this presentation helps the author to create a kind of suspense on his readers.

On the other hand, though not stated directly there are symbols, which can forecast the coming of events. The place where Obi and Clara started a serious relationship (page nineteen) can be taken as an example for this kind of presentation. It was a small cargo boat. The water on which the boat had floated can be taken as a signal for the kind of problems that existed between the two. This forecasts the tragic separation of the couple that we have learnt around the end of the story. And this can be considered as a presentation of a future event before its appropriate time.

The other point that we need to consider in analyzing the narrative time of the text is the duration of the story. When we look at the text in terms of the time it takes an average reader to go through the text, the kind of relationship that we find between the story time and discourse time will be acceleration or speed up. This is to say that it should not take more than two or three days to go through a text, which consists of one hundred and fifty four pages only.

However, when we look at the different parts of the story, we can notice some differences. The total story time that existed in the text is five years plus some childhood stories that are presented in a form of flash back. From this story time, Obi's stay in England took around four years; the other one year is about Obi's life in the senior service. But when we look at the discourse time allocated in these different parts of the story the reverse is true. Obi's life in England is given a little coverage in the text. We can say that this part of Obi's life is summarized and as it is pointed out by Jahn (2005) 'summary is a narrative mode in which the narrator condenses a sequence of action events into a thematically focused and orderly account'. Therefore, we can say that the author used Obi's four years in England to strengthen the theme of the text, i.e., the corruption of the educated Africans.

On the other hand, the one year that Obi spent in the senior service took a large portion of the text's discourse time. The kind of presentation that we can notice in this part is scenic. Here events are presented in detail. What the characters of the story are saying is presented in many parts in dialogue form. It is from this part of the story that we have learned about the different reasons that led Obi towards corruption. So, when we look at these detailed presentations, we can say that this part of the story is a bit slowed down. But it does not mean that the kind of relationship that existed between the story

time and text time of this part of the story is slowed down, since it does not take around a year to go through the part for an average reader.

The other thing that needs to be raised in relation to narrative time is the frequency of the text, i.e., how often an event occurs in the text. Many events are recounted once as they happened. Obi's disagreements with his girl friend is recounted the number of times it happened; and it can be taken as an example of singulative presentation.

On the other hand, there are things that are presented repetitively. One of these things is Obi's education. This point is mentioned on pages one, twenty eight, sixty four and seventy. Similarly, the fact that Obi's father is a Christian convert and a catechist is repeatedly recounted on pages six, forty six to forty seven, and fifty three. Through recounting these facts repeatedly, the author tries to tell us neither modern education nor Christianity cannot stop Obi from being corrupted. And the emphasis on these points is used to strengthen the main point that the author tries to address.

4.3. Point of View and Narrative Time in 'Arrow of God'

4.3.1. Synopsis

Arrow of God' is Achebe's third novel, which focuses on the traditional life of the villagers of Umuaro and the effects of colonization on that life.

The conflict that we see in this novel has double faces. On the one hand Ezeulu (the protagonist) had to fight with the local chiefs and deities to defend his position of a Chief priest; on the other hand he had to stand against the European culture and religion. This is where the major theme of the story lies, i.e.; the conflict among the natives can create a gap for Europeans to enter and expand their colonies.

The story begins with the introduction of Ezeulu, the protagonist of the story. We are also introduced with his position in the society, his power and his family background as well. Then, there came the land dispute with the neighboring village Okperi. Ezeulu stood against his people by saying the land belongs to Okperi and advised them not to go to war. However, Umuaro waged war on Okperi. After some causality, the white men interfered and brought the case to court. The white man decided that the land should be given to Okperi because Ezeulu witnessed the truth. This incident became the start of the conflict between Ezeulu and the local chiefs.

Ezeulu was favoured by Captain Winterbottom after the land dispute. Because of this, the captain offered Ezeulu the position of a 'warrant chief'. However Ezeulu refused the offer and was arrested for thirty two days in Okperi. At this time, the villagers did not support Ezeulu because they considered him as a friend of the Europeans.

After he was released, Ezeulu waited for a proper time to avenge his villagers. Then there came the time of the New Yam feast. It is after this feast that the villagers will start harvesting. As a chief priest to Ulu, Ezeulu has the power of postponing the time. He used this power to avenge the villagers. Because of this, the threat of hunger reigned over Umuaro.

This created a favourable condition for the Christians to expand. The Christians convinced the villagers to harvest without an approval from the chief priest of Ulu, Ezeulu, and to bring the sacrifice that they give to the god to church. Many people start to harvest without a concession from the chief priest. The Christians were able to convert many people more than they

could have dreamed. “Thereafter any yam that was harvested in man’s fields was harvested in the name of the son”. (Achebe, 1964:287)

4.3.2. Point of View in ‘Arrow of God’

‘Arrow of God’ is Achebe’s third novel, which focuses on the traditional life of the Ibo’s and the effects of colonization on that life. The story in this novel is presented from the point of view of a third person omniscient narrator, just like the first two novels.

Throughout the novel, the narrator reveals the inner most feelings of the characters. For instance, the narrator tells the following about Ezeulu, the protagonist of the story.

Whenever Ezeulu considered the immensity of his power over the year and the crops and, therefore over the people, he wondered if it was real. It was true he named the day for the feast of the pumpkin leaves and for the new Yam feast; but he did not choose the day. He was merely a watch man. No! The chief priest of Ulu was more than that, must be more than that. If he should refuse to name the day there would be no festival no planting and no reaping. (Achebe, 1964:3-4)

This extract clearly illustrates the omniscience of the narrator especially his ability of reading the mind of the characters. The comment that he gave us about the power and position of Ezeulu can tell us the familiarity of the

narrator with the cultures and traditions of the society that is depicted in the story.

The other characteristic of omniscience that the narrator exhibits is his knowledge of the past. On pages seventeen and eighteen, it is the narrator who tells us the way Ezeulu became the chief priest of Ulu. It is the narrator who tells us Captain Winterbottom's experience when he came to Nigeria fifteen years ago. This detailed presentation of the past signals the narrator's omniscience.

The other thing that we need to consider with the omniscience of the narrator is his presence in positions where characters are supposed to be unaccompanied. The following extract can be an illustration for the presence of this fact.

At first Oduche [Ezeulu's son] did not want to go to church. But Ezeulu called him to his Obi and spoke to him as a man would speak to his best friend and the boy went forth with pride in his heart. He had never heard his father speak to anyone as equal.

'The world is changing', he had told him ... I want one of my sons to join these people and be my eye there. If there is nothing in it you will come back. But if there is something there you will bring home my share ... (Achebe, 1964:55)

This is how Ezeulu convinced his son, to join the church. The narrator was present when Oduche and Ezeulu are alone in Ezeulu's Obi to tell us what was going on in the obi word by word. Besides his presence, the narrator also tells us what Oduche felt when he was treated as a friend by his father who never spoke to anyone as equal.

One of the things that can make this narrator different from the narrator of Achebe's first two novels is that he does not focus his attention only on the protagonist. He was able to move in and out of the minds of different characters. He also gave us information about the background of different characters, what they are doing when they are alone, etc. Let us demonstrate this fact by taking an extract from the novel.

Although Okuata emerged at dawn feeling awkward and bashful in her unaccustomed loin-cloth it was a very proud bashfulness. She could go without shame to salute her husband's parents because she had been 'found at home' ... she felt greatly relieved for although she had always known she was a virgin she had had a secret fear which sometimes whispered in her ear and made her start. It was the thought of the moonlight play when Obiora had put his penis between her thighs. True, he had only succeeded in playing at the entrance but she could not be too sure. (Achebe, 1964:151)

Besides showing us the narrator's focus on different characters in the story, this extract can show us the God-like power of the narrator. In this extract he reached to the extent of revealing the girl's secret thoughts which is impossible for an ordinary person. The narrator's focus on different characters can be shown when he is present in positions where characters were supposed to be alone.

The narrator is present when the white men, Wright and Clarke were having conversation in the middle of the night (pages one hundred twenty five to one hundred thirty seven). It is also the narrator who tells us about Edo's

(Ezeulu's first son) eavesdropping when he was alone in a room that he used to carve masks.

The last thing that I need to discuss in relation to the narrator of this text is the fact that he was able to tell us what happened in several places at the same time. This trait of the narrator is clearly seen in the part of the story where the protagonist, Ezeulu, was arrested by the white men. Here the narrator was able to give us information about what was happening in the guardroom where Ezeulu was arrested, what was happening in the hospital where captain Winterbottom was treated, as well as what was going on in Ezeulu's home. The presentation of these and other factors simultaneously, can tell us something about the presence of the narrator in different places at the same time.

Generally, based on the presence of the aforementioned characteristics of omniscience through out the novel, we can conclude that the angle in which the story in 'Arrow of God' is presented is the third person omniscient point of view.

4.3.3. Narrative Time in 'Arrow of God'

Just like Achebe's first novel 'Things Fall Apart', most parts of 'Arrow of God' are presented in a chronological order. I said most parts of the story, because there are meta stories that are presented achronologically.

The story in 'Arrow of God' starts with introducing the protagonist, Ezeulu, and his family. At this point, the narrator goes back in time to present what happened to Obika, Ezeulu's son, when he came home late at night. This flash back is used to strengthen the fact that Obika is a drunkard.

The other use of flashback we saw in the text is found in chapter two from pages seventeen to thirty four. What is presented in the form of flashback in this part is the major cause of the conflict that we saw throughout the text. Here the leaders of Umuaro decided to go to war with their neighbors, Okperi, because of a land dispute. Ezeulu stood against the idea of waging a war on their neighbors. However, the war broke out and after some causality from both sides the white men interfered and brought the case to justice. Finally, the court decided that the land belongs to Okperi because Ezeulu witnessed honestly. Because of this, every conflict in the story is related with this story, which is presented in a form of flash back.

The other achronological presentation that is used in this text is prolepses (flash forward). Around the beginning of the story, on page four, there is the hint that the chief priest of Ulu (Ezeulu) might use his position to avenge his enemies. Let's take the extract and see what it forecasts.

... [The chief Priest] was merely a watchman. His power was no more than the power of a child over a goat that was said to be his ... No! The chief priest of Ulu was more than that, must be more than that. If he should refuse to name the day there would be no festival – no planting and no reaping. But could he refuse? No chief priest had ever refused. So it could not be done. He would not dare. (Achebe, 1964:4)

This extract can give us a hint that Ezeulu might use this power when he gets into conflict with his enemies. But the idea that we find here does not stop in hinting Ezeulus power; it rather actually forecasted what actually happened around the end of the story. "After a long period of silent preparation, Ezeulu finally revealed that he intended to hit Umuaro at its

most vulnerable point- the feast of the new yam.” (Achebe, 1964: 253) Here we saw Ezeulu using his power to postpone the new yam feast and the harvest to avenge his enemies. This idea can be clear for a reader who goes through the text carefully, since it is stated earlier on page four before its actual time.

Therefore, looking at the aforementioned achronological presentations, one will find it difficult to conclude that the presentation of the story in the novel follows a strict chronological order.

Duration of the story is the other aspect of narrative time that will be given due attention in this discussion. Before discussing the duration of the novel one needs to consider the relationship between the story time and discourse time of the story. The story time stretches from the point where Umuaro waged war on Okperi because of a land dispute to the present time in the story. And this takes, according to what is written on page eighteen, around five years. On the other hand, the text consists of only two hundred and eighty seven pages. Therefore, if we see the text in terms of the time it took an average reader to go through it, the text’s discourse time is shorter than its story time; and the kind of relationship that we find between story time and discourse time is acceleration or speed up.

As I have tried to point out earlier, this novel is different from Achebe’s first two novels by the kind of focus the narrator gave to other characters, in addition to the protagonist. Because of this, a lot of discourse time is spent in the introduction and description of characters and in presenting traditional festivals. For example, the first chapter is only about Ezeulu and his family. It describes what kind of person Ezeulu is, how he led his family, as well as the villagers. It also includes description and introductions of Ezeulu’s family

members. Narratologists call this kind of presentation 'descriptive pause', in which discourse time elapses on description or comment while story time stops and no action takes place. This made the narrative mode used to present the story more of scenic rather than summary since descriptions of individuals as well as incidents were provided in detail.

This kind of presentation makes the duration a bit slowed down, but not to the level of isochronous and deceleration relationships. It is because of the use of 'descriptive pause' that the novel became relatively larger in volume when compared with the other two novels.

The last thing that I need to raise in relation to the narrative time used in the text is frequency. Like the other two novels that we saw earlier a lot of events were recounted once as they appear. But there are incidents where the author used repetitive frequency in his presentation of events.

Incidents that can be considered as the main reason for the start of the conflict are repeatedly addressed in the novel. One of these incidents is Ezeulu's decision to send his son to church to be his eye there. This is the point of argument that Ezeulu's local enemies raise whenever they get in conflict with him. By a repeated presentation of the incident, the author emphasizes Ezeulu's belief in change. The other point that is repeatedly addressed in the novel is related with the white men's assumption that they brought Africa from darkness to light. The fact that Africans used to bury a man up to his neck with a piece of roast yam to attract vultures is repeatedly addressed through out the text by Captain Winterbottom. This indicates the wrong assumption of the Europeans towards Africans.

Generally, through the use of repetitive frequency the author was successful in emphasizing points which are essential for the development of the story.

4.4. Point of View and Narrative Time in ‘A Man of the People’

4.4.1. Synopsis

“A Man of the People” is Achebe’s fourth novel, which presents a story that took place after colonization. The story revolves around the bribery and corruption that existed in a postcolonial African nation.

The novel presents, in the first person, the story of Odili Kamalu who is a university graduate and a secondary school teacher. Odili’s narration of the story begins with Chief Nanga’s visit to the Anata grammar school in which Odili is teaching. This is the part of the story where we are introduced with Chief Nanga’s backgrounds.

Odili gets along with chief Nanga since the chief was his teacher when he was an elementary student. Odili accepts Nanga’s offer to be his guest in the capital city. When he gets there he sees the extravagant life lived by the corrupted senior members of the government. Despite all what he saw, Odili was overwhelmed by Chief Nanga’s charisma until the day he had his girl friend snatched by the chief.

When the Chief steals his girlfriend from him, Odili joins a new and rival political party, initially from motives of revenge. Odili is chosen to contest Nanga’s seat in the election. He pursues the election seriously with little hope of winning.

Government officials bring considerable resources for their campaign. They control the national broad casting system and newspapers. Besides, chief Nanga offered Odili a scholarship to study abroad and two hundred and fifty pounds, to level the contest. Odili stays firm on contesting Mr. Nanga despite his offers and threatening. When all this fails to discourage Odili from the contest he was mercilessly beaten by Nanga's supporters in public.

The election took place while Odili is in a hospital. Odili's best friend and the leader of the opposition party (CPC) Max, is killed on the Election Day by chief Koko, who is intern killed by Max's fiancé. Nothing is changed after the election. The prime minister had appointed chief Nanga and the rest of the old Cabinet members back to office.

However, the fighting, which broke out between Max's bodyguards and chief Koko's supporters, brings instability throughout the land. And a minor reign of terror begins.

The chaos became under control with a coup. The army arrested every member of the government. "The military regime had abolished all political parties in the country and announced they would remain abolished 'until the situation becomes stabilized once again'." (Achebe, 1966:166).

4.4.2. Point of View in 'A Man of the People'

'A Man of the People' is Achebe's fourth novel, which deals with bribe and corruption that took place in a postcolonial African state. Unlike the first three novels, this novel is presented from the point of view of a first person narrator, who is also the protagonist of the story, i.e., Odili Samalu.

To determine a certain story is presented from a point of view of a first person narrator, we need to look for the presence of an experiencing 'I'. In the story under discussion, we can find an experiencing 'I' right from the beginning of the story.

No one can deny that chief the Honorable M.A.Nanga, M.P., was the most approachable politician in the country. Whether you asked in the city or in his home village, Anata, they would tell you he was a man of the people. I have to admit this from the onset or else the story I'm going to tell will make no sense.

That after noon he was due to address the staff and students of the Anata grammar school where I was teaching at the time. ... (Achebe, 1966:1).

This extract is taken from the first and second paragraphs of the first chapter. The last sentence in the first paragraph can clearly indicate that the first person point of view is the perspective in which the story in the novel is presented. Then reading the second paragraph one can say that the narrator is at least one of the acting characters in the story.

Identifying the narrator, let us look at some of the features that this narrator exhibits. The first thing that we need to consider is the fact that this narrator engages with readers directly. From the onset, he gave signals to his audiences that he is the one who is going to present the story as follows. '... I have to admit this from the onset or else the story I'm going to tell will make no sense.' (Achebe, 1966:1). This signal can make readers closer to the narrator since they knew it is someone who is going to tell them a story that he had experienced. The narrator does not address his readers only at the beginning of the story. He rather continues getting closer to his readers

through out the novel. Let us take an extract from page sixty three to illustrate this fact.

Anyone who has followed this story at all carefully may well be wondering what had become of the Elsie whom I said was one of my chief reasons for going to Bori, well, that chief reason had not altered in the least ...

Here the narrator is telling 'anyone who has followed this story', i.e., his audience, not to worry about what happened to Elsie whom was one of his chief reasons for going to Bori. He said this to tell his readers that he is going to present the time that he spent in Bori with Elsie. This direct engagement with readers is considered as the main advantage of using the first person point of view in presenting a certain story.

The other thing that one needs to consider in relation to this first person narrator is his limited knowledge. He presents only what he had experienced as far as he could remember. This chief characteristic of first person narrators is greatly shown in Odili's (the narrator's) presentation of the story in 'A Man of the People'. Let us take a look at the following extract.

'We have our problems', he said 'like everyone else some of my people are narrow as pin-we have to admit it. But at the same time we have gotten some, where no one is satisfied, but we have made progress.' He gave some facts and figures which I don't remember now. But I do remember his saying that lynching was not racial in origin ... (Achebe, 1966:50).

Here the narrator did not fully present what the speaker had said because he did not remember facts and figures that the speaker gave. The information

that he gave is limited to what the narrator can remember about the things he had experienced. Since it is an ordinary human limitation, it can characterize the narrator as a human being unlike the third person omniscient narrator. This is what the narratorlogists call limited range of vision, i.e., the limitation of the presentation to what the narrator knows, infers, experiences or can find out by talking to other characters.

The other limitation that we can notice in the presentation of the story in 'A Man of the people' is subjectivity. In the novel under discussion the narrator, Odili, had a positive attitude towards chief Nanga before he had his girl friend snatched by the chief. Let us illustrate this by taking an extract from the text.

Chief Nanga was a born politician; he could get away with almost anything he said or did ... He had that rare gift of making people feel-even he was saying harsh things to them – that there was not a drop of ill will in his entire frame. I remember the day he was telling his ministerial colleague over telephone in my presence that he distrusted our young university people and that he would rather work with a European. I knew I was hearing terrible things but some how I couldn't bring myself to take the man seriously. He had been so open and kind to me and not in the least distrustful ... (Achebe, 1966:71).

Here Odili could not take Mr. Nanga seriously just because he was open and kind to him. However, this positive attitude towards Mr. Nanga is changed right after Mr. Nanga had snatched Odili's girl friend, Elsie.

The heat and the anger had largely evaporated leaving the cold fact that another man had wrenched my girlfriend from my hand and led her to bed under my very eyes, and I had done nothing

about it – could do nothing. And why? Because the man was a minister bloated by the flatulence of ill-gotten wealth, living in a big mansion built with public money, riding in a Cadillac and watched over by one eyed, hired thug ... (Achebe, 1966:85).

The man who was a born politician, who was open and kind to Odili, became ‘a minister bloated by the flatulence of ill gotten wealth’. This change of attitude towards Chief Nanga shows the narrator’s subjectivity in presenting what other characters look like. It is according to the kind of relationship he had with characters that Odili presented them.

The other thing that can make this narrator very subjective is the kind of value that he gave to himself. In chapter eleven on page one hundred twenty two, Odili considered his and his friends outlook towards politics as a ‘high-minded thinking’ when compared with the general feeling in the country. The subjectivity of the narrator can create difficulties to accept what the narrator presented as the only truth in the text. This in turn made the narrator to be unreliable.

Generally, the story in ‘A Man of the people’ is totally presented from the point of view of a first person narrator. As it is pointed out by different scholars in chapter three, first person narrators have their own strengths and weaknesses. When we look at the narrator in this novel his presentation is full of bias and subjectivity in most parts of the novel. Before his conflict with Mr. Nanga, his attitude towards government officials was positive, though we saw him criticizing them for things that they have done. However, Odili’s feeling towards these officials was totally changed right after he got into conflict with Mr. Nanga. It is not the desire to bring change and development that leads Odili into politics. It is rather revenging Mr. Nanga to

the humiliation that he caused him by snatching his girl friend. And this might be the author's intention to show the overall cynicism of the masses.

4.4.3. Narrative Time in 'A Man of the People'

Looking at the narrator's presentation in terms of time, one can say that most parts of the story are presented chronologically. There are, of course, incidents in which the narrator deviates from the chronology of the text to provide background information about the characters or to tell us what is going to happen.

The narrator starts using flashback on pages three to eight, when he described what kind of person chief Nanga was before he became a minister. Here the narrator (Odili) gave facts like the minister quitted education at an early stage and the like which are essential to the development of the theme of the novel. This is what naratologists call external analepses. The other deviation from the chronology of the story is found from pages twenty six to twenty nine. It is the point where Odili introduces us with his girl friend Elsie, who was the major cause of the conflict between Mr. Nanga and himself. These are some of the stories that are presented after later events have been recounted. There are, of course, other flash back presentations, which are used to describe characters (page twenty nine), to make comparison between Odili's childhoods with the present situation of Mr. Nanga.

The other achronological presentation is flash forward (prolepses). The first paragraph of the beginning chapter forecasts what will happen to Mr. Nanga. In this paragraph the narrator points out the following

No one can deny that chief the Honorable M.A, Nanga, M.P., was the most approachable politician in the country. Whether you asked in the city or in his home village, Anata, they would tell you he was a man of the people ... (Achebe, 1966:1).

What is implied by these sentences is that Mr. Nanga is not the most approachable politician anymore, which is a fact that we are going to find at the end of the story. What is left for readers is the reason that made the chief no more the most approachable politician.

Generally, though there are events that are presented achronologically, the story basically follows its chronology. The events that are told achronologically are used just to provide some back grounds about the characters and other events of the story.

When we look at the duration used in this novel, we do not see any particular difference when compared with the other novels that we see in the analysis. The story deals with an election time, which covers not more than a year. There are, of course, meta stories which are presented after later events that took place around sixteen years ago. But, we can not consider this time as a time taken up by an action or an episode in the story, since it is only used to provide us with the background of one of the major characters, chief Nanga and it is external to the main story line. Therefore, when we look at this time in accordance with the time that it took an average reader to go through the text the kind of relationship that we see is acceleration, i.e., the text's discourse time is shorter than its story time.

However, this does not mean that every event in the story is equally accelerated. Of course, there are events, which are more accelerated. What

we see on the first three chapters can be an example for this. Here the narrator presents Chief Nanga's visit to the Anata Grammar School, chief Nanga's background and Odili's visit to his home village Urua, in a summarized manner. This is because these parts of the story are only useful to introduce us with the characters, their backgrounds, and the kind of relationship that existed among them.

On the other hand, the narrator provides us with a scenic presentation of his visit to the capital in which we are introduced with the major conflict that took place in the novel. The election campaign that both parties made is also presented in a relative detail. So, these detailed presentations can make this part of the story a bit slowed down. However, when we look at the type of duration used in the story as a whole, we found the text's discourse time shorter than its story time.

4.5. Point of View and Narrative Time in 'Anthills of the Savannah'

4.5.1. Synopsis

'Anthills of the Savannah' tells the story of three schoolmates who become major figures in a new military regime in the fictional West African State of Kagan. The various conflicts in this novel revolve around the fundamental conflict between those in power and those with less or little power; and how each uses or abuses the power he has.

The story begins with a meeting of the cabinet of the military government. Meanwhile, a delegation from Abazone made a demonstration to ask the president to personally pay them a visit and witness the draught in their region.

Though they are friends, the president (Sam) suspects Chris (the commissioner of information) and Ikem (editor of the national gazette) for organizing the demonstration. Therefore, he ordered his men to follow every step that these two people made.

Ikem was suspended from his position of editor of the national gazette because he was found on a dinner party organized by the Abazone delegation. After his suspension, the student union of the University of Bssa invited Ikem to make a speech on their meeting. Here he delivered a lecture that is considered destructive by the government. Because of this Ikem was abducted from his home and murdered by the military officers.

Chris left his home fearing for his own safety. In his hide out, Chris started to make contact with foreign correspondents and revealed the fact that Ikem is brutally murdered by the military government. This is the point that the government begun to look for Chris.

Chris became a fugitive and began his journey to the north of the country, Abazone, by bus. When the bus reached around Abazon after many police checkpoints, a group of solidiers who are drinking beer blocked the road. It is from these soldiers that Chris learned about the coup that resulted in kidnapping the president.

Chris decided to go back to the capital, Bassa. Mean while, he saw a drunk police sergeant dragging a girl to rape her. Chris confronted the sergeant and told him he will report it to the inspector general. The sergeant escaped after he shot Chris on the chest and killed him. And the history of the three schoolmates who become major figures in the country came to an end.

4.5.2. Point of View in ‘Anthills of the Savannah’

‘Anthills of the Savannah’ is Achebe’s fifth novel in which he used different kinds of point of views in presenting the story. He employed the first person point of view using three different narrators. In addition, he also used the third person omniscient point of view in most parts of the story.

The first and the fifth chapters are presented by the first person narrator, Christopher Oriko (Chris), who is the protagonist of the story. According to Hawthorn (2005:86), a narrator who is also a protagonist in the story that he or she is presenting is called an autodiegetic narrator. It is from Chris’ presentation that we are introduced with the military government of Kagan and its cabinet members. In his presentation, Chris considers himself as a witness and tries to engage directly with his readers.

I find their actions not merely bearable now but actually interesting, even exciting. Quite amazing! And to think that I personally was responsible for recommending nearly half of them for appointment.

And of course, complete honesty demands that I mention one last factor in my continued stay, a fact of which I’m somewhat ashamed, namely that I couldn’t be writing this if I didn’t hang around to observe it all and no one else would (Achebe, 1987:2)

It is how Chris describes his feeling towards the cabinet members of the military regime. Here what is exciting and interesting for Chris is the ministers’ worshipping of the military dictator, Sam. Here he tells us that he felt sorry for recommending such people for the post of a minister. The other

thing that we can notice in this extract is the narrator's direct engagement with his audience. He wants to be completely honest that he is ashamed of becoming one of those people that he is ridiculing. At this point, we can also notice the narrator's subjectivity. When he said 'no one else would' he meant that others could not write about what was going on since they are busy of worshipping. From this, we can understand that Chris is extracting himself from the business of worshipping the dictator. Engaging directly with readers by sharing emotions and feelings as well as becoming subjective in presenting a certain story are characteristic traits of first person narrators.

The other characteristic trait of a first person narrator in which Chris exhibited is limited range of vision, which is considered as a limitation for the first person point of view. Chris states the following when he described the British Poetry editor, Dick, in chapter five page Sixty-one.

... You cannot look at him and say: now he is sad or he is enjoying himself now. You always have to wait and figure it out and still you are not entirely sure. And then all of a sudden you are angry with yourself for letting your mind engage with so much trouble on something so inconsequential...

Here we can notice how difficult it is to figure out what other people are feeling or thinking for a first person narrator. In addition, displaying this basic characteristic of human nature can make the narrator credible by his audience though it is considered as a limitation in terms of the flow of information.

The other thing that I need to raise in relation to this particular narrator is related with his subjective judgments. An example for this can be what he tells us about his best friend's resentment towards him. Without considering

other things, Chris tells us that the reason for Ikem's resentment is jealousy. According to Chris' description, Ikem is jealous because Chris was elevated to the position of commissioner for information by the military government.

The other first person narrator who took part in the presentation of the story is Ikem Osodi. The most amazing element in Ikem's presentation is his attitude towards women.

I have never seen the sense in sleeping with people. A man should wake up in his own bed. A woman like wise ... I simply detest the very notion of waking up and finding beside you somebody naked and unappetizing. It is unfair to you but especially to her... But many women take it as a personal affront, which I find very odd indeed. They are their own worst enemy, women are. (Achebe, 1987:37)

This shows Ikem's attitude towards women. Any women who came against this attitude is considered as her own worst enemy. This idea can take us back to the time of the traditional life that we saw in Achebe's first novel 'Things Fall Apart'. Presenting their own feelings is one of the characteristics of first person narrators.

Ikem's relationship with his best friend, Chris, can reveal the narrator's judgment towards people. As we saw it earlier in Chris' presentation of the story, the reason for Ikem's resentment is jealousy. But, when we come to Ikem's presentation of the story, we will come across a different reason.

Worshipping a dictator is such a pain in the ass. ... Nobody told me either. But the great difference between me and Chris is that I never did expect to be told. I happen to feel a certain way in the

matter and like a free agent, sat up at night after Elwa [his girl friend] had gone away in the taxi and composed my thoughts. I keep telling Chris that life is simpler that way. Much simpler. Stop looking back over your shoulder, I tell him. There ain't no deliverer running just a little behind schedule. March to the stake like a man and take the bullet in your chest, much simpler. (Achebe, 1987:45-46)

According to this extract, the main reason for Ikem's resentment towards Chris is not Ikem's jealousy. It is rather the fact that Chris worshipped the dictator, which upsets Ikem. Here we find Ikem considering Chris as a person who lacks confidence, which can be considered as a subjective judgment of the first person narrator.

Ikem's subjectivity is clearly viewed when he presented the president, Sam. According to Ikem's presentation, "[Sam's] major flaw was that all he ever wanted was to do what was expected of him especially by the English whom he admired sometimes to the point of foolishness". (Achebe, 1987:49). On the same page the narrator also tells us that Sam is "not very bright but not wicked. And completely tone deaf." This kind of presentation can make the narrator's presentation very subjective because they are based only on the narrator's perception.

The other first person narrator, Beatrice, who is also one of the acting characters in the story, presents the sixth and the seventh chapters of the novel. Beatrice is Christopher's (Chris') girl friend. She is also Ikem's best friend. Let me start going through Beatrice's narration by looking at the way she described Chris. According to her description, "Chris is damn too reasonable'. He is the one who is able to produce 'beautiful historical

vignettes his incredibly wide reading and fluency makes him so good at' (Achebe, 1987:73-74)

One can understand from Beatrice's' presentation of Chris that he is not a kind of person who lacks confidence, as Ikem described him earlier. He is rather well read and convincing, who believes in reason.

On the other hand, she states the following when she tells us something about Ikem.

I have sat and talked, and argued with Ikem on more things serious and unserious than I can remember doing with any other living soul. Naturally, I think he is a fantastic writer ... I don't even mind too much that his way of praising my style was to call it muscular and masculine on another! When I pointed this out to him jokingly as a sure sign of chauvinism he was at first startled and he smiled one of those total similes of his that revealed the innocent child behind the mask of beard and learned fierceness. (Achebe, 1987:91)

From this extract we can understand that Ikem has a quality that needs to be appreciated though his attitude towards women is some how unacceptable. In connection with Ikem's attitude towards women the narrator (Beatrice) tells us that 'he has no clear role for women in his political thinking; and he doesn't seem to be able to understand it" (Achebe, 1987:91). This coincides with what Ikem tells us while he is narrating the story in chapter four.

As a first person narrator, Beatrice tries to get closer to her audience. She did this by introducing herself to her audience on page eighty-three. She also disclosed her feelings and emotions directly to her intended audience. An example for this can be what she tells us about the thing that brings tears to her eyes (page eighty four). What makes her feel this way is the fact that she is considered ambitious.

Generally, when we look at the author's choice of using three first person narrators in presenting the story we might ask its relevance. By using these three narrators in the story, the author enables his readers to get balanced information about the characters and events that are found in the story. For instance, if it is only from Chris' perspective that the story is presented our picture about Ikem will be related only with jealousy. However, we were able to get a balanced picture of the situation through Ikem's and Beatrice's presentation of the story. Therefore, by using three first person narrators in the same story the author tries to avoid unreliability, which can be created due to the narrator's subjectivity. By doing so, the author helps his readers to get overall information about the events that are going on in the story, which can be impossible if he only used one first person narrator.

The other point of view that is used in presenting the story is the third person omniscient point of view. This point of view is used in chapter two for the first time after Chris' first person narration in chapter one. It is the time when the president is talking with one of the cabinet members (professor Okong) in his office. To present what is going on inside that office, the author used an anonymous third person omniscient narrator.

Here the narrator is able to tell us what the two people are talking though the president warned professor Okong that 'nothing about this must get outside

these four walls'. The president also warned the professor that 'if a word of this ever gets around, it is either from me or from you' (Achebe, 1987:25). However, the narrator is able to reveal what goes on in the secret meeting. Presence of the narrator in positions where characters are supposed to be alone is one of the characteristics of omniscience.

The third person omniscient point of view is used again starting from chapter eight until the end of the story. Let us take some examples to illustrate the omniscience of the narrator.

The conversation was brief and undetailed, without proper

names.

'Any visitors?'

'Yes they came at twelve.'

'Any problems?'

'None so far'

'So far?'

'Well, none really nothing at all'

'Thank god.'

Click (Achebe, 1987:182)

This is a telephone conversation between Chris and Beatrice. The narrator is able to tell us what the two people are saying. This is because of the narrator's ability to be present at different locations at the same time.

This omniscient narrator has exhibited other characteristics of omniscience in his presentation of the story. He is able to tell us how Chris and Beatrice are making love, on page one hundred fourteen. This can illustrate the narrator's presence in areas where characters are supposed to be alone. He

is also able to tell us what the characters are thinking by reading what is going on in their minds. Such characteristics can clearly indicate the narrator's omniscience.

'Why is it important to use the third person omniscient point of view in addition to the first point of view to present the same story?' is the kind of question that could be asked by a person who goes through the text.

One of the answers that can be given to the above question can be avoiding the limitations of the first person narrator. As it is pointed out by different scholars, the first person point of view has limitations like inability to be in different places at the same time, inability to be present in positions where characters are supposed to be alone, limited range of vision, etc. Therefore, in avoiding these limitations the author used the third person omniscient narrator together with the first person narrators in presenting the same story.

What happened in the first and the second chapters can be a good example that can illustrate the aforementioned fact. The first person narrator (Chris) starts to present the story in the first chapter. However, the point of view shifted from the first person to the third person when the president called professor Okong to his office for a secret meeting. The first person narrator cannot tell us what is going on in the office in his absence. However, the problem is avoided by the use of the third person omniscient narrator. It is the third person omniscient narrator who tells us the story of Ikem's and Chris' death who both are first person narrators in the story. This also avoids the limitations of first person narrators, since they are not able to tell the story of their own death.

Generally, the author presented the story successfully by using the aforementioned point of views interdependently. The fact that he used three different narrators to present the story in the first person helps him avoid problems that can be created by the subjectivity of the narrator, which in turn can create unreliability on the accounts of the narrator.

4.5.3. Narrative Time in ‘Anthills of the Savannah’

Looking at the order in which the story in ‘Anthills of the Savannah’ follows, we can say that the story is presented chronologically. There are, of course, instances where we found internal and external anachronies in the text.

The first deviation from the chronological order is found from page ten to thirteen in which the narrator (Chris) tells us something about the background of professor Okong. The other analytical presentation is found on page sixty five in which the narrator goes back in time to present his and his friends’; i.e., Ikem’s and Sam’s (the now president) life while they were in Lord Lugard College in England. These deviations from the chronological order can be considered as illustrations for the presence of external analepses.

There are of course, internal analepses in which the different narrators used in presenting the story. An illustration for this analeptical presentation is what the third person narrator tells in chapter nine from pages one hundred twenty to one hundred thirty three. This is about Ikem’s meeting with the Abazone delegation in Harmony hotel. We are told about the coming of the Abazone delegation in chapter one. And in the ninth chapter the narrator goes back in time and tells us something about Ikem’s meeting with the

delegation after later events have been recounted. There are also internal analepses on pages forty nine to fifty three, seventy two to seventy three, etc.

The other deviation from the chronological order is prolepses or flash forward. On page forty six Ikem (the narrator) foretells the following when he tells us something about the president.

... the emperor may be a fool but he isn't a monster. Not yet, anyhow; although he will certainly become one by the time Chris and Company have done with him.

What Ikem tells us at this early stage of the story is what happens at the end. When people like Chris retreat from the cabinet, the president started to become fierce and put everything upside down.

The other prolepsis is found on page one hundred and one. For a person who goes through the text carefully, Ikem's death is told early in Beatrice's narration at the end of chapter seven. At the end of her narration about Ikem's last visit to her house, she states the following. "And he was gone, not far now as I and perhaps he too thought, but forever." This single sentence discloses Ikem's death before its appropriate time.

Although there are deviations from the chronological order, they do not disorder the chronology that the story follows. These deviations are used to present embedded stories, which are used, in developing the theme and the characters.

The other thing I need to look at in relation to narrative time is duration. The text's story time stretched throughout the years that the military government stayed in power. Therefore, when we look at this time in relation to the time that it takes an average reader to go through the text the durational relationship will be acceleration. This is to say that the text's discourse time is shorter than its story time.

However, this does not mean that the whole story is presented in an accelerated manner. There are, of course, descriptive pauses that we see on pages one hundred two to one hundred five, and one hundred forty to one hundred forty two in which discourse time elapses while story time stops. In addition, parts of the story that are narrated by the first person narrators are presented in a scenic mode of presentation. These incidents can make the story a bit slowed down. But, since most parts of the story are summarized by a third person omniscient narrator the text's discourse time is shorter than its story time.

The last thing that I need to address in this section is the frequency of the text. Just like the other four novels, many events are recounted the number of times they happened in the text. However, there are events that are addressed repeatedly. An example for this can be what professor Okong described the fall of the civilian administration. He used the phrase 'from grace to grass' in describing the situation on the national Gazette. This expression is repeatedly addressed on pages twelve and eighty four. The author might do it internationally to show the destiny of the major characters of the story who are, at the present story time, higher officials of the military government.

4.6. A Comparative Analysis of Point of View and Narrative Time Used in Achebe's Novels

In this part of the analysis, an attempt is made to compare the point of view and narrative time used in Achebe's novels. This part is divided into two sections for the sake of separately looking at the comparative analysis of the point of view and narrative time used in the five novels.

4.6.1. A comparative Analysis of Point of View used in Achebe's Novels.

To make a comparative analysis of the point of view used in Achebe's novels one may be required to divide the five novels into three categories. The first category includes the first three novels (Things Fall Apart, No Longer at Ease and Arrow of God) which are written in the third person omniscient point of view. Achebe's fourth novel (A man of the People) is the only novel that is written in the first person point of view. 'Anthills of the Savannah' belongs to the third category, since it is the only novel that used a mixture of the first person and the third person omniscient point of views.

When we look at the novels that are included in the first category, all of them are written from the point of view of a third person omniscient narrator. In these three novels, the narrators have God like powers such as reading the minds of the characters, presence in positions where characters are supposed to be unaccompanied, knowledge of the past, the present and the future, etc.

However, we can notice a slight difference in the kind of focus given by the narrators. Since the second novel (no Longer at Ease) is an extension of 'Things Fall Apart', we can say that the two novels have the same narrator. In

both novels, the narrator focuses his attention on the protagonists of the stories. Most of the details that the narrator provides are about the protagonists of the stories. On the other hand, the focus of the narrator on Achebe's third novel (*Arrow of God*) is not only on the protagonist of the story (Ezeulu). The narrator gives us details about the characters by employing his God like abilities. Because of this, it provides readers with detailed personal experiences of the different characters in the stories, unlike the first two novels.

'A Man of the people' is the only novel that is found in the second category. The story in this novel is presented from the point of view of the protagonist of the story, i.e., Odili Samalu. This narrator is strong in engaging directly with his readers and in sharing his emotions and feelings. However, since the story is presented from the point of view of the protagonist, the information that we receive is subject to bias. There are instances where the narrator became illogical in his presentation of the events. Still the narrator can be appealing to the audience because of his humanly appearances.

The only novel that belongs to the third category is '*Anthills of the Savannah*'. It is somehow sophisticated in the presentation of the story since it employs the first person and the third person omniscient point of views. The author used three first person narrators (Chris, Ikem and Beatrice) in the presentation of the story. By using these three narrators in the story, the author enables his readers to get balanced information about the characters and events, which are found in the story. This kind of presentation minimizes the limitations that can happen as a result of using only one first person narrator.

In addition to the three first person narrators, a third person narrator participates in the presentation of the story. The author used this narrator to fill the gaps that can be created due to the limitations of the first person narrators. For example, the third person narrator is used in the second chapter to tell us what the president and professor Okong are talking. Here the narrator uses his omniscience to be present in positions where characters are supposed to be alone; which is impossible for the first person narrator. The other limitation of the first person narrators, which is avoided by this omniscient narrator, is the narrators' inability to narrate their own death. It is this narrator who tells us how Chris and Ikem have passed away. Based on the above illustrations we can conclude that this narrator is used to fill the gaps that can be created due to the limitations of the first person narrators.

Generally, looking at Achebe's novels in terms of the way the story in the novels is presented, one can say that little emphasis is given to the way the story in the first three novels is presented. The narrators' God like power makes readers totally rely upon the narrator to receive information. Readers are not allowed to actively participate in the story through inferring. They are rather passive recipients of the information, which is delivered by the narrator. With its subjectivity and unreliability the fourth novel is appealing to its readers since it is written from the point of view of a first person narrator who do have ordinary human limitations. The fifth novel is the most sophisticated among the five novels in terms of the perspective in which the story is presented. As it is discussed earlier, the author used the first person and the third person omniscient point of views in presenting the story in the novel. The use of the two points of views helps the author to minimize the gap that can be created due to the limitations of both points of views.

4.6.2. A Comparative Analysis of Narrative Time used in Achebe's Novels

When we comparatively look at the narrative time used in Achebe's novels, no relevant difference can be observed except his second novel 'No Longer at Ease'. In 'Things Fall Apart', 'Arrow of God', 'A Man of the People' and 'Anthills of the Savannah', the author follows chronological order with some internal and external analepses and prolepses.

The presentation of the story in 'No Longer at Ease' is very upside down, when we see it in terms of its chronological order. The story is presented in a form of a long flash back. There are also internal and external flash backs in the part of the story. The reader might find him/her self-connecting pieces of stories while he or she is going through the text. However, this does not mean that there is no achronological presentation in the other four novels. There are, of course, deviations from the chronological order in the other four novels. However, these deviations cannot make the presentation of the stories up side down like the chronology in 'No Longer at Ease'.

Looking at these novels in terms of duration and frequency, one can notice similar presentations with slight differences. In all the five novels, the discourse time is shorter than the story time. However, Achebe's first novel, 'Things Fall Apart' is more accelerated in its presentation. The author tries to cover a long period in not more than one hundred and fifty pages. In doing so, the author used ellipsis, in which the story is deleted in discourse.

'Arrow of God', on the other hand, is relatively slowed down in its presentation. Unlike 'Things Fall Apart' and 'No Longer at Ease', the narrator in 'Arrow of God' focuses his attention on different characters. In his

presentation, the narrator gives detailed information concerning the life and experiences of different characters. This creates a descriptive pause, which can make the discourse time a bit slowed down.

There are similarities on the way things are recounted in the five novels. Many events are recounted the number of times they happened. On the other hand, those events that are important for the development of the themes are addressed repeatedly in all the five novels.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

As it has been traced in the analysis of point of view and narrative time in Achebe's novels, the stories in the novels are mainly presented from the third person omniscient and the first person point of views. Achebe used the third person omniscient point of view in the first three novels, in which the narrators exhibited God-like abilities. The fourth novel is totally presented from the point of view of a first person narrator who is also the protagonist of the story. In the fifth novel, he used a mixture of the first person and the third person Omniscient point of views.

When we look at the first three novels which are presented from the point of view of the third person omniscient narrators, we can see the kind of attention that the author gave to the point of view in which the stories in the novels are presented. I can say that the author did not give enough attention to the way the stories are presented. He rather gave more attention on the content of the story. Because he used the omniscient point of view in the presentation of the stories in the three novels his readers become passive recipients of what the narrator tells them.

Achebe changes the point of view in which he presents his stories on his fourth novel, 'A Man of the People'. The story in this novel is totally presented from the point of view of a first person narrator who is also the protagonist of the story. In this novel, the author is successful in drawing a narrator who is able to engage directly with the audience and thereby share his emotions and feelings. Besides, this narrator exhibited ordinary human limitations like limited range of vision, inability to be present in different places at the same

time and the like. Therefore, from the overall presentation of the story in this novel one can say that the author deviates from his tradition of presenting a story through omniscient narrators to using a first person narrator. The author used the limitations of the first person narrator, like subjectivity and unreliability, to foreground the overall cynicism that existed in the country.

The fifth novel is 'Anthills of the Savannah' in which the author used both first person and third person omniscient point of views in presenting the story. This is the novel where the author became very careful to the way the story in the novel is presented. In this novel Achebe used three first person narrators who are also among the major characters of the story. This kind of presentation helps the author to minimize the problems of presenting the story that can occur due to the limitations of the first person narrators.

In addition to the three first person narrators, the author also used an anonymous third person omniscient narrator. The God like ability of this omniscient narrator also helps the author in avoiding the difficulties that can happen due to the limitations of first person narrators. How the author presented the president's and professor Okong's meeting in chapter two can be a very good example. Here the author used an omniscient narrator since it is difficult to be present in locations where other characters are supposed to be alone, for first person narrators. By employing a mixture of the two points of views the author enables his audiences to become actively involved in the course of the story rather than becoming passive recipients. All in all, 'Anthills of the Savannah' takes the first place in embodying different points of views. In this novel, the author succeeded to overcome the limitations of the first person as well as the third person omniscient point of views by substituting the two points of views in presenting the story.

Therefore, when we see it in terms of point of view, we can say that 'Anthills of the Savannah' is the best novel among Achebe's five novels.

On the other hand, looking at these novels in terms of narrative time, one cannot see relevant differences. The author did not follow strict chronological order in the presentation of the stories. Both internal and external analepses and prolepses are employed in presenting the stories in the five novels. However, the author is totally deviant in the presentation of the story in his second novel, 'No Longer at Ease'. The whole story in this novel is presented in a form of a long flash back beginning with the end of the story. This deviation from the usual chronological order can be appealing to readers since they will get involved in connecting the stories that are presented achronologically.

The other thing that we saw in the analysis of narrative time is the use of duration and frequency. No significant differences can be observed in the author's use of duration and frequency in presenting the stories. The kind of relationship that we saw between story time and discourse time in all the five novels is acceleration; i.e., discourse time is shorter than story time. Similarly, no significant difference is observed on the way things are recounted in the stories. The author repeatedly addressed events that are important in developing the themes in the stories of the five novels. And based on this I can say that the author is effective in employing the techniques that are related with narrative time.

In general, of the five novels, 'Anthills of the Savannah' has taken the top position when we see it in terms of point of view, since the author used a mixture of first person and third person omniscient point of views in presenting the story. The presentation of the story in this novel can imply the

author's effectiveness in presenting the story by minimizing the limitations of different point of views.

Therefore, one important thing could be learned from the presentation of the story in the 'Anthills of the Savannah'. It is possible to have a change of point of view and the narrator within a certain story, which is presented from a certain point of view. This is to say that it is possible to shift from one angle to the other and present a story within a mixed point of view. Since this method of story telling is flexible and attractive, I suggest that it has to be accustomed and developed by Ethiopian writers.

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Declaration

The undersigned declare that this thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university, and that all sources of material used for the thesis have been duly acknowledged.

Tesfamaryam G/Meskel

This thesis has been submitted for examination with my approval as a university advisor.

Abiye Daniel (Ph.d.)

June, 2008

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