

**Approaching Prose Narrative with Modern
Narrative Theory of Focalization and Voice: A
Comparative Study of Achebe's Things Fall Apart
and Fikeremarkos's Land of the Yellow Bull**

**A Dissertation for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in Literature**

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Yideg Alemayehu



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School of Graduate Studies
Department of Foreign Languages and Literature**

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Yideg Alemayehu



Approved by Board of Examiners:

Prof. A. Subba Rao AS Rao 04-06-2009

Advisor

Signature

Date

PROF. C. ODHAMBO JOSEPH

Joseph

04/06/2009

Examiner

Signature

Date

Berkhanu Mathews

Examiner

Signature

04/06/09

Date

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Abstract

Narratorology, a theory of narrative, helps us to highlight the distinctiveness of any given narrative, compare any number of narratives to institute a narrative according to narratively pertinent features, and certain interpretive conclusions.

The present study explores the methodological and practical consequences of the Genettean and post-Genettean theory of narrative. Focusing on narrative voice and focalization, the study reviews and situates traditional 'point of view' concepts within the narratological framework of Genettean and post-Genettean voice and focalization theory by moving, roughly speaking, from Genette(1980) to Stanzel (1984), including other important concepts of recent contributors to the field. This narratological toolbox has been practically used to analyze two case study novels: **Land of the Yellow Bull** and **Things Fall Apart**.

The study considers narrative to include all types of genres, literary or non-literary, fictional or non-fictional, and verbal or non-verbal. Besides, the study examines the integrative investigation of both **story narratology** and **discourse narratology** in the novels under discussion. Furthermore, although narratology has different specialized fields, for example, cognitive narratology, this study focuses on narratology as a general exploration which builds a basic narratological framework and shows how to apply it in the analysis of prose narrative fiction.

The study also proposes to show that a given narrative technique cannot be judged according to its service to the narrative but only according to its success in particular works, because narrative content has no basis except in the narrative act and the narrative act cannot carry within itself its own predetermined meanings and effects. Furthermore, the study also argues that among the different narratological concerns, narrative voice and focalization are the two significant and salient features of a prose narrative.

Methodologically, the researcher depends on literary and qualitative methods and on the critical and literary reviews of voice and focalization as narrative techniques which are believed to help the researcher identify relevant theories, recent modifications and

developments in this area. Thus, the researcher will focus on investigating and classifying the categories of voice and focalization. This will lead the research to classify, analyze and interpret the facts and events in the two selected novels against the data collected in line with the selected categories of criticism, viz., focalization and voice.

Based on the above theoretical framework and methodology, the following general findings have been arrived at. In both the novels, the authors employed heterodiegetic authorial-figural narrator to tell the story. Both narrators in the novels under discussion are sexually indeterminate, and therefore, they have been gendered according to the sex of the author of each of the novels. Unlike **Land of Yellow Bull**, in **Things Fall Apart**, inside the overall matrix, there are seven embedded narratives which are narrated by intradiegetic narrators. All these narrators are heterodiegetic in relation to the story they relate.

Regarding focalization, both authors utilized an external focalizer dominantly, though there are instances of internal focalizations, too. In **Things Fall Apart**, window shift and window overlap is the underlying narrative technique of focalization. In **Land of the Yellow Bull**, although there are instances of window shift, the pervading narrative technique in focalization is window overlap.

CHAPTER ONE: Introduction

1.0 Background of the Study

Narratology is a theory of narrative which examines what all narratives have in common and what enables them to differ from one another. It aims at describing the narrative specific systems governing narrative production and processing. Narrative is anything that tells or presents a story, and in turn, a story is a sequence of events involving characters who get involved by being agents (causing an event), victims or beneficiaries (being affected by an event).

Genette (1980:41) divides narratology into three fields of Tense, Mood, and Voice. **Tense** treats the possibilities of temporal arrangements and presentations (Order, Speed, and Frequency); **Voice** deals with narrators, embedded narratives, and the choice of grammatical person of narrator; and **Mood** analyzes the regulation of narrative information, subsuming (a) modes of selection and restriction (focalization), and (b) modes of presenting action, speech, and thought.*

Although narrative tense and time are occasionally visited in the review, the following general definition of tense may help in understanding the theories assessed throughout the first two chapters in relating tense with voice and focalization (mood). Generally speaking, there are two major narrative tenses: the narrative past and the narrative present. Normally, a text's use of tenses relates to and depends on the current point of time in the narrator's speech act. Naturally, the tense used in a character's discourse depends on the current point of time in the story's action. Hence, there is a **discourse-now** which is the current point of time in discourse time, i.e., the **narrator's now**; and a story now, which is the point of time in story time; usually, a **character's now**. A switch from narrative past to narrative present and vice versa is normally used to produce an effect of intensification or distancing (moving in and out) and change of perspective.

*See Chapter Two for a detailed discussion on voice.

Under this general term 'tense', we can further analyse time asking three questions: When? (Order) How long? (Duration) and How often? (Frequency) **Order** refers to the handling of the chronology of the story; **duration** covers the proportioning of story time and discourse time; and **frequency** refers to possible ways of presenting single or repetitive action units.

Other minor concerns of narratology include action, episode, and the beginnings and endings of a narrative. An **action** is a sequence of acts and events, the sum of which constituting a 'story line' on a narrative's level of action. An 'action unit' or '**narreme**' (Dorforman 1969) is a distinct unit (or small segment) on the story line, and such units are often kept distinct from 'external' events that take place before the beginning and after the end of the primary story line. **Episode** is a group of narremes consisting of three parts: an exposition, a complication, and a resolution (Kintsch 1976). Beginnings and endings include incipit, point of attack, and closure. **Incipit** is the opening passage of a text (Bonheim 1982); **point of attack** is concerned with the events chosen to begin the primary action line: **ab ovo**, typically begins with the birth of the protagonist and a state of equilibrium; **in medias res**, the point of attack is set close to the climax of the action; and in **ultimas res**, the point of attack occurs after the climax and near the end. And finally, **closure** is the type of conclusion that ends a text.

Broadly speaking, narratology functionally offers the reader (or student) of narrative the means to progress from describing what an author says to analyzing what an author does. In the study of the structure of the story, the structuralist seeks to understand how recurrent elements, themes, and patterns yield a set of universals that determine the make-up of a story. The ultimate goal of such an analysis is to move from a taxonomy of elements to an understanding of how these elements are arranged in actual narratives. One should, therefore, note that we look to the field of narratology to help us examine what it might be about the workings of building stories. The precision of terms used in narratology are helpful in discussing those aspects of the story design process that involve story-telling thereby giving the student of prose narrative the way how to turn his or her

thinking into compelling stories. This is because, it should also be noted that narratology is concerned with how the individual mind seems to encode information about the world through highly personalized schemata.

Against this background, the organization of the thesis is as follows: Chapter One deals with the methodology of the study. Chapter Two reviews the related literature where mainly the narratological theories of voice and focalization are assessed. The third chapter deals with voice in **Things Fall Apart** and **Land of the Yellow Bull**. The fourth chapter, likewise, deals with focalization in **Things Fall Apart** and **Land of the Yellow Bull**. The chapter on voice has assessed the identity of the narrator and the signals that imply the presence of the narrator, and the narrator's distance or proximity to the material. The focalization chapter has dealt with the focalizer and the focalized, and window-shifting in focalization. Finally, the gist of the findings of these chapters are summarized in the concluding fifth chapter.

1.1. Narratology

The roots of narratology go back to Aristotle's distinction between 'mimesis' (imitation) and 'diegesis' (narration). This distinction between mimesis (showing) and diegesis (telling) has formed a starting point for even most recent distinctions among literary historians and narratologists concerned with 'point of view' theory. Chatman (1990) uses these concepts to distinguish diegetic narrative genres, like epic narrative, novels, and short stories, from mimetic narrative genres, such as plays and films. In fact, a narrative, especially a prose narrative, need not, and very often does not be just narration from beginning to end; it contains description, exposition, and dramatically rendered dialogue. Genette (1988:43) proposes that narrative fiction is a 'patchwork' consisting of both mimetic and diegetic parts.

On the theoretical level, however, Frye's **Anatomy of Criticism** (1957) provides an important stage in the transition from theories of the novel to theories of narratives for it breaks down the artificial barriers that had separated verse from

prose, oral from written, and short from long narratives. Shortly after Frye's introduction of the subject and conventions of fiction, Wayne Booth, in his **Rhetoric of Fiction** (1961), challenged the conceptions of narrative technique that had gained general acceptance in the years preceding 1961. For example, Percy Lubbock, in **The Craft of Fiction** (1921), upheld Henry James's dramatic use of the '**central consciousness**' to solve the intricate question of narrative method. But Booth lists and argues against the dogmatic precepts of this tradition which imply that the novel attains artistic value by divorcing itself from human values so that it can become a self-contained object of pure presentation. This seems to ignore, as Booth identified, the fact that the novel's varied methods to secure effects cannot be understood apart from questions of tone, attitude, implicit evaluation, and variable degrees of attitudinal distance between the implied author and the implied reader.

Against the background of these historical developments in the theories of narrative, and their implications for later studies in the field, narratology emerged, especially, with the origin and development of French Structuralism in 1960's. Narratology, historically, falls into the tradition of **Russian Formalism** and **French Structuralism**. According to Ferdinand de Saussure, the founding father of structuralism, any '**sign**' consists of a '**signifier**' and a '**signified**', basically a relation between, a 'form' and 'meaning'. For a narrative text, a complex sign, the signifier is '**discourse**' (a mode of presentation) and the signified is a '**story**' (an action sequence). Practically, all theories of narrative distinguish between 'what is narrated' (the story) and 'how it is narrated' (the discourse). As a result, narratological investigation usually studies one of two basic orientations: discourse narratology and story narratology. **Discourse narratology** analyzes the stylistic choices that determine the form of a narrative text as well as pragmatic features that contextualize a text within the social and cultural framework of a narrative act. **Story narratology**, by contrast, focuses on the action units that 'emplot' and arrange a stream of events into a trajectory of themes, motives, and plot lines.

Bremond (1970) defined the elementary sequence as a series of three functions corresponding to the three basic stages in the unfolding of any process: **virtuality** (a situation opening a possibility); **actualization** or **non-actualization** of the possibility; **achievement** or **non-achievement**. Moreover, Bremond developed a typology of roles based on a fundamental distinction between **patients** (affected by processes and constituting victims or beneficiaries) and **agents** (instigating the processes and influencing the patients, modifying their situation, or maintaining it).

Similarly, Greimas (1966/1975-76) refined Propp's notion of dramatic personae and evolved an '**actantial**' model, originally comprising six 'actants', which has been very influential: **Subject** (looking for the object), **Object** (looked for by the subject), **Sender** (of the subject in quest for the object), **Receiver** (of the object to be secured by the subject), **Helper** (of the subject), and **Opponent** (of the subject). According to Greimas, a narrative is a signifying whole because it can be grasped in terms of the structure of relations between the actants.

Although much of the early work on narratology thus centered on the narrated and characterized narrative in terms of it, some narratologists considered and characterized narrative to be essentially a mode of presentation, and they defined their tasks as the study of narrative discourse rather than the study of the story. They argued that focusing on the structure of the narrated results in a failure to account for the many ways in which the same set of events can be recounted, for example, the recounting of events by different narrators.

Genette is perhaps the most eminent representative of this narratological tendency. In **Narrative Discourse** (1980), he analyzed its recounts, the factors regulating narrative text and the story it recounts, the factors regulating narrative information, and the narrating distance. A number of narratologists consider both the events presented and their presentation pertinent to the exploration of its possibilities. Chatman (1978) and Prince (1982), for example, have attempted to integrate the study of the 'what' and the 'how'. These two basic narratological orientations partly define the scope of narratological focus.

In further defining narratology, the scope of narrative genres had been a field of contest among narratologists. Some theorists, among them Genette, restricted narrative to verbally narrated texts (Genette 1988:17). However, several other theorists (Barthes 1975, Bal 1985; Pavel 1985, Chatman 1990) argue that anything that tells a story, in whatever genre, constitutes a narrative. By arguing that narrative has a far wider scope, Roland Barthes offered the following list of the different narrative genres:

There are countless forms of narrative in the world. First of all, there is a prodigious variety of genres, each of which branches out into a variety of media, as if all substances could be relied upon to accommodate man's stories. Among the vehicles of narrative are articulated language, whether oral or written, pictures (still or moving), gestures, and an ordered mixture of all those substances; narrative is present in myth, legend, fable, tales, short stories, epic history, tragedy, comedy, pantomime, paintings, stained glass windows, movies, local news, conversation. Moreover, in this infinite variety of forms, it is present at all times with the very history of mankind; there is not, there has never been any where, any people without narratives; all classes; all human groups, have their stories, and very often those stories are enjoyed by men of different and even opposite cultural backgrounds (Barthes 1975:237).

According to Barthes's list and the other theorists mentioned above, narratology is concerned with all types of narratives: literary and non-literary, fictional and non-fictional, verbal and non-verbal. Since this study focuses on the fictional narrative, however, the relevant distinction would be that between fictional and non-fictional narratives. A fictional narrative presents an imaginary narrator's account of a story that did not happen in the real world. A non-fictional narrative, by contrast, may present a real-life person's account of a real-life story which can serve as evidence of what happened in the real world unless there are reasons for questioning the author's credibility.

Most of the monographs published in narratology's classical period, i.e., during the 1970's and 1980's, are still very useful introductions to the field, especially

Chatman (1978), Cohn (1978), Sternberg (1978), Genette (1980), Prince (1982), Rimmon-Kenan (1983), Stanzel (1984), and Bal (1985). Particularly useful are Rimmon-Kenan's (1983) concise survey, Prince's (1987) dictionary of terms, Onega et al.'s (1996) on narratology which contains reprints of many of the fundamental essays, the surveys by O'Neill (1994) and Nelles (1997), and the linguistically oriented discussions and exercises in Toolan (1988).

The more recent 'post-classical' variants of narratology are discussed in D.Herman (1999) and L.Herman and Vervaeck (2005). Today, narratology has branched itself into various specialized studies of narratology. These narratological branches include a **cognitive narratology** (Perry 1979), a **psychoanalytical narratology** (Brooks 1984), a **postmodernist narratology** (McHale 1987), a **possible world's narratology** (Ryan 1991; Ronen 1994), a **feminist narratology** (Lanser 1992), a **legal narratology** (Brooks and Gewirtz, 1996), a **rhetorical narratology** (Phelan 1996), a **natural narratology** (Fludernik 1996), a **historiography narratology** (Cohn 1999), a **cultural studies narratology** (Nunning 2000), a **psychonarratology** (Bortolussi and Dixon 2003), a **transgeneric narratology** (Huhn 2004), and a **political narratology** (Bal 2004). Current researchers, for example, Ryan (1991), emphasize the openness of this discipline.

Recent studies include Abbott (2002), a dedicated transgeneric approach containing chapters on "narrative and life", "narrative rhetoric", "cultural masterpieces", "closure", "overreading and underreading"; and David Herman (2002), an investigation of the cognitive, stylistic, and linguistic bases of narratology.

For an encyclopedic survey of approaches and trends in modern and ancient narrative theories, one needs to visit the Rutledge **Encyclopedia of Narrative Theory** (L. Herman, et al. 2005). For a massive (1712 pp.) collection of fundamental essays, one should go to Bal (2004-vol.1: **Major Issues in Narrative Theory**; vol.2: **Special Topics**; vol. 3: **Political Narratology**; vol.4: **Interdisciplinarity**).

1.2. Statement of the Problem

In the discussion of the theory of narrative, we usually find the interdependence between narrative techniques and subject matter of a narrative text. These are the two overlapping ways by which the author can arrange fictional matters. To make the story seem substantial and real, the author may include a mass of details about people, places, and events. Alternatively, the author may arrange things by the way he or she chooses to tell the story: a story can be rendered in many ways, for narrators will see things from different points of view. Thus, prose narratives contain stories, which in the process of their narration become complicated. It should be noted, however, that this does not mean denying to employ both the techniques of 'what' and 'how' at the same time.

Therefore, it is helpful to note that narrative techniques have no meaningful existence apart from their employment in particular narrative texts, and neither does any subject matter of a narrative text, its theme, values, etc., have any existence separated from the techniques. Hence, to reveal that a story is rendered in first-or third-person, and categorize it into one or another kind, tells nothing of importance unless we are more precise and describe the way, the particular techniques of a narrator which relate to specific desired effects. This shows the need for a critical theoretical vocabulary on the salient narrative techniques in prose narrative, namely narrative voice and narrative focalization, which were traditionally treated under 'point of view'.

No other aspect of fictional technique has been more widely discussed, analyzed, and debated, at least, among modern critics of the novel, than the term 'point of view' (Stevick, 1967). The reason that point of view has dominated as large as it had in modern discussions of a narrative fiction seems easy to see. Henry James in his 'prefaces' (1907-09) thought and wrote often about the problems of how his narrative was to be narrated, by whom, and to what effect (Stevick 1967:112). Following James, Percy Lubbock (1921), made point of view the single most significant category in his assessment of particular prose narratives. Profitable

discussions of almost any modern prose narrative might well begin with point of view, because of the modern experiments in narration ('who speaks?') and the modern preoccupations with the perceiving mind ('who sees?'). This is because our understanding of a narrative point of view determines, to a large extent, our perception of a narrative's value system and its complex of attitudes. Among other literary theories, narratology is the more inclusive and thorough critical assessment of narrative critical toolbox, in general, and narrative focus and narration, in particular.

A fuller extent of figural techniques was first explored in the novels and short stories of 20th century authors. Henry James (as in **The Ambassadors**) and other great novelists of the late 19th and early 20th centuries heightened the illusion of the novel as a closed entity by removing the overt presence of the narrator. Lubbock (Ibid) claimed the whole intricate question of narrative technique to be governed by the question of point of view-the relation in which the narrator stands to the story. Lubbock described this relation as a dichotomy of telling and showing, within which there was a spectrum of four possibilities that ranged from panoramic survey and dramatized narrator to dramatized mind and scenic narration. Lubbock's attention was focused on the relationship between the narrator and the narrated.

Lubbock's focus has continued to dominate the way point of view is used by various late 19th century authors, such as Joyce, Woolf, etc; who developed these techniques of changing perspectives by limiting, expanding or contrasting view points. These experiments in narration contributed significantly in bringing about the concept of **realism** in prose narrative, and late 19th century novels, generally speaking, are less intrusive than 18th century novels. Realism is the creation of the effect of the representation of the concrete, historical nature of human life where the details of environment, of motivation, of circumstance, and of temporality with its cause and effect, which become the context for the exploration of human values and fate. Realistic novels, however, do not present a documentary picture of life, for any representation is a selection, and hence implicit or explicit set of inclusions, exclusions, and arrangements. All the same, realism is a very attractive

form because many things, at least, are more accurately represented than in any other form.

Another critic who further explored these themes in point of view is Wayne Booth in his **Rhetoric of Fiction** (1961). He uses point of view as a basic tool of formal analysis in literary criticism of prose narrative fiction. The theoretical framework, which was used by most critics in discussing point of view, was significantly developed by Booth, but still with no final and satisfying solution to the problems impinging on point of view, the problem of blurring narration with focalization, features that are crucial in defining point of view. Other critics who were preoccupied with point of view include Pouillon (1947), Stanzel (1955), Friedman (1955), Uspensky (1970), and Dolozel (1973).

Genette suggests that most previous discussions of point of view "suffer from a regrettable confusion between 'what I call here mood and voice, a confusion between the question 'who sees?' and the question 'who speaks?'" (Genette 1980:186). Genette has shown that most previous studies of point of view (for example, Friedman 1955; Brooks and Warren 1959; Booth 1961; Romberg 1962) treat two related but different questions as if they were interchangeable (i.e., who speaks? vs. who sees?). Focalization theory resolves the confusion between perspective and narration which often occurs when 'point of view' is discussed. The distinction between narration and focalization is not any easy job, though. There are instances where the narrator and the focalizer merge, although, in principle, focalization and narration are distinct activities.

As such, this critical theoretical literature may be interesting to us in our graduate research, but it seldom seems appropriate to pass along to undergraduate students. And given the enormous increase in scholarly publications in narratology, we ourselves at the graduate studies often seem hard-pressed to digest the current narratological, critical feast before us. Three years ago, during my graduate studies, the course, Recent Theories of Narrative was basically new to me, which made it difficult and interesting at the same time. The other graduate courses were more or less continuations of courses at my undergraduate studies. Considering



our lack of proper introduction to the area, our instructor made an unselfish and honest effort to introduce us to the inclusive narratological framework of the structuralist and post-structuralist theories of narrative. Yet I was personally still confused about the difference between the two independent courses, namely **Major Topics in Contemporary Criticism (Lite 605)** and **Introduction to Modern Narrative Theory (Lite 601)**, to be the same and dealing with the same area. Later, it demanded me of pains-taking additional effort to fairly acquaint myself with the narratological interpretive toolbox, which is essential to deal with the critical analysis of prose narrative. This is the most important reason which prompted me to undertake this study in narratology.

For this or other reasons, in Addis Ababa University, we do not find any undergraduate, and many graduate research studies on narratological, narrative techniques. Although theses on prose narratives have been reported for more than two decades at Addis Ababa University, almost all tend to approach narrative prose with the traditional narrative techniques, overlooking the rich and precise critical narrative tool of modern narrative theory, viz. narratology. This is by no means to deny the existence of studies of prose narrative techniques. To mention some: 'Analysis of Themes and Literary Techniques (by Tsegaye, 1983); 'A study of Characters and Themes' (by Getachew, 1985); 'The Role of Narrators' (by Anteneh, 1993); 'Analysis of Literary Techniques' (by Assef, 1995); 'Comparative Study of First-Person Narrative Techniques (by Haila, 2001).

It should be stressed, however, that none of the above studies tries to reconcile and sharpen the traditional way of approaching prose narratives with modern narrative theory in general and narrative voice and focalization in particular. The only M.A. thesis on this particular topic is Mebrahtu's (2005) assessing voice in prose narrative.

When we turn to the novels under study, we find the above fact. Many critics such as Killam (1969), Palmer (1972), and Wren (1980) have been primarily interested in the anthropological features of Achebe's **Things Fall Apart** stressing the historical picture of an indigenous Ibo village community with little focus on how this picture has delimited its aesthetic aspect. The novel's ethnographic freight is,

however, never allowed to weigh down upon its human interest or obscure its aesthetic significance. A crucial factor, therefore, given the particular circumstances of its composition, is the novel's deeply reflective engagement with the particular order of life that provides a reference for its narrative scheme and development.

Unlike the above critical studies, some critical papers on the narrative techniques of Achebe's novels by different critics have been compiled in Innes (1979): **Yeats and Achebe** (by A.G. Stock); **Narrative Techniques in Things Fall Apart** (by Solomon O. Iyasere); **Language, Poetry and Doctrine in Things Fall Apart** (by C. L. Innes); **Symbolic Structure in Things Fall Apart** (by Weinstock and C. Ramadan); and **Fire and Transition in Things Fall Apart** (by Bu-buakei Jabbi). Similar to Achebe's, Fekeremarkos's novel **Land of the Yellow Bull** has not yet been assessed in terms of modern narrative theory. There is a single thesis regarding narrative technique, i.e., the plot structure (by Mekonnen 1997) while another paper deals with the 'cultural implications' in the novel (by Sisay 2005).

As we can see from the above facts, no one has yet approached the novels under discussion with modern narrative theory (narratology) in general, and narrative voice and focalization of the structuralist and post-structuralist narrative theorists and critics in particular. The above assessment of literature on the two novels helped the researcher to explore the texts in a fresh way. Hence, this study is aimed at discovering new facts about how voice and focalization are manipulated and managed in the two novels.

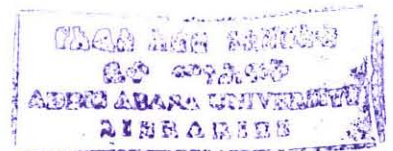
In other words this study examines narratology and narrative techniques, particularly focusing on narrative voice and focalization in two African ethnic novels: **Things Fall Apart** and **Land of the Yellow Bull**. The study aims at showing that narratology helps students of narrative studies to move beyond the mere content-oriented study of narratives, beyond the paraphrase of what authors say, towards, a tentative appraisal of what authors do in their texts and an appreciation of how they do it. Students at graduate and undergraduate levels, although need to be introduced to a variety of literary texts from different cultures and historical periods; they also need to get some grounding in critical theory-not

entirely apart from the study of literature, but as an integral part of the process of learning to read critically

For this purpose, a theory of narrative techniques needs a rich and lucid terminology. Without a precise and appropriate terminology, the necessary discrimination and comparison of very subtle and specific narrative techniques can scarcely be achieved. Therefore, one needs the interpretive toolbox that sharpens the identification of subtle differences and reveals the significance of one narrative technique in comparison with that of another. Henceforth, this study argues that Genettean and post-Genettean studies of focalization and voice are especially essential for a critical reading of a prose narrative; and the other narratological concerns such as tense, discourse, characterization, etc., can be treated secondarily, because they can, more or less, be aligned to and included in the discussion of voice and focalization.

1.3. Objectives of the Study

1.3.1. General Objectives



The basic and general objective of the study is to show that narratology can help to highlight the distinctiveness of any given narrative, compare any number of narratives to institute the narrative according to narratively pertinent features, and support certain interpretive conclusions. Narratology provides us with a narratological toolbox that enables the reader (or critic) to undertake innovative types of textual analyses, and to arrive at new insights about themes, styles, techniques and effects. Based on this assumption, the present study specifically focused on narrative voice and focalization, the two key prose narrative techniques, in the analysis of selected narrative fiction.

A basic principle in constructing critical readings of prose narrative should, therefore, be to help students grasp the fundamental distinction between narration and focalization. The researcher believes that it is essential to note that when we read, we attempt to see from where we are viewing the text and who is telling the

story. In other words, we need to make an explicit distinction between the vision through which the elements of the story are presented and the identity of the voice that is verbalizing the vision. Identifying one from the other is a crucial step in critically analyzing a prose narrative.

As already mentioned in Introduction, traditionally, the theory of narrative fiction has been directed mainly to the level of the action of story and its meaning. Yet, it is the narrative presentation of the story which any reader first encounters; our only access to the story itself is through the act of its being told. The story as a separable part of that presentation is an abstraction constructed through the act of narration with which the story is inevitably rearranged and made into a peculiar version that possesses its own singularity. The present study aimed to show that the primary objective of critical interpretation in prose narrative is the narrative point of view, which narratologically has been considered to include narrative voice and focalization.

The study also attempted to show that narrative content has no basis or ground except in the narrative act, and the act cannot carry within itself its own predetermined meanings and effects. The narrative act partly constructs or makes the story, and what constitutes the narrative act is the process of constructing or making the story.

The researcher also believes that in the study of fictional narrative discourse, the primary objective of criticism is not 'the story', but what is presupposed by any story, namely the narrator. The narrator may be regarded as a form of action that constitutes the condition of possibility of the narrative; and rather than a fixed entity, the narrator is the discourse produced by the act of narrating-otherwise, the narrator is nothing other than fictional words. In other words, we identify the narrator by the end of the story as an entity from the cumulative result of each action in the story.

It should also be noted that even if we often, for psychological or other reasons, ignore the presence of the narrator while reading, the presence is nevertheless a logical presupposition of our reading a narrative in the first place. However,

unlike a character, a narrator can neither think nor feel without speaking in narrative fiction, which indicates the unavoidable presence of a narrator. And the narrator's conceptual cosmos is bounded by other actions, apart from the social and cultural forces which constitute his or her textual materials. He or she cannot transcend his or her own represented range of reality, which may help us identify his or her 'mind style' (Fowler 1977). All these are important points for the critical reading of a prose narrative. This also justifies the need for the precision of terms used in narratology, especially, those related to narrator and focalizer.

Hence, the researcher believes that, through keen observation and analysis, a reader (critic) of a prose narrative can identify objective textual signals of narrative voice and focalization, which can crucially help the reader in the interpretation of a prose narrative text.

1.3.2. Specific Objectives

It should be noted that being able to identify whether a certain text is homodiegetic or heterodiegetic, authorial or figural, or whether there is an internal or external focalization, single or multiple focalization, or what not, is fine, but not much. What is really important is that these concepts come with a number of assumptions, expectations, implications, and above all, specific questions. The following are the issues regarding narrative situation, the narrator, and focalization. Thus, the study has specifically attempted to assess the following aspects regarding the two novels under discussion:

- Each text's major narrative situation; and if it uses several narrative situations, the pattern or strategy behind the juxtaposition of several narrative situations;
- Each author's choice of a speaker (narrator), and the signals (if any) that indicate the presence of the narrator in each novel;
- Whether the narrator in each novel has a name and/or a distinctive voice, and if his or her voice quality is different in specific locations such as a chapter, at beginnings, and endings;

- Whether the narrator uses one or many story-internal focalizers, and if it is the latter, to establish which point;
- If there is a first-person narration, to what extent is the **experiencing I** used as an internal focalizer;
- How accurate are the perceptions and thoughts of the focalizers, and to what extent they are 'fallible filters';
- Whether the narrator in each novel ever comments on the focalizer's perception from a superordinate perspective;
- In the context of several focalizers (e.g., in multi-perspectival narration), whether their various perceptions mutually contradict or corroborate;
- If the general attitude of the narrator is one of sympathy or empathy towards his or her focalizer, and if the focalizer's perceptions and thoughts are reported consonantly or dissonantly (ironically);
- How focalization is cumulatively maintained and managed throughout the two selected novels;
- How voice and focalization separately and in coordination contribute to the interpretation of the events in the novels;
- How narrative content and narrative techniques of voice and focalization interdependently succeed in creating the 'reality effect', the 'illusion of reality' in the represented fictional worlds of the two novels; and
- How the embedded narrative in the novels (if any) cohere with the main story line.

1.4. Delimitations of the Study

As already mentioned in the introductory chapter, narratologists argue on the scope of narrative. Theorists such as Genette (1988) confined narrative to verbally narrated texts. On the other hand, other theorists such as Chatman (1990) argued

that any thing that tells a story constitutes a narrative. The present research takes the latter view and considers a narrative in all types of genres: literary or non-literary, fictional or non-fictional, verbal or non-verbal, for he believes that there is narrative 'everywhere'. Within this, narratology today has branched itself into various studies of narratology, such as a cognitive narratology (Perry 1979); a psychoanalytical narratology (Brooks 1984), just to mention only two. The research depends on basic, classic, Genettean paradigm as a point of departure, adding to and modifying it with the post-Genettean developments of narratology as a general exploration rather than focusing on a specialized field of narratology as indicated above.

At the beginning, narratologists, such as Propp and Bremond, as already mentioned in Introduction, examined the story presented divorcing it from the mode of presentation (its discourse). Later narratologists such as Genette focused on narrative mode of presentation, and they even defined their task as a study of narrative discourse rather than the study of the story. And theorists such as Chatman attempted to integrate both. This study will follow the integrative investigation of 'the narrated' and 'the narrating' to use the terms of Gerald Prince (1982).

In the study of narratology, the two classic terms of 'mimesis' (showing) and 'diegesis' (telling) are pivotal. Chatman (1990) uses these concepts to categorize epic narrative, novels, and short stories under diegetic narrative genres, and plays, films etc, to be mimetic narrative genres. Following Genette's (1988) proposal, I take prose narrative to be a 'patchwork' including both mimetic and diegetic parts; hence I will analyze the novels under discussion accordingly.

On a critical and analytical level, the reader (critic) is forced to experience narrative as a compendium of categories. Thus, if we take voice and focalization in prose narrative fiction, a critical reader will be able to identify voice and focalization in terms of homodiegetic or heterodiegetic, overt or covert, internal or external, and focalizer or focalized, etc. Although many narratologists have written about various aspects of narratology, this study specifically considers narrative voice and focalization. Thus, the scope of this study is investigating and

classifying the categories of voice and focalization in the novels under study. This inevitably leads the researcher to look for specific and subtle differences, similarities, and overlaps among specific signals of narrative voice and focalization.

However, identifying and categorizing voice and focalization is not the end of the study, rather those signals are exploited as a means to critically comprehend and appreciate the novels; experiencing the text as a total movement, giving us the foregrounded point of view (the attitudes, opinions, and personal concerns that are constituted in the novel in relation to the world). In other words, this investigation reveals the ways of manipulation and effects of voice and focalization for appreciating and estimating narrative fiction.

One may wonder why the study deals selectively with voice and focalization, but not with the other aspects of prose narrative. When we examine it critically, the studies of plot, characters, and setting are almost equally shared by other literary narratives, too. Thus, an exhaustive study of the technique of narration (voice) and perspective (focalization) can help a reader of narrative more specifically to comprehend and to appreciate a prose narrative text than the other aspects so that distinctive features of the text can be highlighted.

1.5. Methodology of the Study

The research depends on literary and qualitative methods. The major method is documentary analysis, that is, descriptive and critical survey of the novels under discussion. Thus, the descriptive and critical surveys of literary materials and resources have built the related literature. For this purpose, the researcher has assessed the literary resources of important universities throughout the country. Besides, a significant survey of studies in the area (i.e., narratology) has also been made.

The researcher had no plans to conduct interviews with the authors since the study mainly focuses on showing the critical significance of the narratological, critical

toolbox in approaching the prose narrative rather than the author's personal opinions on their works.

The two selected novels are both ethnic stories. Both relate stories of two different peoples, but with similar self-confidence in their rich self-contained, African cultures and traditions. These two anthropological narratives are examined to show how voice and focalization are manipulated and managed in their making. This is aimed at showing how the same or similar content can be arranged and told in many different narrative techniques for different purposes and effects.

The project has undertaken the following procedures and activities. First, a literature review of theoretical issues of narrative voice and focalization is attempted, and, in the process, refined, in order to provide an inclusive, orderly, and well-meant literature review. The researcher believed that this can help to identify the most relevant theories, recent modifications, and developments in the study of narrative voice and focalization, which are very important narratological concerns in the study of prose narrative. Besides, it also helped the researcher to identify relevant and working procedures in exploring voice and focalization as prose narrative techniques. In fact, relevant sources of the novels under discussion are also assessed and relevant information gathered. Lastly, the researcher has classified, analyzed and interpreted the facts and events in the novels against the collected data, from the above-mentioned sources, in line with the selected categories of criticism, viz, focalization and voice. Furthermore, narrative aspects like tense and time are assessed and aligned with voice. For example, in the narration of the events in the story, the durational aspect of the story presentation can be either isochrony or acceleration (see Section 2.1.2.2.2, below).

1.6. Significance of the Study

It has been indicated in the above discussions that narratology significantly eliminates the artificial differences between short story, the novella, and the novel. Further, narratology offers a technique of criticism, especially of prose narrative fiction. It offers the teacher of literature a means by which to help students

progress from describing what an author says to analyzing what he or she does, and how; allowing both students and teachers to share a critical theoretical terminology which provides a crucial step toward constructing critical readers in the literature classroom.

The researcher also believes that much work on narratology concerning technique is voice and focalization. Thus, this study is hoped to show that some concerns of narratology, such as characterization, plot, and setting, are almost equally and readily accessible to literature students in other literary genres, such as drama and poetry. On the contrary, narrative voice and focalization are, relatively speaking, the most peculiar (salient) features of prose narrative and should be the primary concern of critical reading of a prose narrative. Narrative voice and focalization instantaneously connect the reader to the fictional world of the prose narrative in the act of reading.

The traditional term 'point of view' is a general term referring to all aspects of the narrator's relation to the story, including distance (variations in the amount of detail and consciousness presented) and perspective (whose eyes we see through). This term is usually confusing and wrongly identifies the teller of the story with the one who sees in the story. A narratological study of focalization can dispel the confusion between perspective and narration which often occurs when 'point of view' is discussed. The study is expected to show the possibility of a focalizer other than the narrator; the difference between third-person narrator and character reflector; the difference between the focalizer and the narrator in first-person retrospective narratives; there being no difference between third-person centre of consciousness and first-person retrospective narration, as far as focalization is concerned; that focalization and narration may sometimes be combined in some instances. The study, it should be noted, however, is not dismissing 'point of view' but tries to refine it with recent narratological experiments on point of view to sharpen the difference between focalizer and narrator.

This investigation is hopefully expected to inspire literature students of narratology, both at graduate and undergraduate levels, to further and wider

investigations of voice and focalization in particular, and narratology in general. It is significant to notice that although many graduate research reports are conducted yearly at the Addis Ababa University School of Graduate Studies, hardly do these studies focus on narratology, in general, and focalization and voice, in particular.

Besides, both **Things Fall Apart** and **Land of the Yellow Bull** are ethnic novels. As we all know, ethnology is a branch of anthropology that studies comparatively the cultures of contemporary, or recent, society or language groups. Likewise, the two novels under discussion deal with similar anthropological themes (i.e., cultures and traditions) of two near-to-nature African people: the Igbo of Nigeria and the Hamar of Ethiopia. The two novels reveal the self-confidence of the people in their self-contained indigenous ways of life, which can help us label them as ethnic novels. The two novels having similar thematic concerns may easily lead us to the comparison of manipulation of the narrative techniques which are utilized for different purposes and effects. In other words, they lend themselves for the comparison of the narrative techniques of voice and focalization as employed in both texts since both of them are written with similar thematic organizations around topics worth discussing.

The exposure of our 'teacher training' has most often been solely in the area of language. What we generally do when it is finally our turn to teach introductory literature courses is to fall back on our experience. We choose texts that we have already studied, or perhaps were taught as graduate students. We flesh out our undergraduate reading notes with graduate seminar notes or old exposures, and we model our teaching styles on those of our former teachers who have had a significant impact on us. This study can also help teachers to identify the implications of narratological techniques at the undergraduate and graduate studies. By using narratology in the undergraduate literature courses, we can demonstrate to our students that theory is not merely a tool for advanced scholarly research, but also an integral part of the process of becoming competent and critical readers. For example, it shows the concept of distinguishing focalization from narration, in a way showing how this can help students integrating literary theory to practical reading of selected prose narratives in studying prose fiction.

Based on the general critical advantages, the study is expected to contribute to a better critical understanding of the two novels under discussion, disclosing new knowledge on how voice and focalization are handled and managed throughout the texts. Besides, these findings, in turn, will turn to be one of the critical literary documents that can be used as a reference of the narratological criticism of the novels in particular, and any prose narrative fiction in general, in the Ethiopian-African context.

The following chapter presents review of related literature.

CHAPTER TWO: Review of Related Literature and Theoretical Framework

2.0. Narrative Voice and Focalization

In the following sections, the two important concepts, namely narrative voice and narrative focalization are discussed because they constitute the major dimensions of the theoretical framework evolved for the purpose of the present study. This chapter is also meant to explain the theoretical framework by which the two novels under study will be analyzed and interpreted.

2.1. Narrative Voice: Definition and Background

In writing a prose narrative fiction, the author's job is creating a grand illusion of reality (i.e., reality effect), that is, to present the story as true; and the reader's part is to suspend disbelief, that is, to take the story as true, at least while reading. To accomplish this illusion, someone must tell the story. The author, then, must not only create the story, but also must choose a narrator who can match the story. There are many positions from which a story can be told, and each way of telling may bring a different emphasis, different knowledge, and different ways in which readers process the story. The narrator, however, not only tells the story, but also he or she does it with style. Style is partially a matter of voice, and voice, for the author, is a matter of being spoken to from within. Mainly, by voice, we generally mean two somewhat different things: (1) the relationship of the narrator to the action of the story-whether the narrator is, for instance, a character in the story, or a voice outside of the story; and (2) the relation of the narrator to the issues and the characters that the story involves-whether the narrator is sympathetic, whether he or she agrees or supports or opposes a particular cultural practice or doctrine. Thus, we may say that even though we cannot actually see or hear the narrator, the novel projects the narrator's voice.

Generally, in narratology, voice deals with narrators, the choice of grammatical person of the narrator, and embedded narratives and their respective voices. The basic voice question is 'who speaks? (who narrates this?). Since all novels project a narrative voice, the text always contains a number of elements that project the narrator's voice, some more distinct, some less distinct, some to a greater extent, and some to a lesser degree. Hence, the audibility of a narrative voice is best understood as being a matter of degrees. In fact, there is what is called a neutral or matter-of-fact voice; comparing two voices, however, we can always say that one narrator's voice is notably more or less distinctive. Obviously, the more information we have on a narrator, the more concrete our sense of the quality and distinctiveness of his or her voice. In fact, following Chatman (1978), narrative theorists often use the oppositional pair 'overt' and 'covert' to characterize a narrative voice, adding the qualification needed. Therefore, narrators can be more or less overt, and more or less covert. This makes it clear that it is difficult to imagine an author writing without using any style at all, for the reason that a fictional matter is always associated with a cultural-historical context.

In this present account, voice is also understood as characteristic vocal and tonal quality projected through a text. There are appropriate tones for sad and happy, comic and tragic subjects though precise type of intonation never follows automatically. Besides, vocal characteristics can be profitably investigated by analyzing somebody's dialect, sociolect, idiolect, and genderlect, (See below for more on tonal and vocal points).

Since all novels project voice, there are some textual elements which in particular project a narrative voice. According to Jakobson, a narratorial discourse can serve a variety of 'functions, mainly (a) an addressee-oriented '**phatic function**'; mainly having contact with the addressee; (b) an '**appellative function**', persuading the addressee to believe or do something; and (c) an '**emotive**' or '**expressive function**', conveying the narrator's own subjectivity. All these functions are highly indicative of a text's projection of narratorial voice when we revise Jakobson (1960) for the 'discourse functions'; Fowler (1977) on the notion of a

narrator's 'discourse stance'; Bonheim (1982) on the presence or absence of narratorial 'conative solicitude'; and Chatman on narratorial 'slant', "the psychological, sociological, and ideological ramifications of the narrator's attitudes, which may range from neutral to highly charged" (Chatman 1990:143).

From the foregoing discussion, we learn that textual elements such as content-matter, subjective expressions, and pragmatic signals, project a narrative voice in a text. With regard to **content-matter**, there are appropriate voices, for example, for comic and tragic subjects, though a precise intonation is a cumulative effect. **Subjective expressions** are those that indicate the narrator's background, his or her beliefs, conventions, interest, values, political and ideological orientation, attitude towards people, events, and things. Under the **pragmatic signals**, we look for expressions that signal the narrator's awareness of an audience and the degree of his or her orientation towards it. Those textual expressions signaling emotion, subjectivity, pragmatics, etc, project a narrator's voice and particular tone.

A literary narrative is also a space in which one encounters multiple voices. Narrative texts call upon readers to think about them in terms of many voices, for instance, in terms of what Bakhtin (1981), Barthes (1990), and others refer to as 'polyphony'. According to Bakhtin, there are two basic voice effects that can characterize a narrative text: monologism and dialogism. **Monologism** is the effect created when all voices in a text sound more or less the same, producing a monologic 'text, whereas, **dialogism** is the effect created when a text contains a diversity of authorial, narratorial, and characterial voices creating significant contrasts. The result is a polyphonic or dialogic text.

Two other additional Bakhtinian terms that are frequently mentioned in the context of dialogism and polyphony are heteroglossia and alterity. **Heteroglossia** is the use of language elements inherited or learned from others whereas, **alterity** is the effect of otherness or strangeness, especially, as opposed to what is familiar, and to what one considers one's own selfhood and unique identity.

Vocal characteristics can profitably be exploited along the discussion of multiple voices. These vocal characteristics include **dialect**, regional features, especially

pronunciation; **sociolect**, speech characteristics of a social group; **idiolect**, singular or idiosyncratic style; and **genderlect**, the gender specific styles preferred by women and men, respectively.

2.1.1. Fictional Narrative Communication

Literary narrative communication takes place in a communicative setting comprising an addresser and addressee. Story-telling involves the interplay of communicative levels, where each comes with its own set of addressers and addressees (i.e., with different participants at different levels). In the model of narrative communication, especially, with the impact of Bakhtin's theory of narrative; it is now a standard practice to assign to all addresser agencies their own voices. This distinguishes between the level of non-fictional communication and fictional mediation, and establishes useful points of reference for key terms like **author**, **implied author**, **reader**, **implied reader**, **narrator**, and **narratees** (or **addressee**).

Narratologists, such as Bakhtin, now differentiate between interpretive strategies of intra-textual and extra-textual voices. The **intra-textual** (or **textual**) voices are those of the narrator and characters. In other words, the first intratextual communication is on the level where a fictional narrator communicates a narratee or addressee, and on the level of action, there is communication among the characters of the story, assuming that speech acts (Austin 1962 and Searle 1974) are not categorically different from other acts. The **extra-textual voice**, however, is that of the author. Along this comes the '**authorial audience**' that is, the audience of real readers addressed by the author, and '**narrative audience**', that is, the fictional audience addressed by the narrator. The fictional audience includes both explicitly specified (named) addressees as well as the wider set of unspecified, implied, or hypothetical addressees. Normally the levels of action and non-fictional communications are hermetically sealed domains indicating crucial thresholds of control and awareness. Therefore, in these communication levels, any agent situated on a higher level dominates and frames the lower agent, and the

lower level agents are unaware of the existence of the higher level agent(s). A narrator for example, is not aware of the fact that he or she is a fictional figure in a narrative that is created and written by a certain author. According to Jahn, M.(1997), the following diagram shows the standard structure of non-fictional and fictional narrative communication:

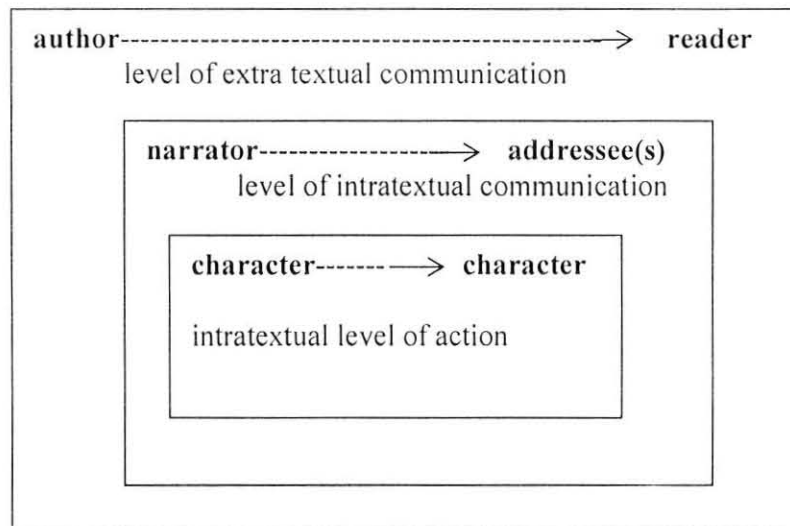


Figure 2.1.

Within the frame of narrative communication and the existence of multiple voices, one must identify the relationship between the author and the narrator. For one thing, it must be noted that a narrator is not writing a novel at all; rather he or she is the creation of the author to tell the story of other people or of personal experience. The other reason is that the identity of the narrator or voice of a narrative text is not easily specified, although he or she is the agent who establishes communication contact with an addressee, one who manages the exposition, one who decides what is to be told, how it is to be told (especially, from what point of view, and in what sequence), and what is to be left out. The narrator, talking about what he or she imaginatively perceives, enables readers to adopt a fictional point of view. The narrator can be a man or woman, a child, or

even an animal, as in fables. A narrator is simply the speaker or voice of narrative discourse (Genette 1980:186).

Furthermore, there is one specific audience that neither a character nor any other narrator in fiction can ever be concretely aware of, the audience of real readers. The narrator is a 'fictional being', who is temporally, spatially, and ontologically separated and distant from the real reader. The narrator, his or her addressee, the characters in the story, belong to a different world, the fictional world. Hence, just as it is important not to confuse a narrator with the author, we must not confuse a fictional narratee with the real reader. The narratee is the imagined person whom the narrator is assumed to be addressing in a given narrative. The narratee is a notional figure within the 'space' of the text itself, and is thus not to be confused either with the real reader or with the implied reader. Narratees, however, are often difficult to identify clearly since they are not usually described or characterized explicitly, although in some works they appear as minor characters, especially in a frame story. The narrator cannot possibly address the real reader because he or she does not know such a reader exists at all; only words fill the gap between the narrator and the reader. By contrast, the relationship between the author and the real reader is real enough, for example, a reader can write the author a letter if he or she still exists. There is no such a real point of contact with the narrator.

Verbal story telling, like speaking in general, takes place in a communication setting comprising a speaker and an audience (or, a bit more generally, in order to account for written communication as well, an addresser and an addressee). According to Leech and Short (1981), the addresser - addressee model constitutes any process of linguistic communication, spoken or written. Spoken communication normally takes place in a single context of time and place, with the addresser and addressee normally being distinct. For all published texts, however, there is usually one addresser but an infinite number of addressees, most of whom the author has never met. As a result, the author of a narrative is in the dark about his or her addressees from many concerns. The author, however, can instead assume that he or she shares with his or her addressees a common field of

knowledge and experience. But since the author might not necessarily have the same knowledge and experience as that of the real reader, we come to:

A hypothetical personage who shares with the author not just background knowledge but also a set of presuppositions, sympathies, and standards of what is pleasant and unpleasant, good and bad, right and wrong (Leech and Short, 1981:259).

The term 'implied reader' was first used by Iser (1974) and then by some other theorists of reader-response criticism to denote the hypothetical figure of the reader whom a given work is designed to address.

To sum up, we have so far just discussed the standard structure of fictional narrative communication. So, basically, communication contact is possible between author and reader on the extra-textual level, the narrator and the narratee, and character to character, on the intra-textual level. This communication contact is analyzed under voice.

2.1.2. Typology of Narrators

Both Genette (1988) and Stanzel (1984) use the term 'narrative situation' to refer to more complex arrangements or patterns of narrative features. Genette's system uses the subtypes of voice (narration) and focalization in order to explore a range of possible combinations. Stanzel is more interested in describing 'ideal-typical' configurations and arranging them on a 'typological circle'. In addition to Genette's homodiegetic and heterodiegetic distinctions, the present researcher also makes use of Stanzel's theory of typical narrative situations in order to assess the typical implications of a scenario in a narrative. Stanzel's typical narrative situations include typical patterns of narrative features of relationship (involvement), distance, pragmatics, knowledge, reliability, etc. This line of approach results in complex 'frames' of typical conditions (or default conditions) which are extremely rich in interpretive implications.

Narrative types and their narrators are identified on the basis of several criteria. The narrative level the narrator belongs to, the extent of his or her participation in the story, the degree of perceptibility of his or her role, and his or her reliability

are the crucial criteria to distinguish the variety of narrators in prose narrative fiction. The criteria are not mutually exclusive and allow for cross-combination between the different types (Rimmon-Kenan 1983: 94). The different types are listed below.

2.1.2.1. Narrator's Extent of Participation in His or Her Story

The narrator types that we are going to identify here are to be based on a relational criterion. We know that any author of prose narrative must decide, at least, on one of two basic options: whether to present a first-person narrative or third-person narrative, just to use the traditional terms. While 'first-person narrative' is still widely used, as in Stanzel's 'narrative situation', the term 'third-person narrative' has generally been recognized to be misleading. Genette uses **homodiegetic narrative** for **first-person narrative** and **heterodiegetic narrative** for **third-person narrative**. A narrator who participates in the story is called homodiegetic, whereas one who does not take part in it is a heterodiegetic narrator (Genette 1980:255-6). Genette's categorical distinctions (homo-and heterodiegetic), which are based on a clear-cut 'relation' condition (narrator present or absent in the story), can be fruitfully complemented by considering the typical features, expectations, and implications that come with Stanzel's situations (**first-person, authorial, and figural narrations**).

2.1.2.1.1. Homodiegetic (First - Person) Narrator

The homodiegetic narrator is a character in the story and is aware that he or she is telling a story. The story is being told from an internal point of view. It is a story of events he or she has experienced himself or herself, that is, a story of personal experience. The individual who acts as a narrator in retrospect (the **narrating I**) is also a character (the **experiencing I**) on the level of action. Therefore, the first-person pronoun (I) refers both to the narrator (the narrating self) and to a character in the story (the experiencing self) at the same time.

This internal narrator may be a protagonist, especially called the **autodiegetic narrator**, or one of the main characters. He or she may also be a minor character (**I-as-witness narrator**), an observer of the protagonist's life. Over and above the functional roles of 'I' as a protagonist and the 'I' as witness in Friedman (1967), Lanser (1981:160) identifies a range of common subtypes: I as co-protagonist, I as minor character, I as witness-protagonist, I as uninvolved eye-witness (as in Faulkner's **A Rose for Emily**).

The internal narrator may tell the story retrospectively (as the narrating I) after he or she has lived through it, or as it is happening (as the experiencing I). There is a temporal and psychological distance between the narrating I and the experiencing I. There is an avowed temporal distance between the **fictional time** (i.e., that of the events as they happened), and the **narrator's actual time** (i.e. his or her time of recording those events). Usually, the narrating I is older and wiser than the experiencing I, because living through the experience, he or she usually has been changed by it. It is also helpful to note that the retrospective narrator knows more than the reader, and is in a position of irony in relation to the events of the story. However, the narrator as an experiencing I, who tells the story as it is happening, knows no more than the reader, does not know the outcome, and is in a position of suspense with regard to the story.

Epistemologically, homodiegetic narrators are restricted to ordinary human limitations (Lanser 1981:161): they cannot be in two places at the same time (the 'law against bilocation'), they do not know what will happen in the future; for example, they cannot (under ordinary circumstances) narrate the story of their own death, and they can never know for certain what other characters are thinking or thought about (a restriction which is called the 'other mind' problem).

There may well be more than one internal narrator where we get the story from more than one narrator's point of view, and often such a method emphasizes the subjectivity of experience and the fact that the same event can have different meanings for different people. It must, however, also be noted that there can be internal narratives within internal narratives. A letter within a narrative, for example, written by someone other than the narrator, telling an event, is an

embedded, internal narrative. It is significant to note, therefore, that there may be a difference between a 'principal' internal narrator and the narrator of an embedded narrative, especially their intended audiences, who they are narrating to, and what for, may be different.

It is helpful to notice that an internal narration may take various forms: it may be a voice telling a story, but it may also be a diary, or letters, or a discovered manuscript, even an overheard conversation or a telephone call.

Finally, it should also be noticed that the use of the first-person pronoun does not necessarily indicate a homodiegetic narration; the narrator can refer to himself or herself using the first-person pronoun. Even a third-person narrator can refer to himself or herself using the first-person pronoun (as in George Eliot's **Adam Bede**). Thus, the only determining factor whether a text is homodiegetic or heterodiegetic is the relation the narrator has to his or her story- if he or she is present in the action, he or she is homodiegetic, if not, he or she is heterodiegetic.

A typical homodiegetic (first-person) narrator is, thus, restricted to a largely personal, subjective, and limited point of view; he or she has no direct access (or authority on) events he or she did not witness in person; he or she cannot be in two places at the same time; he or she has no way of knowing for certain what goes or went on in the minds of other characters. It is obvious, then, that a narrator's handling of these limitations, and a text's relative closeness to, or distance from, such typical ('default') conditions can tell us a lot about the 'slant' or attitude of the narrative voice as well as the motives for telling the story.

Generally speaking, a first-person (homodiegetic) narration aims at presenting an experience that shaped or changed the narrator's life and made him or her what he or she is today. Therefore, there are some typical sub-genres of homodiegetic narration. These typical sub-genres of first-person narration are fictional autobiographies, initiation stories, and skaz narratives.

A **fictional autobiography** is an I-as protagonist (Genette's autodiegetic) narrative in which the first-person narrator tells the story (or an episode) of his or

her life. The essence of such a narrative is that it is retrospective. There is a vital difference between writing a story forward from the past, as in the third-person narrative, and writing one backward from the present, as in the first-person retrospective narrative.

Though both are equally within the past, in the third-person narrative, the illusion that the action is taking place is created; in the autobiography, the action is felt as having taken place.

A **story of initiation** is a story about a young person's introduction into a new sphere of society, activity or experience. Many stories of initiation involve some stage in the transition from childhood and ignorance to adulthood and maturity and climax at a moment of recognition. Many stories of initiation (as Freese 1979 has shown) also begin with a journey, often they involve a character's first sexual experience or some growing-up or ceremony, which sometimes turns into an ordeal. Along this, it is helpful to note, however, that not all initiation stories are necessarily homodiegetic ones. We should consider also what it means to say that someone is 'uninitiated'.

Skaz narrative (from the Russian *skaz*, 'speech') is a literary form that represents an oral (or 'conversational') story-telling situation in which a speaker tells a story to a present audience. Apart from having a distinctly oral direction and syntax, a skaz-narrator's discourse is also characterized by a high incidence of phatic and appellative elements, signaling the presence of the listening audience. Skaz is closely related (and usually compared to) the poetic genre of the '**dramatic monologue**'. But all skaz narratives are not necessarily homodiegetic ones—we can have heterodiegetic narrator, too, as pointed out by Dolezel (1980:22); Banfield (1982:172); Fludernik (1996:178-9).

2.1.2.1.2. Heterodiegetic (Third-Person) Narrator

The heterodiegetic narrator is somebody who is not, and never was, a character in the world of the story, but rather one who 'stands outside' the world of the story.

This narrator is aware that he or she is telling a story, and may comment on the story being told. The story may be told by the external narrator in order to put the reader in a 'position of irony', in which we know more of the story, of the fate of the characters, of the motivations of other characters, than the characters themselves, or in a 'position of suspense', in which we know no more than the character or characters do.

The external (heterodiegetic) narrator may be more or less dramatized, and more or less reflexive (i.e., more or less overt, and more or less covert). A more dramatized external narrator is one whose own personality, opinions, etc., may begin to obtrude and to influence the reading of the story. We may, for instance, be aware that the narrator, perhaps unfairly or unreasonably, likes a character more than the events of the story would warrant, or that the external narrator has a certain purpose. A more overt external narrator is aware of and comments on telling of the story. When this consciousness of telling the story becomes very prominent, especially when the external narrator starts pointing out the fact that this is only a story, that he or she is making it up, that it could be told in another way with a quite different meaning or outcome and so forth, we may start using words like '**meta-narrator**', '**meta-commentary**', or '**meta fiction**': the telling of the story itself is being subjected to reflection and question.

On the other hand, the external narrator may be simply the voice telling the story, so we do not view him or her in any way as having any particular characteristics or interests. This less reflexive or non-reflexive (a less overt or covert) external narrator is one who draws no attention to the story-telling process at all, who, as critics say, 'naturalizes it,' assumes that the telling of the story is ordinary, entirely reliable, unproblematic. Generally speaking, readers will consider such an objective voice to be highly reliable.

While the external narrator tells the story, when we seem to be present to the thoughts, experiences, and feelings of a character in the story, that character is known as a '**reflector character**'. We are 'inside' the reflector character's mind, but through the agency of the external narrator. The reflector character is not aware that he or she is the subject of narration. He or she is not telling the story

but merely having his or her experiences reported-this is the crucial distinction between a reflector and an internal (homodiegetic) narrator. When the story is told entirely as the internal processes of one or more reflector character's minds, we call the narrative method, '**stream of consciousness**' or at times '**interior monologue**'. But it should be noted that, of course, there may be an embedded narrative, a story within a story, told by a reflector character, who becomes then the narrator of the story in which he or she and his or her narrative are embedded.

So far we have been introducing some of the general Stanzel's (1984) typicality conditions to enrich Genette's 'pure' category of heterodiegetic narratives. Following Stanzel, it is possible to further divide heterodiegetic narration into two sub-categories: heterodiegetic-overt and heterodiegetic-covert narration and narratives. Stanzel's **heterodiegetic-overt narration** is especially known as **authorial narrative situation** (or just **authorial narration**). And again following Stanzel, the specific configuration of **heterodiegetic-covert narratives** which backgrounds the narrator and foregrounds internal focalization has been called **figural narrative situation** (or simply **figural narration**).

Authorial Narrative is told by a narrator who is not a character in the story. The authorial narrator tells a story involving other people, however, like a first-person (homodiegetic) narrator; an authorial narrator may refer to himself or herself in the first-person (e.g. the beginning paragraph in George Eliot's **Adam Bede**). The first-person pronouns, however, just project a voice characteristic of a highly overt character, not a relation to the story.

The fact that an authorial narrator has a position outside the world of the story makes it easy for the reader to accept what we would never accept in real-life, that is, somebody has unlimited knowledge and authority, commanding practically godlike, with omniscience and omnipresence. Furthermore, 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 the course of action by detailed descriptions (pauses). As Friedman puts it, the prevailing characteristic of omniscience is that the authorial narrator is always ready to intervene himself or herself between the reader and the story, and that

even when he or she does set a scene, he or she will render it as he or she sees it rather than as people see it (1967:124).

Homodiegetic narrators, too, can address their narratees, comment on action, characters, and story-telling itself, of course. But, it must be noted that owing to their specific 'human limitations', especially their lack of omniscience, they tend to do it differently.

Therefore, when we attempt to assess typical authorial story patterns, usually, the authorial narrator typically assumes the power of omniscient and omnipresent level, telling an intrusive story (a story containing a moral or a lesson) set in a complex world. The authorial narrator's comprehensive world-view is particularly suited to reveal the protagonist's moral strengths and weaknesses, and to present a tightly plotted narrative. Furthermore, the typical authorial narrator refers to himself or herself in the first-person, one who also offers reader-friendly exposition whenever it is needed, one who is, on the whole, a distinctively voiced narrator.

According to some theorists of narratology such as Genette (1980:243-5); Rimmon-Kenan (1983-95-6); and Stanzel (1984:141-84,185-224), typical authorial narrative subgenres belong to the 18th and 19th century novels of social criticism.

Figural narrative is a narrative which presents the story's events as seen through the eyes of a **third-person internal focalizer** (also called '**third-person reflector**' or '**figural medium**'). The narrator of a figural narrative is a highly covert heterodiegetic narrator hiding behind the presentation of the internal focalizer's consciousness (especially, his or her perceptions and thoughts) whom we encounter even in the first word of the text. From moment to moment, the text seems to render the character's changing perceptual horizon-the things he or she sees, feels, and hears, etc.

Since the narrator's discourse closely mimics the focalizer's voice, his own vocal quality is largely indistinct and it is much harder to determine his or her voice: we do not get any of the expressive remarks that normally project a distinctive voice

(i.e., no first-person self-reference, no value judgments, no indications of a moral agenda, point of interest or purpose, nothing of that sort); this narrator is also not active on the pragmatic front—he or she does not acknowledge any actual or hypothetical addressee. After all, setting and characters have to be introduced, but still figural texts have a covert (withdrawn, subdued) narrator only. Figural texts typically begin 'medias in res,' have little or no exposition, and attempt to present a direct (i.e., both immediate and unmediated) view into the perceptions, thoughts, and psychology of a character's mind. The narrative agency of figural narration being a highly covert one, some theorists even go as far as to say that figural texts are 'narratorless' (Banfield 1982; Stanzel 1984).

The reading experience created by a figural text (narrated by a figural one) is quite remarkable. One of the main effects of the reflector-mode narration (i.e., the story is presented as seen through the eyes of either a third-person or first-person reflector character) is to attract attention of the reader to the mind of the reflector-character, away from the narrator and the processes of narratorial mediation. By so doing, (1) because the narrator is so covert, the text projects a sense and feeling of 'directness' and 'immediacy' (letting the reader reflect on the meanings of direct and immediate presentation of the events in the story); and (2) because the text is so strictly aligned with a character's spatio-temporal co-ordinates of perception, the reader is drawn into the story and invited to co-experience what is like to be a participant in the unfolding events. Finally, it results in the reader's imaginative adoption of a reflector's point of view which is usually called 'immersion' or 'transposition to the phantasm' (Buhler 1990). It should be stressed, thus, that to produce a heterodiegetic covert (figural narrator), two mutually dependent features must come together: the covertness of narrator and a kind of spotlight on one of the story characters (a 'central consciousness'). Logically enough, the most radical reduction of narrative voice comes when the text presents nothing but a direct quotation of a reflector's thoughts in the form of an interior monologue.

Hence, typical subgenres are '**slice of life**' and '**stream of consciousness**' **narratives**. Slice of life narrative is whose story time is restricted to a very brief episode in a character's life, often only a day, a few hours, or even just a single moment. The notable examples of this genre may include Joyce's 'Eveline',

'Mansfield's 'Miss Brill', Woolf's 'Mrs. Dalloway', just to mention a few. Stream of consciousness is the textual rendering of mental processes, especially any attempt to capture the random, irregular, disjointed, associative and incoherent nature of those processes. Indeed, several authors especially aimed at capturing the distorted perceptions of unusual internal focalizers. Authors such as Henry James, Virginia Woolf, James Joyce, and others, by subduing the overt narrator's intrusive presence, opened the door to an unmediated access to a character's mind, and through it, access to the story's events.

To recapitulate: in addition to Genette's two basic types of narratives (i.e., homodiegetic and heterodiegetic), this literature review now also adds Stanzel's typical narrative situations (first-person, authorial, and figural) to enrich these interpretive tools.

It must be noted, however, that there are texts that switch narrative situation (first-person, authorial, figural) from one chapter to the next, from one passage to another, and there are borderline cases whose situation vacillates between one or more situations. A whole novel or a passage of a narrative text may exhibit features of more than one narrative situation, producing borderline cases, transitional passages, and mixed-mode narrative situation. The most common mixed-mode phenomenon is of 'authorial-figural' narration. In authorial figural narration, there is both an authorial narrator and figural medium (Stanzel 1984:185-86).

In addition to the above three standard narrative situations, it is necessary to briefly mention three more narrative situations which are peripheral categories: we-narratives, simultaneous narration, and camera-eye narration.

We-narrative is a form of homodiegetic narrative in which the narrator's experiencing self belongs to a group of collective internal focalizers. It should be noted that the narrating self is an external focalizer as a narrator (Fludernik 1996; Margolin 1996). A good example of this narrative situation is Faulkner's **A Rose for Emily**. **Simultaneous narration** is a type of homodiegetic narrative in which the narrator tells a story that unfolds as he or she renders it. The problematic logic

of this type of narrative situation demands that the narrator does not know how the story ends, that there can be no objective flash forwards, that all diegetic sentences are in the present tense, and that the narrating and experiencing selves (the narrator [external focalizer] and internal focalizer) overlap and merge. Simultaneous narration exhibits a certain resemblance to both journalistic 'on-the-scene reporting' and 'interior monologue'. The term was originally coined by Genette (1980:218-9); this current extended definition is Cohn's (1993). An example of this type may be Charlotte Perkins Gilman's **The Yellow Wallpaper** (1892) - a diary-type story.

The **camera-eye narration** is the purely external representation of events; a text that reads like a transcription of a recording made by a camera. The term, today, is more often used as a metaphor of strictly neutral types of heterodiegetic narration, which is characterized by covert narration, absence of inside views, and the point of view of a stationary camera. Hemingway's **The Killers** is exemplary of this type of narration.

2.1.2.2. Narrator's Degree of Perceptibility

Our knowledge of the fictional world is often given to us through a narrative voice, and our knowledge is said to be 'mediated' rather than 'immediate'. But some narratives go to great lengths to eliminate, as far as possible, the narrative voice, and give us a sense that we are in immediate contact with the fictional world. The narrator's presence derives from the reader's sense of some demonstrable communication. If he or she feels being told something, the reader presumes a teller. The alternative is a 'direct witnessing' of action. It should be noted, however, that even in the scenic art like drama, pure mimesis is an illusion and the main question is how the illusion is achieved, but the degree of possible analogy varies, more or less overt, and more or less covert.

Mediated narration presumes a more or less express communication from narrator to reader. What follows is a list of the types of fictional presentations ranging

from minimal (mimesis) to maximal (diegesis) narrator presence. It should be remembered that although there are cases of extended forms of purely mimetic and purely diegetic presentations, it is more usual that we find them in combination while we are reading.

The main narrative modes (or ways in which an episode can be presented) basically follow from frequential and durational relationships of 'how long?' and 'how often?'. This begins with the traditional distinction between 'showing' and 'telling' (often correlated with 'mimesis' and 'diegesis', respectively). In the showing mode of presentation, there is little or no narratorial mediation, overtness, or presence. The reader is basically cast in the role of a witness to the events. In the telling mode of presentation, the narrator is in overt control (especially durational control) of action presentation, characterization and point of view arrangement.

In order to assess a narrative passage's speed or tempo, one compares **story time** (the fictional time taken up by an action episode or the whole action) and **discourse time** (the time it takes an average reader to read a passage or the whole text). Let us first identify and discuss the textual signs that define the extreme points of the overtness - covertness continuum in the perceptibility of the narrator, and the move from the degree of covertness to overtness through the continuum.

2.1.2.2.1. Extreme Points of the Overtness-Covertness Continuum

This ranges from maximum of covertness to the maximum of overtness. The audibility of a narrative voice is best understood as being a matter of degrees. Every kind of narrator is to some degree involved in the story. Consequently, the opinions, the knowledge and the style of the narrator will always have some effect upon the various elements of the narrative, no matter how much the narrator might attempt to achieve objectivity and impartiality. In other words, overtness and covertness are relative terms, that is, narrators can be more or less overt, and more or less covert on a continuum. For an analytical purpose, it is always a good idea to look for typical signals (or absence) of narratorial overtness, or functionality.



As has already been indicated, following Chatman (1978) narratologists normally use the oppositional pair of overtness and covertness to characterize a narrative voice, adding whichever gradation is needed.

An **overt-narrator** is one who refers to himself or herself in the first person ('I', 'we'). This can be found both in homodiegetic and heterodiegetic narratives. Besides, an overt-narrator directly or indirectly addresses the narratee, and offers exposition whenever it is needed. Furthermore, he or she exhibits a 'slant' toward characters and events, especially, in his or her use of rhetorical figures, imagery, evaluative phrases and emotive and subjective expressions. He or she is also one who intrudes into the story in order to pass philosophical or metanarrative comments. In the case of heterodiegetic narrative, the overt narrator assumes the power of omniscience and omnipresence. To sum up, an overt-narrator is one who has a very distinctive voice.

In contrast, a **covert-narrator** is one who exhibits none of the features of overtness listed above: especially, he or she is one who never refers to himself or herself nor addresses any narratees; one who has a more or less **neutral** (non-distinctive) voice and style; one who is sexually indeterminate; one who does not provide exposition even when it is urgently needed; one who does not intrude but lets the story events unfold in their natural sequence and tempo; and most of all, one who fades into the background, camouflaging himself or herself behind an internal focalizer. It may be noted, here, that covert narration can be most easily achieved by letting the action be seen through the eyes of an internal focalizer since this can reduce the external (narrator) focalizer's interference in telling the story.

However, there are texts that switch narrative situation (highly overt, neutral, highly covert, or somewhere in between) from one chapter to another, one passage to the next, and there are borderline cases where narrative situation wavers between one or more situations.

The foregoing narrative situations have been described as typicality models which capture standard narratorial characteristics (function, strategy, stance, limitation) and the corresponding readerly expectations in culturally acquired 'cognitive

frames'. Frequently, the conditions of those frames can also be made explicit by detailing the unwritten 'narratee contract'. Of course, sometimes a narrative has a surprise in store, either because its story takes an unexpected turn or because it becomes difficult to reconcile a present mode of presentation with the general frame or contract that we may think of and that we could use in order to optionally read and understand. It is this second type of narrative effect which Genette terms 'transgression' or 'alteration' or 'infraction of code' (Genette 1980).

Alteration is a (usually temporary) shift into a mode of presentation which does not conform to the standard expectations associated with the current narrative situation. Genette further differentiates between the following two main types of alterations: *paralepsis* and *paralipsis*.

Paralepsis is an infraction caused by saying too much, a narrator assuming a competence he or she does not properly have; typically a first-person narrator (or a historiographer) narrating what somebody else thought or what happened when he or she was not present (illicit assumption of authorial competence), (Genette 1980:208). *Paralipsis* is an infraction caused by omitting crucial information, saying too little; typically, an authorial narrator pretending 'not to know' what happened in his or her characters' minds, or what went on at the same time in another place, or distortively censoring a character's thought, or generally pretending to be restricted to ordinary human limitations.

2.1.2.2.2. Covert to Overt through the Continuum

In discussing signals of overt to covert of the voice of the narrator in a narrative text, it would help to have the following points in mind. Generally speaking, covert to overt is a movement in the continuum (1) from scenic presentation of the events to the summative representation, (2) from figural narrators to authorial to homodiegetic; (3) from free direct to direct, from free indirect to indirect speech and thought representation (Bonheim, 1982).

Generally speaking, the reader is interested in what happened rather than what the author/narrator thought about it. In other words, the reader should be given the

opportunity to experience the events of the story and form his or her own opinion of it as described rather than being told it is such and such, because this prohibits the reader from forming an opinion. Thus the narrator can get the point across with a superior narrative technique rather than a mere narrative statement (Ibid, 1981). The narrative movement from scenic presentation to summative presentation is discussed below.

Scene presentation is a showing mode which presents a continuous stream of detailed action events. Its durational aspect is isochronous (i.e., story time and discourse time are approximately equal); hence, isochrony is a defining feature of the scenic mode. This is normally the case in passages containing lots of dialogue or detailed action presentation. This has been indicated by Genette (1980), Bonheim (1982), and Rimmon-Kenan (1983).

'Stream of consciousness' is a forerunning mode of scenic representation of events in a third-person reflector narrative. Stream of consciousness is a phrase first used by William James in 1892 to describe the way we experience consciousness (as a continual stream of associated thoughts, without rational ordering and permeated by changing feelings). In literature, it is often used as a general term for the textual rendering of mental processes, especially any attempt to capture the random, irregular, disjointed, associative, and incoherent nature of these processes in the mind of a character. It is an attempt to give 'a direct quotation of the mind'. When an author chooses to represent the thoughts of a character, in whatever form, we are invited to see things from the character's point of view; he or she becomes the reflector of the events in the story, (Cohn 1978, Chatman 1978, and Toolan 1988).

This presenting the mental processes of characters, their thoughts and perceptions, their memories, dreams, and emotions became a prime challenge for late 19th and early 20th century novelists. They began experimenting with stream of consciousness novels in which the flow of consciousness of one or more characters was the principal focus. Among the authors who became strongly interested in stream of consciousness art were D.H. Laurence, Virginia Woolf, James Joyce, William Faulkner, Dorothy Richardson, and many others.

The main techniques of representing the sound and rhythm of the stream of consciousness are 'interior monologue', 'direct thought', and 'free indirect thought'. These are treated under the more general term 'narrative discourse', below. With respect to verbal narratives, **narrative discourse** is the oral or written text produced by an act of narrating. In principle, therefore, a narrative text can be subdivided into the narrator's discourse and the characters' discourses. The narrator's discourse comprises all 'diegetic statements' telling the narrative of events as well as the narrator's evaluative or commentary statements, if any. The characters' discourses make up the 'narrative of verbal events' (Cohn, 1978).

Direct discourse is a direct quotation of a character's speech ('direct speech') or verbalized thought ('direct thought'). Direct speech is often placed within quotation marks, explicitly signaling the transition from quoting to quoted discourse. 'Tagged' direct discourse is formed by a clause of attributive discourse; whereas 'untagged' (or free) direct discourse is free of attributive discourse. The main property of direct discourse is that the deictic elements of the quoted 'inset', especially its tenses and pronouns, are wholly independent of the deixis of the quoting discourse. **Free indirect discourse** is a representation of a character's words ('free indirect speech') or verbalized thought ('free indirect thought') which is between direct discourse and indirect discourse. Its most typical manifestation is one where, unlike indirect discourse, the reporting clause is omitted, but where the tense and pronoun selection are those associated with indirect discourse. The indirect discourse is a form of representing a character's words ('indirect speech') or verbalized thoughts ('indirect thought') which uses a reporting clause of introductory attributive discourse, places the discourse quoted in subordinate clause bound to the deictic orientation of the narrator, and generally summarizes, interprets, and grammatically straightens the character's language. Indirect discourse adjusts pronouns, tenses, and referring (or deictic) expressions to the point of view of the reporting speaker (the narrator) (Leech and Short, 1981).

Because any portrayal of character's thought must involve the presence of an omniscient narrator, the more direct forms of free direct thought and direct thought take on a somewhat different value from their speech counterparts: free

direct speech and direct speech. In the presentation of speech, the use of direct speech and free direct speech produces the impression that the character is talking in our presence, resulting in less and less narratorial intervention. Such intervention can also be minimized by the use of direct and free direct thoughts, but as the result is effectively a monologue (with the character talking to himself or herself) the thoughts he or she produces acquire a conscious quality (Ibid, 1981).

Interior monologue is an extended passage of 'direct thought'. It is more extended, more thoroughly given over to character's stream of consciousness. It is, therefore, usually direct rather than indirect. Dujardin, who is assumed to be the inventor of the technique, defines it as follows:

The essential innovation introduced by interior monologue consists in the fact that its aim is to invoke the uninterrupted flow of thoughts going through the character's being, as they are born, and in the order they are born, without any explanation of logical sequence and giving the impression of 'raw' experience (Edouwin Dujardin 1931:118).

The psychological states of a character are also usually rendered by diegetic statements in the form of the free indirect thought which is a borderline between direct and indirect thought. Dividing a narrative text into a narrator's discourse and characters' discourses is very useful; however, there are also many transitional and borderline phenomena such as 'psychonarration', 'narrated perception', and 'narrative report of discourse' (Dolezel 1973; Cohn 1978; Genette 1980; Lintvelt 1981).

Psychonarration is the textual representation of a character's conscious or unconscious mental states and processes, mainly by forms of 'narrative report of discourse' or 'narrated perception'. **Narrative report of discourse** is a narrator's summarizing report of a character's words ('narrative report of speech') or thoughts ('narrating report of thought'). This technique's aim is to capture the gist of the character's discourse, but render it in the narrator's own language. In the case of interior monologue, it becomes '**narrated monologue**', that is, here the stream of consciousness is primarily narrated rather than presented directly. Similarly, narrated perception is the textual representation of a character's perception, often

through forms similar to indirect discourse, free indirect discourse, and psychonarration (Fehr 1938; Chatman 1978; Leech and Short 1981; Stanzel 1984; Short 1996; Toolan 1999). This shows us that a character's point of view can also be represented without the state of mind being described. Instead, the author portrays scenes and events as they would have looked to the character concerned.

In sum, like the direct forms, the free indirect form takes on a different value when we turn from the representation of speech to the representation of thought. Instead of indicating a move towards the narrator, it signifies a movement towards the exact representation of a character's thought as it occurs. Thus, free indirect discourse is generally a less mimetic (i.e., a less accurate) rendering than direct discourse, but more mimetic than indirect discourse.

Finally, from a thorough study of narrative discourse (i.e., speech and thought representations), we may be able to distinguish the narrator's or/and character's mindset called 'mind style'. **Mind style** is a general term for a character's or narrator's typical patterns of mentation. It is the textual evocation, especially by typical diction, rhetoric, and syntax, of a narrator's or a character's mindset and typical patterns of thinking (Fowler 1977, Leech and Short 1981).

Transition from the free indirect discourse to the indirect discourse signals a move from the realm of covertness (scenic) to the realm of overtness (summative) in the representation of events in the story. **Summary** is a telling mode in which the narrator condenses a sequence of action events into a thematically focused and orderly account. Its durational aspect is **speed-up** (or **acceleration**): an episode's discourse time is considerably shorter than its story time. Speed-up, therefore, typically characterizes a summary or 'panoramic' mode of presentation according to Genette (1980), Rimmon-Kenan (1983), and Toolan (1988). The use of indirect discourse style signals the move of the narrative discourse from the narrative of verbal events or words into the diegetic statements telling the narrative of events. Thus, it is important to note that the indirect discourse style is a special subset of diegetic statements.

In addition to the two major modes (scene and summary), there are two minor or

supportive modes: **description** and **comment**. These modes are supportive rather than constitutive because no one can tell a story by mere description and comment alone. It should also be noted that both of these minor modes are telling modes, but comment is a more overt mode than description because the indirect discourse style may range from objective description to intrusive comments and judgments.

Description, as indicated above, is a telling mode in which the narrator introduces a character or describes the setting. In its description of events, characters, and settings, it is a description not from the point of view of any character, and the narrative voice can, therefore, emerge on its own. But even here, the narrative voice can reveal itself or make itself almost invisible, where the distance between the narrator and the implied author approximates to zero. This is because in description there is only the direct presentation of events, settings, and characters without any judgments and comments which mark the presence of narrative voice in a description of a setting, an event or a character. Description's durational aspect is **pause**, that is, discourse time elapses into description while story time stops and no action actually takes place.

Comment is another form of telling mode in which there are often moral evaluations which can be explicit or implicit. In scenes where there are no characters present, the voice is purely the narrative voice, and even when characters are present, the result may be the same if the characters are simply part of scenery. Besides, we may even say that anything beyond an objective action set against a particular place is the result of narrative voice by the narrator. A second way that a narrative voice makes itself felt is through direct comment on characters, the development of the action, the circumstances of the act of narrating, etc. These comments are often social, philosophical or sometimes ironic in nature. The durational aspect of judgment is pause. Comments are typical signs of narratorial intrusions and often indicative of self-conscious narration (Bonheim 1982).

Chatman (1978:220-52) lists signs of overtness, in less overt cases, in an ascending order of perceptibility: (1) the relatively minimal sign of a narrator's presence is revealed by the **description** of a setting, which is directly shown in a

play or film. In prose fiction, it is described in narrator's language; (2) a narrator has a **prior knowledge of the character** at the very beginning of the text, and makes the identity of the character for the reader; (3) **temporal summary**, which presupposes a desire to answer questions in a reader's mind about what has happened in the interval, implies the presence of a narrator as well as his or her notion of what should be told in detail and what should be narrated with greater conciseness; (4) while identification of a character implies simply the narrator's prior acquaintance with a character, **definition of character** suggests an abstraction, generalization or summing up by the narrator; (5) **reports of what characters did not think or say** is another sign. A narrator who can tell things of which the characters are either unconscious or which they deliberately conceal is clearly felt as an independent source of information on the part of the narrator; (6) the last one, **commentary**, includes interpretations, judgments, and generalizations of a narrator on events, characters, etc. This forgoing discussion refers to the heterodiegetic narrator-moving from more figural to more authorial narrator.

In contrast, the homodiegetic narrator is the case of maximal narrator presence. The narrator is a character in the story, but even here we may sense a shifting distance and judgment. The internal character may refuse to judge or comment when he or she reports events as a minimal narrator, when his or her description is marked by minimal involvement.

A homodiegetic narration may be in voice telling a story, but it may also be a diary, or journals, for example. The epistolary narrative (i.e., letters and diaries) is a narrative presented in the form of letters or diary entries. The narrator, in epistolary narrative, cannot travel into the future or enter characters' minds. The events are recorded as they happen or as they have just happened. The narrator is no more than a stenographer, and since his or her narratee is not the general reader, the story is not mediated to us.

The homodiegetic narrator rendering a story may also range from the one who is restricted to largely personal, subjective, and limited point of view, into the uninvolved sexually indeterminate, witness narrator, as the narrator in **A Rose for**

Emily. It helps to note that as there is an internal narrator who tells the story as it is happening, there is also one who tells us the story of himself or herself in retrospect. While the former knows no more than the reader about the outcome of the story, the latter knows more than the reader which puts him or her in a position of irony in relation to the events of the story- this seems that we are back to the external narrator. Finally, there is the case of an internal narrator whose reports, comments, and evaluations become increasingly questionable (unreliable). Therefore, a narrator's handling of these limitations, and a text's relative closeness to or distance from such typical conditions can tell us a lot about the perspective (slant) or attitude of the narrative voice as well as the purpose (motives) of telling the story.

2.1.3. Reliability of Narrator

All narrators can relate their tales to us primarily as scene, or primarily as summary, or most commonly, as a combination of both. In the mean time there occurs the implicit self-characterization of the narrator, which is always a key issue in interpretation. We need to ask whether the narrator is omniscient, opinionated, self-conscious, well-read, ironic, reliable, etc. Any narrator can be more or less reliable, at least in what they know. Whether they are involved in the action as agents, narrators, and third-person reflectors, differs markedly by the degree and kind of distance that separates them from the implied author, the reader, and the other characters of the story they describe or reflect upon. In any reading experience, there is an implied dialogue among author, narrator, the other characters, and the reader. And usually, the extent to which the narrator plays a part in the story has an impact on the reader's assessment of the information he or she reads. In other words, voice and distance have much to do with what Wayne Booth (1961) referred to as the **narrator's reliability**. There is a great range of unreliable narrators with a great range of impact.

We need to consider to what extent we can rely on the narrator to give us an accurate rendering of the facts, furthermore ascertain the facts, whether we are meant to respect the narrator's opinions when he or she offers an interpretation.

Thus, certainly, in order to interpret a narrative, we must have as fine a sense as we can of where a narrator fits on this broad spectrum of reliability. Rimmon-Kenan (1983:100) defines reliability as follows:

Reliable narrator is a narrator whose rendering of the story and commentary on it the reader is supposed to take as an authoritative account of the fictional truth, and the unreliable narrator is whose rendering of the story and/or commentary on it the reader has reasons to suspect. The main sources of unreliability are the narrator's limited knowledge, his personal involvement, and his problematic value-scheme.

Unlike in the earlier novels, at the end of the 19th century, in the works of realistic novelists, such as Conrad, all sorts of experiments with methods of narration took place: a certain confidence (omniscient narration) disappeared, and suddenly the novelists were aware of the gap between reality and interpretation of reality. In fact, it is only in realistic prose narratives that we can really regard the narrator as reliable, as presenting a true picture, and sometimes, a true interpretation of events. In less (or non-) realistic narratives, the narrator is usually either dramatized or self-conscious. Unlike the realist narrative, the non-realist narrative makes far greater use of the method of narration to hint at the complexity of experience, principally by suggesting that there is always a gap between life itself and any rendering or interpretation of life. Such scepticism about the ability of the narrative to get at the full truth has always been present in fiction, but it became far more common at the end of the 19th century realist narratives.

It is therefore helpful to make a distinction among unreliable narrators: those whom we trust for the facts but not for their interpretation, and those whom we cannot even trust for the facts. Dorrit Cohn (2000) has referred to the former as **discordant narrators**. They are narrators whom we feel we can rely on for the facts of the case, but whose interpretation of those facts is probably in discord with what we infer would be the implied author's interpretation. Getting to this implied author is one of the central challenges of interpretation.

But the difficulty this task can pose makes us wonder why authors would ever choose to entrust their narratives to an unreliable narrator in the first place. Yet they do, and the number is legion of narrators who are bumblers, madmen, jealous

lovers, mean-spirited relatives, and even pathological liars. Besides willful obscurity, there are advantages in handling narrative responsibility over to an untrustworthy narrator. One important advantage in such narratives is that narration itself, its difficulties, its liability to be subverted by one's own interests and prejudices and blindness's thereby, becoming part of the subject. In some texts, the implied authorial vision emerges quite clearly, despite the narrator's unreliability. Though we pick up the narrative from the narrator's 'unreliable' words, we nonetheless develop a clear judgment of the narrator's character. In such a narrative, then, there is not only a great distance between the narrator's views and those of the implied author, but we also have a clear understanding of the distance.

The unreliability of the narrator is not ordinarily a matter of lying. An important element in the telling of the story is how much the narrator knows. If we are assured that the narrator knows everything, then we read the story with trust: what is presented to us is what really is. The narrator who totally accords with the implied author demands our absolute faith in his or her powers of divination. On the other hand, if we are not so assured, we read the story with suspicion, noting the things that the narrator does not know, or does not understand, and struggling to make a sense of the facts of the story ourselves and to decipher the narrator as well as the story. This question may arise both with external and internal narrators. We see limited knowledge in internal narrators, and this is expected, but it is also possible for an author writing a story in which it becomes clear that the external narrator does not understand the implications of what he or she is narrating, or is misrepresenting what is happening, and so forth. A younger narrator would be a clear case of limited knowledge and understanding, and an 'idiot-narrator' could be another one. It should be noted, however, that adult and mentally normal narrators also quite often tell things they do not fully know. For example, in **Lord Jim** (1900), Conrad sometimes uses a character called Marlow as narrator: he is an intelligent man, but his understanding of what he perceives is limited, simply because, like any one, he interprets events according to his own beliefs and values, which makes him unreliable.

This question of what the narrator knows is a separate matter from what the narrator chooses to tell us, that is, he or she pretends to have qualities which the author denies him or her. The unreliable narrators could be isolated, (unsupported or uncorrected by other narrators) supported or corrected. The support or correction differs radically depending on whether it is available from within the action, so that the narrator might benefit or is simply given externally, to help the reader correct or reinforce his or her own views as against that of the narrator.

Sometimes it is almost impossible to infer whether or to what degree a narrator is unreliable or fallible. But there are various factors in the text which may indicate a gap between the norms of the implied author and those of the narrator. When the facts in the story contradict the narrator's views, the narrator would be judged to be unreliable. When the outcome of the action proves the narrator wrong, the reliability of the narrator is doubted, and retrospectively the reader doubts even events reported earlier. Further, we can sense unreliability when the views of other characters consistently clash with those of the narrator. Lastly, when the narrator's language reveals internal contradictions, double-edged images, it may undermine the reliability of the narrator. For example, an explicit conflicting testimony of facts is one sign of unreliability.

According to Rimmon-Kenan's (1983) the third source of unreliability is the coloring of the narrator's account by a questionable value-scheme. A narrator's moral values become questionable if they disagree with or differ from those of the implied author in the text. But if both the narrator and the implied author share the same value, the narrator is reliable in this respect, no matter how objectionable his or her views may seem to the readers.

To sum up, a covert extradiegetic narrator, especially when he or she is also heterodiegetic, is likely to be reliable. However, when an extradiegetic narrator becomes more or less overt, his or her chances of being fully reliable are diminished, since his or her interpretations, judgments, generalizations are not always compatible with the norms of the implied author.

Intradiegetic narrators, especially when they are also homodiegetic, are on the

whole more fallible than extradiegetic ones, because they are also characters in the fictional world. As such, they are subject to limited knowledge, personal involvement, and problematic value-schemes often giving rise to the possibility of unreliability.

2.1.4. Grammatical Person of Narrator

In general, interpretive discourse must decide on how to mark the gender of a narrator grammatically, mainly because it would be stylistically awkward never to use a pronoun at all. Although a novel's text projects a narrative voice, the text's narrator, as indicated, is temporally, spatially, and ontologically distant. Chatman (1978:151) presents the following diagram to illustrate the process of communication between the author and the reader.

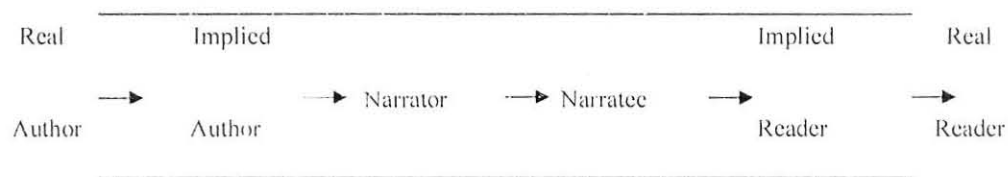


Figure 2.2.

In the diagram the real author and the real reader are put outside the textual domain of the narrative. Within the text, the two outside participants, are represented by two substitute agents whom Booth (1961) and other theorists such as Iser (1974) called the '**implied author**' and the '**implied reader**'. These two agents, in fact, are at a level below the author-reader level. That is to say, they are situated at an intermediate level of implied fictional communication (a level below the author-reader level) comprising an implied (a text's projection of an overarching intera-textual authority above the narrator) and an implied reader (a text's overall projection of a reader role, subordinate to any narratee).

Booth considers the 'implied author' to be the 'author's second-self' (1961:67), a text's projection of an overarching intratextual authority above the narrator. In other words, the 'author's second self' view makes the implied author the governing consciousness of the work as a whole—the source of the norms embodied in the work. The relationship between the implied author and the real author is complex, but Booth (Ibid: 75) has barely analyzed this complex relationship except suggesting that implied authors are often far superior in intelligence and moral standards to the actual (real) authors. It should be noted that the main reason for implementing this level is to account for unreliable narration and narrators.

In any event, the real author and the implied author need not be, and in fact are often not, identical. In a given work, an author may embody ideas, beliefs, emotions other than or even opposed to those he or she has in real life. He or she may also embody different ideas, beliefs and emotions in different works. The author may have written or may write other tales with very different narrators implying a different kind of implied author behind each of them.

Unlike Booth, Chatman and Rimmon-Kenan consider the implied author as a construct based on the text rather than imagining it as a 'second self' of the real author. Rimmon-Kenan argues:

In this sense the implied author must be seen as a construct inferred and assembled by the reader from all the components of the text. Indeed, speaking of the implied author as a construct based on the text seems to me far safer than imagining it as a personified 'consciousness' or 'second self' (1983:87).

As distinct from the real author, the implied author also differs from the narrator. In presenting the distinction between implied author and narrator, Chatman gives us the following interpretation:

Unlike the narrator, the implied author can tell us nothing. He, or better it, has no voice, no direct means of communicating. It instructs us silently, though the design of the whole, with all the voices, by all the means it has chosen to let us learn (1978:148).

In fact, the implied author does not recount the story, but is inferred as the authority responsible for selecting it and inventing a narrator for it. The implied author is the source of a work's design and meaning which is inferred by readers from the text, and imagined as a personality standing behind the work. As an imaginary entity, it is to be distinguished clearly from the real author. The implied author is also distinguished from the narrator, since the implied author stands at a remove from the narrative voice, as a personage assumed to be responsible for deciding what kind of narrator will be presented to the reader.

Thus while the narrator can only be defined as the narrative 'voice' or 'speaker' of a text, the implied author is, in opposition and by definition, voiceless and silent. It is important to note that Chatman's observation that an implied author can tell us nothing carries an underlying sense that he or she is like the director of a film who never appears on the screen, as Chatman (1978) also discusses film. This is the basic difference between film and narrative fiction because in the latter where language is the only medium, the authorial or narrative voice becomes unavoidable, either in a covert or an overt form. Thus, it is often hard to say that the narrator does not speak for the (implied) author, but one cannot simply make an assumption that the narrator speaks for the author unless one has grounds to say so. One normally considers the (implied) author's voice in two cases: (a) when one has reasons to believe that it is more or less identical to that of the narrator (as it often is authorial narration, and in non-fictional (real-life), or historiographic narrative, or (b) conversely, when the author's and the narrator's voices are likely to be significantly different; in other words, when one assumes that the author intentionally uses a narrative voice distinctive from his or her own.

At the same time, we must be cautious about the far-fetched assumption that the narrator represents, or always speaks for the author, or that in fact the narrator is the author. The fact that a story can be told by more than one external narrator makes it clear that the narrator is not and never can be the author. Besides, the existence of an unreliable narrator signifies that the author and the narrator are not the same person. Thus, we may say that although the narrator is the creation of the author, the latter is from now on, mostly denied any direct voice in the narrative

proceedings, and the narrator may be more or less distant from the implied author as well as the characters in the story he or she tells about.

These complex facts make it difficult to gender the narrator grammatically. The problem of sexually indeterminate narrators usually arises with authorial and figural narrators; there are, however, sexually indeterminate first-person narrators, such as the witness-narrator in Faulkner's **A Rose for Emily**.

In the attempt to gender a narrator grammatically for interpretive purpose, a generic 'he' is clearly out of question for its gender politics. Again, the option suggested by Bal, "I shall refer to a narrator as 'it', however odd this may seem" (1985:199), is, as Ryan (1999:141) has rightly pointed out, "incompatible with consciousness and linguistic ability". By way of compromise, most scholars now follow what has become known as '**Lanser's rule**':

In the absence of any text-internal clues as to the narrator's sex, use the pronoun appropriate to the author's sex; i.e., assume that the narrator is male if the author is male, and that the narrator is female, if the author is female, respectively (Lanser 1981:166).

'Lanser's rule' in fact establishes the questionable and delicate author-narrator link. Since the present researcher could not find any better solution to the problem of gendering the narrator grammatically, he has adopted this rule throughout his analysis of voice in the novels under discussion. Thus, the narrators in the novels under discussion would be gendered according to the above 'Lanser's rule'.

2.1.5 Narrative Level of Narrator

Most of what has so far been said is concerned with the narration of the story. Story-telling, however, can occur on many different levels. The matrix (or original) narrative can be a chain of two or more independent narratives which are not subordinate to any other story or stories. The epistolary novel is a typical example in this respect. Story-telling may also be in a hierarchical structure, one subordinating to the others. In the hierarchical structure, the highest level, the one

immediately superior to the events in the story and concerned with its narration, is called the **extradiegetic level** narrated by extradiegetic narrator, that is, the events of the story themselves, are the diegetic level. For example, the level of the narrator in the novels under discussion is extradiegetic, and the events of the stories these narrators relate are at the **diegetic level**. These events of the stories may include speech-acts of narration, whether oral or written.

There are, however, tales within tales, and so on in infinite regress. One such circumstance arises when a character in a story begins to tell a story of his or her own, creating a narrative within a narrative, or a tale within a tale. The original narrative now becomes a **'frame'** or **'matrix' narrative**, and the story told by the narrating character becomes a second degree, hence an 'embedded' or 'hyponarrative', that is, a level below another level of diegesis (Bal, 1980a:43). A character whose actions are the object of narration can himself or herself, in turn, engage in narrating a story either as homodiegetic or hetrodiegetic narrator. Thus, narration is always at the higher narrative level than the story it narrates. Therefore, the diegetic level is narrated by an **extradiegetic narrator**, and the hypodiegetic level by a second level called **intradiegetic narrator**.

For a more elaborate analysis of embedded narratives, Immon-Kenan (1983: 91) suggests the following terms:

A first-degree narrative is a narrative that is not embedded in any other narrative; a second degree narrative is a narrative that is embedded in a first-degree narrative; a third-degree narrative is one that is embedded in a second-degree narrative, etc. A first-degree narrator, by analogy, is a narrator of a first-degree narrative, a second-degree narrator is the narrator of a second degree narrative, etc, in exact correspondence.

Such narratives within narratives create a stratification of levels whereby each inner narrative is subordinate to the narrative within which it is embedded. Embedded narratives are very important in constructing meaning.

Embedded narratives may have various functions in relation (in coherence) to the narratives within which they are embedded. Embedded narratives may cohere

with the main story-line to serve one or more of the following functions. The functions are sometimes present separately, sometimes in combination, as under:

- **Actional Integration:** The hyponarrative serves as an important element in the plot of the matrix narrative. It may maintain or advance the action of the first story.
- **Exposition:** The hyponarrative provides information about events that lie outside the primary action line of the matrix narrative (especially, events that occurred in the past). It offers an explanation of the diegetic level, answering some such questions as 'What were the events leading to the present situation?'
- **Retardation:** The hyponarrative momentarily suspends the continuation of the matrix narrative, often creating an effect of heightened suspense.
- **Thematic:** The hyponarrative corroborates or contradicts the story line of the matrix narrative. The relations established between the hypodiegetic and the diegetic levels are those of analogy, i.e., similarity and contrast.

To conclude, generally, voice deals with such narrative concerns as narrator, grammatical person of narrator, and embedded stories and their respective voices. Further, the above concepts of voice are applicable in the analysis of both fictional and non-fictional works.

2.2. Narrative Focalization: Definition and Background

In fictional texts, authors see only selected representations of the world, and while selecting, they choose some of the things as important, leaving other things. They create a frame in which the selection makes sense, a pattern which allows readers make sense of the selected data which they are offered. This helps readers to connect the data in a meaningful way, where if one changes the way the pieces are patterned, one is likely to change the meaning. This resultant 'whole' which is

made of bits in certain relations to one another implies a world which is only partially represented in some form-only in the way the author sees it.

This selection and representation process, however, is not carried out randomly, rather it is based on some perspective, some angle, with some background of experience, expectations, ideology, etc. This makes clear the fact that there are various ways of representing the world, each one governed by an understanding of what the world is, how we see it, what is important to us, etc. In narratology, this is what focalization is concerned with.

Focalization in narrative texts is selection and presentation of data for a certain purpose. This is because, the very act of writing fiction is a process of abstraction, selection, omission, and arrangements to produce as complete a story-illusion as possible. This makes the question of effectiveness to be one of suitability of a given technique, for example, of selection, for the achievement of certain kinds of effects. Each kind of story requires the achievement of a particular kind of illusion to sustain it.

Focalization is one of the basic factors which determine the meaning of a narrative story. It is the matter of 'who sees' (who focalizes) the events in the story and how. The story is presented in the text through the mediation of some 'perspective', 'angle of vision', which is verbalized by the narrator though not necessarily his or hers. This mediation is called focalization (Genette 1980:189). Hence, focalization refers to the ways and means of selecting and presenting information from somebody's point of view. Therefore, it can be determined by answering questions like: 'Whose point of view orients the stretch or current segment of textual information?' Or 'Whose perception serves as the current source of information?' Perception here includes actual as well as imaginary perception, such as visions, dreams, memories, and other states of consciousness.

Furthermore, focalization is a matter of regulating and managing windows into the narrative world and by regulating (guiding, manipulating) readerly imaginary perception, i.e., selecting which objects will become the focus of attention. Focalization is the literary-critical revision of the general concept of ideational

meaning: the mental image generated by the words. In sum, with regard to focalization, the relevant question (as opposed to 'Who speaks?') is 'Who sees?'. Besides, useful, too, are variations like: Who serves as a text's center of perceptual orientation?, How is narrative information restricted or narrowed down (either temporarily or permanently) to somebody's perception, knowledge, or point of view?

The historical background of the term focalization is primarily based on three classical introductions: Genette (1980), Bal (1980) and Rimmon-Kenan (1983), (See Section 2.4.2.1).

For his definition of focalization, Genette (1980) draws on some traditional approaches: Pouillon's (1946) 'vision approach'; Brooks and Warren's (1959) 'point of view approach'; and Todorov's (1966) 'knowledge approach'. Brooks and Warren build on the question 'who sees the story?' (1959:659); Pouillon (1946:69-114) distinguishes three main vision modes: vision through a character's eyes, vision from behind, (i.e., from an omniscient narratorial vantage), and vision from outside; while Todorov raises the question whether the narrator knows more than, as much as, or less than the character (1966:126).

Genette's own contribution to this issue is, roughly, three-fold. First he introduces a sharp focalization-narration distinction by setting 'who sees?' against 'who speaks?'. Second he defines focalization in terms of combining and adjusting the pre-narratological concepts listed above. Third, his study paved the way for a subsequent, detailed typology of focalization: internal, external, psychological, ideological, etc.

A basic principle in critical reading and analyzing a narrative is to grasp the fundamental distinction between narration and focalization. As Genette (1980) has shown, most studies of point of view (for example; Brooks and Warren 1959; Friedman 1967; Booth 1961; Romberg 1962) treat the two related but different questions as if they were interchangeable, that is, 'Who speaks?' and 'Who sees?'. Focalization dispels the confusion between perspective and narration which often occurs when '**point of view**' is discussed. Thus it is essential that when we read,

2.2.1. Subject and Object of Focalization

Narratives are focalized not only by someone (the focalizer, the vehicle of focalization) but also on something. Focalization has thus both subject and object. The **subject (the focalizer)** is the agent whose perception orients the presentation; the **object (the focalized)** is what the focalizer perceives (Bal 1985). Hence, the basic concept of focalization theory is focus, and this term refers to two intricately related things: the spatio-temporal position of the focalizer and the object seen 'in focus', that is, the focalized object or center of attention. Therefore, the two basic concepts in the study of focalization are those of a focalizer (a perceiver) and the focalized (the perceived). In textual analysis, we will, therefore, often ask the two questions of 'Who sees?', and 'What is the object (thing or human being) that the focalizer focuses on?' A text is anchored in a focalizer's point of view when it represents the focalizer's thoughts, reflections, and knowledge, his or her actual and imaginary perceptions as well as his or her cultural and ideological orientations.

In general, focalization can be attributed to one of the following agents: the narrator (external focalizer) and a character (internal focalizer). In fact, the primary candidate for a text's perspectival orientation is the narrator (presenting an external focalization of the world of study); however, a text's information may also be restricted to a character's field of perception. Since we usually find both the external and internal focalizations, questions that need be raised frequently in the analysis of focalization in a narrative text are: 'Why is this character's view and not the narrator's?', 'Could the narrator really have access to the kind of information that we get here?'; and 'What does the character or narrator know and does not know at this particular point?'

A story may contain more than one focalizer and/or focalized where the shift from one to another becomes an important aspect of narrative structure, that is, the '**window shifting**'. The shift can include an imaginary perceptual shift of the focalizer. A focalizer is capable of registering the outer world, self-perception and

reflection. In all three categories: as external perceiver, self-perceiver, and self-reflector, a focalizer has the option of concealing or revealing the contents of consciousness. As a result, the concept of focalization provides a means of integrating consciousness and dialogue in the description of narrative structure.

It would be, therefore, very helpful to consider a further summary, in the review, of the process and types of focalization as well as the roles of the focalizer and the focalized object in the analysis of the novels under discussion. In fact, above all, studying focalization includes sharpening the distinctive differences between narration and focalization in a narrative text. These issues are discussed below.

2.2.2. Types and Facets of Focalization

In fact, there are a number of ways in which the focalizer may orient the events in the story. The focalizer can be emotionally or in other ways distance himself or herself from the story he or she is orienting, or may be very close, very involved. The focalizer may or may not share the 'stakes' of the story with the characters; may show a great interest in the outcome of the story and the choices the characters make or may be clinical, reserved, apparently indifferent (impartial). The focalizer may approach the story from a certain position of commitment and concern, for instance, ideological, theological, political, etc. Generally, focalization is thematic and ideological: how the focalizer 'sees' various issues with which fiction may deal, the various questions, conflicts, and anxieties in the culture that are raised by the narrative. These points of concern can be assessed in a better and detailed way in the types and facets of focalization, as discussed below.

2.2.2.1 Types of Focalization

Focalization consists of different types. A brief summary of focalization types that follows derives from Bal (1985), reworking of Genette (1980), Rimmon-Kenan

(1983) reworking of Uspensky (1973). In general, types of focalization are related to two criteria, in the position relative to the story and degree of persistence.

2.2.2.1.1. Position Relative to the Story

If we consider position relative to the story, focalization may be either **external** or **internal**. While Genette and Chatman prefer to restrict focalization to 'focal character' (i.e., internal focalization) only, most narratologists today follow Bal's and Rimmon-Kenan's proposal that the focalizer can be either external or internal. Translated into spatial terms, the external or the internal position of the focalizer takes the form of a bird's eye view vs a limited view.

Since the vantage point of external focalization brings itself close to the narrating agent, its vehicle is often called the narrator-focalizer. External focalization is most commonly found in third-person narratives, but it can also occur in first-person narratives, for example, "when the perception through which the story is rendered is that of the narrating self rather than of the experiencing self" (Rimmon-Kenan 1983:74). External focalization, it must be noted, is not based on 'Who perceives?', but on 'how' something is perceived.

Internal focalization, by contrast, is located inside the represented events, and its vehicle generally takes the form of a character-focalizer. It can also become simply an unpersonified textual stance. The story, in internal focalization, is presented as seen through the eyes of a third-person or a first-person reflector revealing the distinctiveness of narration and focalization. Internal-focalizers are variously termed as 'focal-characters', 'character-focalizers', 'reflectors', or 'filter characters'. Rimmon-Kenan reminds us that just as the focalizer can be external or internal to the represented events, so the focalized can be seen either **from without** or **within**. But the two parallel classifications do not necessarily coincide and (hence Rimmon-Kenan's division of focalizers into 'external' or 'internal' and the focalized into from 'without' or 'within' (1983:75). In external focalization, the external focalizer may perceive an object either from without or from within. If

that perception comes from without, the reader is presented with nothing but the outward manifestations of the focalized person or thing. If perception comes from within, however, the narrator-focalizer presents the focalized object (person or thing) by penetrating that object's feelings and thoughts.

2.2.2.1.2. Degree of Persistence

Moving from position relative to the story to degree of persistence as a means of classifying focalizations, we see that focalization may remain fixed throughout the narrative (consistently external or internal and attached to a single character), alternate between focalizers, or shift among several (as in many epistolary novels). In other words, **fixed focalization** is the presentation of narrative facts and events from the constant point of view of a single focalizer. The **variable** one is the presentation of different episodes of the story as seen through the eyes of several focalizers. **Multiple focalization** is a technique of presenting an episode repeatedly, each time seen through the eyes of a different (internal) focalizer. Typically, what is demonstrated by this technique is that different people tend to perceive or interpret the same event in radically different fashions. Texts that are told by more than one narrator (such as epistolary novels) create multiple focalization based on external focalizer. Banfield (1982:96) and Stanzel (1984:172) also add a fourth one, **collective focalization**. This is focalization through either plural narrators ('we' narrative) or a group of characters ('character reflectors'). The distinction between fixed, variable, multiple, and collective focalization applies to the focalized as well. Further, it is helpful to consider the following borderline cases: the hypothetical and the empty center focalizations. The hypothetical focalization is a representation of narrative events or existents (i.e., characters) as they might have been perceived by a hypothetical observer or visual spectator. A position of hypothetical focalization can be adopted by either a narrator or a character, (Edmiston 1991, and Fludernik 1991, Herman 1994). Empty center focalization is a reflector-mode representation of narrative events or existents in the absence of any internal focalizer or reflector figure, hence from the point of view of an 'empty (deictic) center'. Mainly, it is used for the

representation of events when no character is present, (Banfield 1987, and Fludernik 1996).

2.2.2.2. Facets of Focalization

Even though the visual aspects of focalization are often those that are most readily accessible, Rimmon-Kenan, following Uspensky(1973), argues that the purely visual sense of the term is too narrow. She demonstrates that at least three other facets are also relevant in focalization analysis: the **perceptual**, the **psychological**, and the **ideological facets** (1983:77-81). Even Genette (1988:64) himself briefly acknowledges that his original formula 'Who sees?' was too "purely visual, and hence overtly narrow, "though his modified definition 'Who perceives?' still fails to apply to who 'thinks'.

2.2.2.2.1. The Perceptual Facet

Perception of the focalizer (seeing, hearing, smelling, etc) is determined by the space and time. Spatially, the external focalizer has a bird's eye view, allowing either a **panoramic view** of the story's events or a **simultaneous** focalization of things happening in different places. This kind of perception is obviously denied to internal character-focalizer.

The second coordinate of the perceptual facet of focalization is that of time. If we are dealing with external focalization, it is **panchronic** for an unpersonified focalizer, but **retrospective** for a character focalizing his or her own past. Internal focalization, however, is logically **synchronous** with the information regulated by the focalizer. Thus, an internal focalizer is limited to the 'present' of the characters while the external focalizer has access to all the temporal dimensions of the story (past, present, and future).

2.2.2.2.2. The Psychological Facet

Within the psychological facet of focalization, it is the focalizer's mind and emotions that take on importance. The external or narrator-focalizer, within the cognitive component, has of necessity unrestricted knowledge about the represented world, and if this focalizer does not pass on total knowledge to the reader, it is simply for a rhetorical effect. The knowledge of the internal focalizer, however, is necessarily restricted; as part of the represented world, an internal focalizer cannot know everything about it. In its emotive aspect, the difference between external and internal focalization gives us the difference between 'objective' (or neutral, or uninvolved) focalization and 'subjective' (or coloured, or involved) focalization.

Of course, perception of the focalized from without also restricts observation to external manifestations, leaving the emotions to be inferred from them. In contrast, perception of the focalized from within allows the reader to share the inner life of the focalized, either by making the focalizer and focalized identical (as in interior-monologue) or by granting to the external narrator-focalizer the total knowledge to penetrate the inner life of the focalized. When the focalized is seen from within, especially by an external focalizer, indicators such as 'he thought', 'she felt', 'it seemed to him', 'she knew', often appear in the text. But when the inner states of the focalized are left to be implied by external behaviour, modal expressions such as 'apparently,' 'evidently', 'as if', or 'it seemed' often occur. These words underline the speculative status of the vision.

2.2.2.2.3. The Ideological Facet

The third facet of focalization is that of ideology. According to Uspensky (1973:8-9), this facet (sometimes simply referred to as the 'norms of the text') consists of 'a general system of viewing the world conceptually' in accordance with which the

events and characters of the story are evaluated. These norms, ordinarily presented through a single dominant perspective (often that of a narrator-focalizer), are usually taken as authoritative, and all other ideologies in the text are evaluated from this 'higher' position. A character may represent an ideological position through his or her way of seeing the world or his or her behavior in it, but also through explicit discussion of his/her ideology. Similarly, the norms of a narrator-focalizer may be implicit in the orientation he or she gives to the story, but they can also be formulated explicitly. In more complex examples, however, the unitary authoritative external focalizer may give way to a plurality of ideological positions, the interplay among them provoking, according to Bakhtin, a non-unitary or 'polyphonic' reading of the text.

Rimmon-Kenan also points out that although focalization in itself is non-verbal ('seeing' as opposed to narrator's speaking'), like everything else in the text it can only be expressed by language. Besides, both the presence of a focalizer other than the narrator and the shift from one focalizer to another may be signaled by language.

It is very important, however, to note the integration among the various facets of focalization. The perceptual, psychological, and ideological facets may converge but they may also diverge by belonging to different, even clashing focalizers. For example, in first – person retrospective narrative, the perceptual focalizer is usually the experiencing self, the ideology tends to be focalized by the older, more experienced narrating self. This is because the present stance of the narrating self in retrospection is mostly one accompanied by evaluations and corrections, and even opposing views, of the actions or perceptions of the experiencing self of the same person. A similar discrepancy between the psychological and the ideological facets can be found in a prose narrative: the psychology of a character revealed from within could be sympathetic, although he or she is preserved as an unsympathetic character from the ideological point of view. Such discrepancies lead us to examine the window shifting in focalization, discussed below.

2.2.2.3. Window Shifting in Focalization

Passages in a narrative text could be uniform with respect to focalization, but they may not also be uniform, either because they shift from one window to another, or because one window overlaps or overlays another window (Jahn, M., 1996). Shifting from one point of origin of focalization to another implies a shift in location but may or may not be accompanied by a temporal shift; conversely, a text may shift from one location to another, or it may have a gap of a period of time or turn to a previous period in time and yet remain anchored in the same point of origin of focalization.

Apparently, a window shift also occurs when the text shifts from a representation of ordinary perception to one of imaginary perception, for example, a shift from ordinary perception (e.g., actually seeing, hearing, etc.) to dreaming. Imaginary perception can also occur in the form of recollection (retrospection) and vision. Imaginary perception is considered as being fully equal to ordinary perception, making a virtue of the fact that it is often impossible to tell whether a perception is based on 'real' sensory input, or imaginative process, or a combination of the two. Besides, imaginary perception is of crucial importance also on levels of narrating and reading a narrative. As for narrating, it may suffice, for the moment, to draw attention to the role of recollection in homodiegetic narration in retrospect. There is, of course, narratorial imaginary perception, too. Reading a narrative, in particular, involves both the building of conceptual structure and the triggering of imaginary perception.

It is, therefore, obvious from this foregoing discussion that shifting in focalization can be used to explain various arrangement, grouping, and cutting patterns of focalization that a text exhibits on a macro-narrative level of analysis. Shifting, however, has also the effect of partitioning an extended heterogeneous passage into homogeneously focalized windows. There are merging and splitting of focalization throughout a narrative text.

Apparently, the language of narrative fiction commands a host of shifting indicators revealing that shifting is often and triply marked. Occasionally, however, shifting may also be left undermined to such an extent that it is impossible to draw a precise line. As a result, there is also another type of focalization heterogeneity that seems to be due not to shifting but to mutual interference between concurrently active windows, (i.e., windows can coexist, overlap or overlay).

More active interferences between narratorial and reflectorial conceptualizations usually result in a phenomenon which is variously termed, 'substitutionary perception' (Fehr 1983) or 'discordant psychonarration' (Cohn 1978). In substitutionary perception, a reflector 'lends his or her sight' while a narrator 'substitutes his or her words' (Fehr 1983:97-8); in discordant psychonarration, the narrator's diction and style transcend the reflector's perceptual or conceptual ability. Such passages may well be experienced as juxtapositions of two windows, one anchored in a reflectorial 'fallible filter' (Chatman 1986), the other on a knowledgeable and well-spoken narrator.

Here, what has, hopefully become apparent is that windows and window-shifting, (i.e., the degree of persistence of focalization and focalizers), provide some helpful guidance in analyzing a wide range of micro-and macro-narrative patterns of focalization, where shifts from one window to another become an important aspect of narrative structure in the narratological exploration of narrative focalization in a text.

2.3. Theoretical Framework

This section establishes the conceptual framework of the study. The important narrative concepts, namely narrative voice and narrative focalization, as reviewed above in details, are the major dimensions of the theoretical framework evolved for the purpose of the study. The theoretical framework bases on the review that combines classic introductions and subsequent revisions and modifications suggested by later narratologists. The definitions and classifications are, especially,

based primarily on Genette (1980; 1988), Chatman (1978; 1990), Stanzel (1984), Rimmon-Kenan (1983), Jahn (1997), and Toolan (1988). This is hoped to serve as

an organizational framework for contextualizing a larger number of more specific terms and concepts in this classic Genettean paradigm as a point of departure.

The following sections, therefore, give a brief summary of the important concepts of voice and focalization which are thoroughly elaborated in the literature review.

2.3.1. Voice

Narrative voice deals with narrators, grammatical person of narrator, and embedded narratives and their respective voices. Further, voice is also understood as the characteristic vocal and tonal quality projected through a text. Narratologists, such as Bakhtin, now differentiate between interpretive strategies of textual voice and extra-textual voices. The 'extra-textual voice' is that of the author, along which comes the 'authorial audience', i.e. the audience of real readers addressed by the author, and the 'narrative audience', i.e., the fictional audience addressed by the narrator.

In voice, the most important concern of critical analysis is the narrator. Narrative types and their narrators are identified on the basis of several criteria, i.e., the extent of narrator's participation in the story, narrative level the narrator belongs to narrator's degree of perceptibility, and his or her reliability, are the most important points to distinguish the variety of narrators in prose narrative fiction. Regarding participation in the story, Genette (1980) divides narrators into homodiegetic for first-person and heterodiegetic for third-person. A narrator who participates in the story as a character is homodiegetic, as in fictional autobiography, for instance. Whereas, a heterodiegetic narrator is one who does not take part in the story. Stanzel (1984), under his 'narrative situation', divides narrators into first-person, authorial, and figural. Stanzel's first-person is similar to Genette's homodiegetic one, but his heterodiegetic type has been further divided into authorial and figural. While the authorial narrator is more subjective in

relation to the material and its narration, the figural medium inclines to be objective. It should be noted, however, that there are texts which change narrative situation (first-person, authorial, figural) from one chapter to the next, from one passage to another. Besides, there is also a mixed mode narrative situation, the 'authorial-figural' narration. In the authorial-figural narration, there is both an authorial narrator and a figural medium (Stanzel, 1984). In fact, there is also a neutral heterodiegetic narrator characterized by covert narration, absence of inside views, and only having the point of view of a camera.

Following Chatman (1978), narratologists normally use the oppositional pair of overtness and covertness to analyze a narrator's degree of perceptibility in the story. This ranges from maximum of covertness to the maximum of overtness. The audibility of a narrative voice is best understood as being a matter of degrees, because, any narrator is more or less overt and more or less covert.

In the case of embedded stories, stories subordinating to others, we find intradiegetic narrators. The matrix narrative is told by an extradiegetic narrator. Both the extradiegetic and intradiegetic narrators can be either homodiegetic or heterodiegetic, and more or less distinctive voices.

The reliability of the narrator is also a case of critical analysis under voice. A narrator can be reliable or unreliable, hence, in order to interpret a narrative, we must have as fine a sense as we can of where a narrator fits on this spectrum of reliability. It is, therefore, helpful to make a distinction among unreliable narrators: those whom we trust for the facts but not for their interpretations, and those whom we cannot even trust for the facts.

Finally, interpretive discourse must decide on how to mark the gender of a narrator grammatically. This is mainly because it will be stylistically awkward never to use a pronoun to refer to the narrator at all. Today, most scholars follow what has become known as 'Lanser's rule', i.e., when there are no textual clues indicating a narrator's sex, for critical analysis, one uses pronoun appropriate to the author's sex.

2.3.2. Focalization

In fictional texts, authors see only selected representations of the world. This selection and representation process, however, is not carried out randomly, rather it is based on some perspective, with some background of experience, expectations, ideology, etc. In narratology, this selection is called focalization. Thus, focalization is the matter of 'who sees' the events in the story and how, for the story is presented in the text through the mediation of some 'perspective' called focalization (Genette, 1980).

Authors create a frame in which the selection makes sense, hence focalization is also a matter of regulating and managing windows into the narrative world. According to Jahn (1997), passages in a narrative text could be uniform with respect to focalization but they may not also be uniform, either because they shift from one window to another, or because one window overlaps into another window. Window shifting can provide some helpful guidance in analyzing a wide range of micro and macro-narrative patterns of focalization.

In sum, with regard to focalization, the relevant question (as opposed to 'Who speaks?') is 'Who sees?'. Besides, useful, too are variations like: Who serves as a text's center of perceptual orientation? How is narrative information restricted or narrowed down (either temporarily or permanently) to somebody's perception, knowledge, or point of view.

Focalization can be classified in various ways. It can be categorized into subject and object. Narratives are focalized not only by someone (the focalizer) but also on something (the focalized). The subject (the focalizer) is the agent whose perception orients the presentation; the object (the focalized) is what the focalizer perceives (Bal 1985). A story may contain more than one focalizer and /or focalized where the shift from one to another becomes an important aspect of narrative structure, i.e., the 'window shifting'.

The focalizer can further be divided into internal and external if we consider position of the focalizer in relation to the story. The external focalization takes the form of a bird's eye view, whereas, the internal focalization is located inside the represented events. Rimmon-Kenan (1983) reminds us that just as the focalizer can be external or internal, the focalized can be seen either 'from without' or 'from within. If that perception comes from without, the reader is presented with nothing but the outward manifestations of the focalized object. If perception comes from within, however, the external focalizer presents the focalized object by penetrating that object's feelings and thoughts.

Regarding its degree of persistence, focalization can be classified into fixed, variable, multiple, and collective ones. Focalization may remain fixed throughout the narrative from the constant point of view of a single focalizer. The variable one is the presentation of different episodes of the story as seen through the eyes of several focalizers. Multiple focalization is a technique of presenting an episode repeatedly, each time seen through the eyes of a different focalizer. And finally, there is the collective focalization when an episode is presented by plural 'we' narrators or a group of 'character reflectors'. The distinction between fixed, variable, multiple, and collective focalization applies to the focalized as well.

Lastly, focalization can also be classified into its different facets: the perceptual, the psychological, and the ideological. The perceptions of the focalizer are determined by the space and time. Hence, spatially, a focalizer may have a panoramic view of the story's events or a simultaneous focalization of things happening in different places. Temporally, if we are dealing with external focalization, it is panchronic for an unpersonified focalizer, but retrospective for a character focalizing his or her own past. Internal focalization, however, is logically synchronous with the information regulated by the focalizer. Within the psychological facet, it is the focalizer's mind and emotion that take on importance. The external focalizer has unrestricted knowledge about the represented world. The knowledge of the internal focalizer, however, is necessarily restricted. The third facet is the ideological focalization. This facet consists of 'a general system

of viewing the world conceptually' in accordance with which the events and characters of the story are evaluated (Rimmon-Kenan, 1983).

In summary, it is based on the above conceptual framework that the two novels under study have been explored and analyzed through chapters three to four.

CHAPTER THREE: Voice in *Things Fall Apart* and *Land of the Yellow Bull*

3.0 Voice

In this chapter, Sections 3.0 to 3.3 explore *Things Fall Apart*, whereas the rest deal with *Land of the Yellow Bull*. The voice of a heterodiegetic narrator tells the story in the novel, *Things Fall Apart*. The narrator is an outside observer of events, not a participant as a character in the story. Since there is neither any sex reference nor self-reference on the part of the narrator, the voice is sexually indeterminate; however, adopting Lanser's rule (See Section 2.1.4), hereafter the narrator will be referred to as 'he'. The predominant omniscient voice is supplemented by various individualized evaluative voices of certain occurrences, which promote frequent changes of perspectives and accounts for the narrative's objective-style; for example, Obierika's and the Commissioner's differing evaluations of Okonkwo's suicide show the differing perspectives the two characters hold. Furthermore, readers are occasionally led into the inner feelings and thoughts of characters, of Okonkwo on page 67 and of Obierika on page 129, * just to give two examples.

There are several instances of authorial interventions intended to enlighten the reader on matters of cultural interest which seem merely to provide orchestration for the bare outline of the plot, and thus to lend to the richness of detail. This is notably the case with the banishment of Okonkwo after his accidental killing of a clansman. The narrator informs us the cultural implications of this episode: "The only course open to Okonkwo was to flee from the clan" (p.128). This intervention of the narrator enlightens the reader of the culture of the Ibo people. Further along, describing the organized destruction of Okonkwo's compound by

* The page numbers without other details in this chapter (Sections 3.0 to 3.3) refer to pages in Chinua Achebe, *Things Fall Apart*, (1958)

the villagers, the narrator provides insight into the Ibo code of values: "They had no hatred in their hearts against Okonkwo" (p.129).

Other interventions are indispensable for a proper comprehension of the narrative development itself, and thus form an integral view of the novel's thematic unfolding. The authorial voice, for example, which follows after the killing of Ikemefuna ascribes a psychological motive of fear of Okonkwo's fatal action: "Dazed with fear, Okonkwo drew his matchete and cut him down. He was afraid of being thought weak" (p.63).

The narrator opens the novel with a block characterization of the protagonist, Okonkwo. The narrator introduces Okonkwo to the reader informing the reader that "Okonkwo was well known throughout the nine villages and even beyond" (p.3). Further, the narrator acquaints the reader with Okonkwo's cultural and personal background. The narrator not only defines Okonkwo and other characters, but also generalizes about their character. "Unoka, the grown-up was a failure"(p.5); "Okonkwo was a man of action, not of thought" (p.71); "Obierika was a man who thought about things" (p.129), etc. Besides, the narrative voice provides the reader with the ethnographic expositions about Umuofia, the setting where the events in the story unravel themselves.

The novel owes much to the tradition of oral story-telling which is effectively signaled by the use of oral art in it. Hence, the dominant voice of the narrative is the voice of the village story-teller whose easy familiarity with Ibo culture is suggested in the ordinary, everyday quality of the language used to describe the life of the village.

Through the integration of Ibo elements in the novel, the narrative voice takes the traditional African story-teller as the communal voice, especially in the first two-thirds of the novel (i.e.,pp.1-159). But there is a duality in the narrator's voice which suggests a cultural dimension other than that of the traditional story-teller.

There is a self-conscious individual, a 'modern' narrator of the novel who takes over the last one-third (i.e., pp. 160-215). Or rather the reader witnesses a narrator whose voice changes and adapts itself to time, which could be a reflection of the Umuofian society's change and adaptation in order to survive. Here far, Achebe's biographical remarks will shed some light on the immediate historical circumstances that seem to have influenced Achebe's artistic development. Besides, such biography somehow gives the clue to bridge the gap of identity between the author and the narrator.

Born in Ogidi, located in the present day eastern part of Nigeria in 1930, Achebe was brought up under the influence of two competing cultural systems. Whereas his father, an evangelist and church teacher belonged to the first generation of Ibo who converted to Christianity, many of Achebe's relatives and acquaintances remained loyal to the Ibo traditions with their indigenous religious and cultural norms. In one of his essays, Achebe remembers: "On one arm of the cross we sang hymns and read the Bible night and day. On the other, my father's brother and his family, blinded by heathenism, offered food to idols. That was how it was supposed to be any way" (Achebe 1975:68). Although Achebe's formal education was entirely British in orientation, it seems this clash of two cultures and the different modes of perception inherent in either system have apparently shaped his literary production. As a result, Achebe creates a cross-cultural combination of Western literary forms and Ibo oral traditions.

As narrating events in a modern African novel, the narrator is hardly in the same position as the traditional story-teller, creating his stories unselfconsciously, out of a full sense of coincidence with the culture within which he practices his art, and which provides objective support from his imaginative projection. Moreover, the narrator is obliged to employ a newly acquired tongue, English, one that is at a considerable structural and expressive remove from the speech modes, habits of thought, and cultural codes of the historical community whose experience he undertakes to evoke in the narrative. We observe, then, that the impression of the narrator's familiarity with his material and the quality of authentic life registered

by his language are in fact effects of the self on the narrator's part merged with the consummate art of the novel. This double-consciousness is perhaps inevitable when writing about a society that did not itself know writing, or using English to describe Ibo-speaking world. Achebe's solution was to forge a style that as much as possible echoed oral story telling. Ibo proverbs and stories drawn upon the collective wisdom of oral people, express their structures of meaning, feeling, thoughts, and expression and thus serve important social and ethical purposes. The novel, therefore, might be called hybrid in that Achebe uses modern form (the novel) and the English language (occasionally interspersed with Ibo words) to describe the Ibo society that confronts the colonial powers, which makes both the theme and form of this presentation socially committed. Thus, it would be difficult to study the novel without paying attention to the particular culture and oral traditions on which the author draws for their themes and values, for their narrative structures and plots, for their rhythms and styles, for their images and metaphors, for their artistic and ethical principles.

The African oral structure did not disappear in its contact with literate colonial discourse, here the novel being a representative 'literary' form. Rather a synthesis takes place in which characteristics of the oral culture survive within the novel- the merging of the worlds of orality and literacy. The superimposition of alphabetic writing upon the oral culture of Umuofia in the novel did not dismiss the oral traditions upon which the Umuofian culture had long been established. The immediate result was that the indigenous Ibo language is written down and brought into the main-stream of the world repertoire of literate language. This makes it no longer possible to undertake a meaningful critical discourse of the novel without looking seriously to the constituents of its oral tradition in the matrix of composite forms and contents, and it is not expedient to ignore the tensions arising from the oral or written and indigenous/ foreign configurations which characterize the novel and its subtexts. This assimilation and synthesization of the two traditions in the novel illustrates the transformations which occur when the pressures of social and formal realism make such assimilation inevitable.

Therefore, in the first two parts of the novel, Achebe has employed a voice of narrator nearer to the unself-conscious oral story-teller than the self-conscious 'modern' narrator of the novel. This traditional story-telling is specially reflected in the language and the embedded stories in the novel. The third part of the novel (i.e., pp.160-215), is narrated by a self-conscious, skeptical neutral narrator.

3.1. The Overt Authorial Narrator

It is essentially at the level of language that the double movement of the narrative is fully manifested. It is revealing of the novel's thematic direction to observe and follow the course charted by the language, which proceeds from the vigorous rhetoric of traditional life that infuses its early chapters with their peculiar energy, to the bare discursiveness that predominates the later chapters. In the early chapters, the language of the characters is one constituent of culture, woven into the fabric of social experiences, creating a vocal characteristic which can be regarded as a **sociolect**, which in turn creates the thematic effect of **alterity** the otherness of the alien tongue of the colonizers and their perceptions of the world as seen against the Ibo language and its perception of the world, revealing that our perceptions and the stories we tell are shaped by our social and cultural context.

Achebe writes with an authentic African consciousness, interpreting his own traditions and culture in a language that is essentially native-Ibo-derived English. This language becomes expressive of the society's seamless whole, of its tensions as well as strategies for their resolution, a language that may be said to found a whole register of the collective being – a community voice. In other words, the language used by the narrator is closely related to the speech of the Ibo characters who are the center of the novel. Expressions and proverbs used by Okonkwo and others are repeated or echoed by the narrator, and thus identity of the narrator as spokesman for the Ibo community is established. The language incorporates idioms, proverbs and imagery that evoke the Ibo tradition and culture in the novel for conveying the experience of African society under colonization. This 'Africanized English,' drawing on native proverbs, folktales, and idioms of

traditional Ibo culture, characterizes the key elements of Ibo thought and mode of speech. The narrator includes Ibo proverbs and stories from the Ibo mythology to tell his tale and tries to bring the oral rhythms of traditional story-telling into his narration. This makes the narrator sound a traditional story-teller rather than a mere novelist following the Western fictional conventions.

One important oral art form in the novel is the proverb. The narrator adopts important traditional proverbs to convey the life lessons, wisdom and philosophy of the Ibo society. The narrative voice portrays much of the Ibo culture through contestations that take place between characters of the novel. The dialogue is flavored with proverbs as the narrator reports: "Among the Ibo the art of conversation is regarded very highly, and proverbs are the palm-oil with which words are eaten" (p.7). The narrative is studded with proverbs and metaphors which help to evoke the cultural milieu in which the action takes place. Indeed, the proverbs in the novel can serve as a key to an understanding of the novel because the narrator uses them not merely to add touches of local colour but to sound and reiterate themes, to sharpen characterization, to clarify conflict, and to focus on the values of the society he is portraying. Therefore, by studying the proverbs, we are better able to interpret the novel. Quite a few of the Ibo-origin proverbs the narrator uses in the novel are the following: "... if a child washed his hands he could eat with kings" (p.9); "...a man who pays respect to the great paves the way for his own greatness"(p.20); "...you can tell a ripe corn by its look"(p.23); "A chick that will grow into a cock can be spotted the very day it hatches"(p.68); "When a mother-cow is chewing grass its young ones watch its mouth"(p.73). Knowledge is immanent in the spoken word, and this must be recalled, recreated, reinterpreted constantly since it lives only insofar as it is repeated and performed by the community. Thus, such proverbs as these tell much about the values of the Ibo society, values by which Okonkwo, the central character, lives and dies. Sometimes one finds proverbs expressing different views on the same subject. For example, comparing parents and children: most Ibos believe that a child will take after his parents, or as one character puts it: "When mother cow is chewing grass its young ones watch its mouth." However, Okonkwo's father had been a failure, and Okonkwo, not wanting to be likened to

him, had striven to make his own life a success. So impressive were his achievements and so rapid his rise that an old man was prompted to remark: "Looking at a king's mouth one would think he never sucked at his mother's breast"(p.27). Okonkwo believed that one's ancestry was not as important as one's initiative and will power, qualities which could be discerned in a child at a very early age: "A chick that will grow into a cock, "he said," can be spotted the very day it hatches." He had a good reason for thinking so. He himself had achieved much as a young man but his own son, Nwoye had achieved nothing at all. This can tell us that the oral narratives (stories, proverbs etc.) are practical, flexible, and with no single definitive message. They vary, adapt and change with performer, situation and need, which in turn is reflective of the society's adaptive and changing views and perceptions.

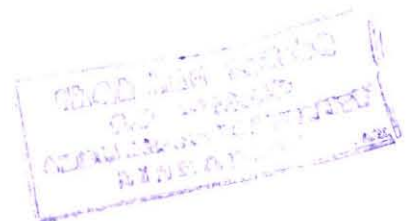
In conjunctions with these African proverbs the narrator includes Ibo words and expressions in the narrative. Here are some of the metaphorical expressions drawn from narrative portions of the novel: "... like a bush-fire in the *harmattan*"(p.4); "...like pouring grains of corn into a bag full of holes"(p.24); "... like a yam tendril in the rainy season" (p.54); "... as busy as an anthill" (p.117); "... like a hen whose only chick had been carried away by a kite"(p.107). Just to give one sample elaboration, the metaphor of the kite and her chick: "Ekwefi stood gazing in the direction of the voices like a hen whose only chick had been carried away by a kite." It alludes to the folktale of 'mother kite and her daughter' which is told by Uchendu (p.144). This interplay of the idioms and allusions by the narrator with the progression of dialogue and indirect thought of characters in the novel indicates that the narrative voice is primarily a recreation of the persona which is heard in tales, history, and proverbs belonging to an oral tradition. It represents a collective voice through which the narrator speaks for his society, not as an individual apart from it, but as the chorus rather than the hero. This collective voice is summed up by the oral art form which represents the community voice, the traditional use of drums: "It was the *ekwe* talking to the clan. One of the things every man learned was the language of the hollowed out instrument"(p.124).

In the closing pages of the novel, the Ibos remain silent. Beside, the spelling 'sah' (p.214) marks the rejection of Ibo for English and the speaker's alienation from English in his very affirmation of it. From now on the world of Ibo will be imprisoned within the language of the commissioner whose written record will classify the story of Okonkwo as a mere detail, the story of the massacre at Abame and the destruction of civilization as 'pacification'.

Hence, language is an important theme on the make of the novel. The interaction between the evocative parts of the novel and the realist mode of its thematic progression is expressive of the interface between the oral and the written that is central to the narrative technique of juxtaposing contrasts. The transition of the style from an epic mode to the fictional mode provides an indication of the changing modes of the historical relation. The significant point about this interaction is the tension produced in the novel between what one might call a romanticism of the oral style and the realism of the Western (fictional) style. The deep 'mechanisms' at work in the novel thus come to the surface in the language, enabling us to grasp the full connotative weight and rhetoric direction of the narrative. As already mentioned earlier in this section, this is a story that begins in the register of myth and ends on a note of chronicle, a transformation that is reflected in its narrative style, a process that is registered within the work by the transformation from a textualized orality to a passive documentation of events imposed by the conventions of the colonizer's literate discourse (i.e., the novel).

The language of daily intercourse that Achebe lends his characters, endows them with a special force, the mobilization of minds and sensitivities within the society, animating with its poetic resonance, its modes of social organization and cultural expression. Throughout the novel, Achebe uses in his narrative, proverbs, fables or tales drawn from the Ibo mythology. Achebe shows in the opening of the novel that this particular aspect of fiction is closely connected to oral tradition an essential feature of Ibo life:

Having spoken plainly so far, Okoye said the next half a dozen sentences in proverbs. Among the Ibo the art of conversation is



regarded very highly, and proverbs are the palm-oil with which words are eaten (p.7).

The oral rhythm concealed in the text is evident in the use of proverb, or in the patterns of temporality, which reflect the 'Africanness' of the text, referring to the pre-colonial traditional society of Africa. Besides, by peppering the novel with untranslated Ibo words, Achebe shows that the Ibo language is too complex for direct translation into English. Similarly Ibo culture cannot be understood within the framework of European colonialist values.

Another way that Achebe uses the oral art form is the traditional use of drums. Throughout the novel the beating of the drums tells the people of Umuofia that celebration or sadness is coming: "Di-go-go-gi-go. It was the *ekwe** coming to the clan. One of the things every man learned was the language of the *ekwe* played out instrument" (p.124). It is this intense quality of life that is conveyed symbolically by the drum, which functions so obviously as a leitmotif in the novel that it generates a singular connative stream within the narrative. The drum manifests a vitality inherent in and interwoven with the tribe's organic mode of existence.

The drums were still beating, persistent and unchanging. Their sound was no longer a separate thing from the living village. It was like the pulse of their heart. It throbbed in the air, in the sunshine, and even in the trees, and filled the village with excitement (p.46).

Achebe presents us, then, with a dynamic framework of social interaction and interpersonal relations that lay the affective foundation of what we might call a collective consciousness.

The interaction between styles, the play of language on which the narrative development turns, forms part of the movement of history traced in the novel. As the story advances, the reader witnesses a linguistic progress that culminates in the triumph of the culture of literacy a process that also signals the engulfing of the

* The *ekwe* is a musical instrument: a type of drum made of wood

indigenous voice, carried exclusively through the oral medium, by the discourse of colonialism. Throughout the novel, Achebe shows how methods of farming, harvesting, building and cooking, are inseparably associated with storytelling and language and thus how quickly the abandonment of the Ibo language for English could lead to the eradication of these traditions. It is in this later colonial discourse that Okonkwo and his people have become the objects of focalization that finally calls attention to itself. At the very end of the novel, there occurs a total coincidence of the linguistic medium of the text with the actual language in which the thoughts of the colonial officer are formulated. The historic turning signified by the end of Okonkwo's personal story is thus registered at the very level of language: from being subjects of their own oral discourse into another elaborated language foreign to them.

In the course of the narrative, therefore, the language changes from the oral to the written and the foreign. In the second part of the novel, there are fewer and fewer inclusions of old sayings or stories from the elders. The style of the narrative changes from being alive with images and customs to more of a chronological retailing of events. In the final part of the novel, the feeling of the pulse of the society is largely absent. This change in tone and style mimics the changes occurring in the life of Umuofia. Along this, the temporal scheme of the novel shifts from the cyclic plane, associated with a rich organism and an intense vitality, to the strictly linear, while the precipitation of events in the third part of the novel contrasts markedly with the unhurried pace of story-telling in the earlier parts, especially the first part. Besides, the Commisionaer's intention to write down his adventures in Africa finally transfers the mythic beginning of the novel into realist chronicle in history. At the same time, the spatial scheme itself becomes transformed, enlarged and, in the process, impoverished from the effectively charged compactness of the nine villages to the impersonal perspective of the lower Niger, evoked in the ruminations of the colonial officer that bring the narrative to its close. The collective life of the society is finally seen falling apart through representational disintegration of Okonkwo's family symbolically shown by Nwoye's conversion to Christianity.

3.2. Embedded Stories and Overt Intradiegetic Narrators

Inside the overall narrative matrix, there are seven embedded narratives which are narrated by intradiegetic narrators. All the narrators of the embedded narratives are heterodiegetic in relation to the story they relate. Besides, all but one narrative are second degree narratives. The Kite Myth (p.144) is the only third degree narrative. This myth functions as an explanation within the Abame story (p.142). The Abame story with its mythic coda exemplifies the best technique of embedding in the novel. In these stories, we hear the voice of the story-teller.

One major aspect of the interplay of the oral and literary traditions in the novel is the phenomenon of the story-within-the story. The novelist reflecting a habit of the orality in life and literature introduces oral stories: myths, folktales, etc, within the matrix of the novel, in the development of its plot and themes and formulation of its artistic and formal principles. The story itself is a primary form of the oral tradition, primary as a mode of conveying culture, experience, and values, and as a means of transmitting knowledge, wisdom, feelings, and attitudes in oral societies. The stories embedded within the narrative matrix of the novel, therefore, provide a lucid example of the interplay of orality and literacy which demand serious critical attention. Following are the embedded narratives in the novel.

I. The Sky and Earth Myth (p.55)

This myth, the initial quarrel between the sky and the earth, reflects the novel's basic conflict: the struggle between masculine and feminine powers and principles. The conflict between Okonkwo and Nwoye is analogous to the quarrel between the sky and the earth which is built on their being so different in character: Okonkwo condemns stories and story-telling (unless they are heroic), which he regards as a symptom of effeminacy, while Nwoye relishes stories other than those of war and bloodshed. Paradoxically, the myth endorses the triumph of imagination over power in that cosmic quarrel is resolved not through overt

demonstration of masculinity and power but through conciliation and the agency of song. By extension, therefore, the myth underwrites the feminine principle of creativity over sheer masculinity. Nwoye's espousal of the feminine and Okonkwo's dedication to the masculine create an unbridgeable impasse that ends in total alienation. This myth also functions as a macrocosmic paradigm in that it broadly represents the historical irreconcilable conformation and conflict between Africa and the European colonizers. The myth reveals the need for compromise and adaptability to situations for survival, which is central to the Ibo philosophy of life.

II. The Locust Myth (p.58)

On the eve of Ikemefuna's tragic death, a locust swarm descends on Umuofia. The event triggers the telling of the locust myth. This myth provides a handle to a phenomenon which is outside the immediate focus of everyday experience. The locusts, according to the myth, appear once in a life time and stop over for seven years in a row before disappearing for another lifetime. Within the microcosmic scope of the action, it is an event filled with portent and omen as the full strength of the invasion is felt:

At first, a fairly small swarm came. They were the harbingers sent to survey the land. And then appeared on the horizon a slowly moving mass like a boundless sheet of black cloud drifting towards Umuofia. Soon it covered half the sky, and the solid mass was now broken by tiny eyes of light like shining star dust. It was a tremendous sight, full of power and beauty (p.58).

On the macrocosmic plane, the locust myth prepares us imaginatively to deal with the phase of European imperialism in this part of Africa. History is elucidated through mythology as locust invasion prefigures imperialist invasion. This aspect of the myth will be explored fully later in the cluster of embedded narratives (pp.142-5).

III. The Mosquito Myth (p.78)

The myth is narrated soon after Ikemefuna's death. Okonkwo's conscience is beginning to recover its serenity, after three days of great internal turmoil. On the third night, he falls deeply asleep but is tormented by mosquitoes. His mind recalls the mosquito story his mother told him when he was a child (p.53). The myth is important for many reasons. First, the story reveals that Okonkwo has had the same exposure to the humanizing mother's story sessions as any other normal child. We know that his father failed to provide him with those opportunities which fathers normally gave their sons under the traditional system which is partly the reason for him to hate everything his father loved. But if his father let him down, the context of this myth shows that his mother didn't. The effect of the revelation is to transfer to Okonkwo greater responsibility for his actions, especially those acts of brutality that seem to arise from his gender imbalance. Mother's stories, which Okonkwo despises as 'silly', are actually the means to sensitizing young people to the values and social attitudes that prepare them to participate constructively in the life of the community. He cuts himself off from the wholesome feminine influences in favor of overcompensating masculinity. The myth highlights that Okonkwo's tragic fall is attributed to his own rigid code of values—his excess.

IV. The Snake-Lizard Myth (p.87)

The Snake-Lizard myth defines gender differences and educates children on the gender roles prescribed by the clan. Ezinma remarks to her mother that she is cooking too many vegetables and is then reminded by the incident of the fable of the snake-lizard. The strict distinction between male and female responsibilities, exemplified by this myth, is further ideologically mirrored in the didactic folktales, which are, according to contents, classified as either female or male stories. Thus, this myth adds to the tribe's male-female principle. The tale shows the depth of the patriarchy in the society that sex difference is mirrored as an ideological difference.

V. The Tortoise and the Birds Tale (p.100)

This is a trickster tale in which the trickster is caught in his own intrigue. The story, in the narrative context, is more substantially moral: it dramatizes the evil of extreme egocentrism. As in pursuit of individualistically determined obsessions the trickster comes into conflict with society, so Okonkwo shares the tendency towards an overwhelming sense of the ego which brings him into conflict with the group. The fate of tortoise, the egoist, prefigures Okonkwo's fall in the novel. It is this propensity to be individualistic that tortoise shares with the protagonist in the novel, and that makes the tale something of a paradigm in relation to the novel. Okonkwo, like the tortoise, offends his society several times and is seriously punished. Analogously, just as Tortoise falls to pieces at the end of the tale, Okonkwo commits suicide in his moment of defeat. The tale strengthens the Ibo's firmness against excess- in this case, extreme egocentrism.

VI. The Abame Story (p.142)

Even though a historical or pseudo-historical narrative, the Abame story assures an aspect of precautionary tale. In the narrative context, it is the first demonstration of the power of imperialism, a power based upon force and coercion. While Okonkwo is in exile in his mother land, his friend Obierika in the company of two other Umuofia men pays him a visit. During a treat of palm-oil wine, their conversation revolves around travels and Uchendu enumerates the clans he had visited in his youth. The mention of Abame among them triggers the memory of the recent tragedy which has befallen that clan and its people and Obierika tells the story of its destruction. Uchendu responds to the Abame story in the nature of his own story of the kite, the duckling and the chicken which becomes a sort of narrative coda to the Abame story. Again this narrative response is triggered forth by the remembrance of a well known story that has a direct bearing on the situation just dramatized, in the kite myth. The story foreshadows



the forthcoming destruction of the Ibo culture due to lack of mutual understanding, and recognition of each other's values between the Ibo and the colonizer.

VII. The Kite Myth (p.144)

Ordinarily an etiological myth which explains why kites eat chickens but not ducklings, the myth goes beyond etiology in this context; it is an extended response to the Abame story. Uchendu, the teller of the myth, had intervened while Obierika was telling the Abame story to learn what the white man had said before the Abame people killed him. He is offering an ethical comment on the murder of a lone traveler who offered no provocation, the myth therefore supplies a moral coda to a story which in turn provides a major sign-post on the thematic structuring of the larger narrative. The myth thus functions as an explanation within explanation.

The critical issue which the novel has to confront is how to bridge the epistemological gap between the known world of the traditional people and the as yet nebulous world of the Europeans threatening the inner stabilities of the traditional world. These embedded stories attempt to bridge this gap. This myth, together with the locust myth and the Abame story, reveals the exclusivity of the two cultures, i.e., that of the Ibo's and the colonizer's.

In the Abame story, the people consult their oracle who predicts as closely as possible what is going to happen. The lone white man would destroy their clan. Next, the lone white man is only a harbinger of others already underway. Here one must reintroduce the locust myth, because it brings an important dimension into this attempt to reconstruct the mode of knowing and absorbing a new threatening experience. And finally the white men are the 'locust'. What is underway is imperialist invasion. On the microcosmic level of experience, we have a particular event of the murder of a solitary white man riding an 'iron horse' and the terrible reprisals against a doomed clan. On the macrocosmic plane, however, we have the parabolic extension of the event that encompasses the global scope of imperialism,

with the locust invasion symbolizing the imperialist invasion with its attendant devastations and distinctions.

The linguistic register draws the two events together and establishes the vital links. Of the locusts in Umuofia we are told that "at first, a fairly small swarm came" and that "they were the harbingers sent to survey the land" (p.39). Of the coming of the white men, the Abame oracle informs us as follows: "Other white men were on their way. They were locusts. And that first man was their harbinger sent to explore the terrain" (pp. 97-98). The connection is deliberate.

The locust myth bridges the gulf of cognition and anticipation; it establishes the link between the known and the unknown. The oracle could draw upon the locust paradigm to explain the threat posed by imperialism.

3.3. Voice of the Neutral Narrator

Besides the heterodiegetic narration, the employment of a narrative (with a neutrally overt) voice is another basic characteristics of the narrator's approach to the telling of the story. The narrator as an observer does his best to relate the truth. He mostly remains unopinionated, this is so that the facts are recognized and are not opinions of the truth. Thus, events in the novel are narrated from the more distanced perspective of the oral story teller. The detached yet tolerant tone of the narrator acts as a most effective mediator between the individual and the community, and by extension between the evocative parts of the novel and the realistic mode of its thematic progression is thus expressive of the interface between the oral and the written that is central to the double cultural awareness of the author. We are let to observe that, as a writer, Achebe is in fact situated at the point of intersection between two world orders, the pre-colonial African and the Western, or more specifically Euro-Christian African, that impinge upon his creative consciousness. It is important to recall this defining factor of the total cultural situation by which Achebe's inspiration is conditioned, and to stress the directing influence of his Western education and its sensibility upon this novel, and the comprehensive process of self reflection they imply.

Thus, an attention to its various inflections indicates that the narrative voice adopted in the novel has to be imputed in large part to Achebe's status as an African with some touch of western values, the product of his Christian education. This is a voice that speaks often, perhaps even primarily, from the margins of the traditional culture, which occurs early in the novel: "Darkness held a vague terror for these people, even the bravest among them" (p.11). This suggests that the perspective that the narrator projects upon the traditional world is that of an external observer, a perspective that implies a cultural distance from the background of life, of thought and manners, that provides the concrete reference to his fiction. We encounter the same stance in another passage where the narrator, acting as an outsider from the Ibo culture, observes the community to which the work relates: "Fortunately among these people a man was judged according to his worth and not according to the worth of his father" (p.8). In these and similar passages, Umofia is simultaneously 'they' and 'we' and this subtle combination of detachment and participation helps the narrator to manipulate a neutral voice. This double consciousness of the narrator, in fact, characterizes the narrative as a whole.

The narrator adopts the tone of objective narrative, a tone derived from the convention of literate discourse. Its impassibility reflects the distance that he is obliged to take with regard to his subject. This tone is evident in the direct accounts of customs and of beliefs and other notations related to the tribal way of life, passages in which the skepticism natural to the rational view point is barely held in check, masked only by the neutral tone of the narrative voice.

We sense the way in which this skepticism is held back in the long description of the search for Ezinma's *iyi-uwa*, a special kind of stone which forms the link between an *ogbanje* and the spirit world, (pp.78-90). The narrator describes how a medicine man exorcised Ezinma, Okonkwo's daughter. Ezinma was an *ogbanje*, a malicious spirit that had been born many times to the same earthly mother, only to die and return to the world of the unborn each time the mother comes to love it. Ezinma was ordered to reveal where the *iyi-uwa* was buried, the stone representing her link to the world of the unborn. This she did and the medicine-

man dug it up: Ezinma would now stay in the land of the living. The narrator recounts what happened without comment or irony. This report of an eminently pragmatic behavior serves to dispel the verisimilitude that seems to attach to the story with a sober notation of fact. The narrator, in this *ogbanje* episode, wants his readers to suspend disbelief and enter into the Ibo world view. Likewise, later in the novel (p.191), a militant Christian who dared to kill a sacred python falls ill and dies. The traditionalist accepts that the gods were protecting their own, let the reader think what he or she likes. When later in the novel the killer of the python is himself killed, the reader must suspend disbelief as he/she is given only the Umuofia point of view, i.e., though another explanation is conceivable, it is not suggested in the novel. In all these episodes, we cannot, of course, say that the narrator is exchanging ironic glances with his readers over the heads of his characters.

Similarly, Ekwefi's reminiscence of her encounter with an evil spirit is juxtaposed with a realistic, almost banal, explanation of her visions:

She had prayed for the moon to rise but now she found the half light of the incipient moon more terrifying than darkness. The world was now peopled with vague, fantastic figures that dissolved under her steady gaze and then formed again in new shapes....What she had seen was the shape of a man climbing a palm tree, his head pointing to the earth and his legs skywards (p.111).

These juxtapositions reflect the workings of the narrator's mind as it hovers between fascination and disbelief, between an impulse towards an embrace of the setting and the narrative elaboration of the context and a positivist outlook inescapable from a liberated consciousness.

There is no better evidence of this ambiguous subtext than the wry report of the *egwugwu* who is rooted to the spot for two days for daring to cross the path of one handed masquerade (p.126). And Obierika's expression of awe at the potency of a neighboring village's 'medicine'(p.118) indicates that even the intelligence of a wise elder like him can be preyed upon by the superstitions of the tribe. Obierika

functions as the voice of the narrator, the voice of reasoning, on occasions when the narrative lapses from the digetic to the mimetic.

The villagers, the narrator recalls, laughed at Unoka's laziness and everyone agreed that he was a failure. However, interspersed with these seemingly uncompromising judgments of Unoka are lyrical descriptions of his musical accomplishments, which reveal the narrator's empathy with him. The affectionate descriptions of Unoka's youth is combined with affections for a time now passed and for a community in harmony with the rhythmic cycles of planting, harvest time and celebration. Look at this following linking passage:

He was very good on his flute and his happiest moments were the two or three moons after the harvest when the village musicians brought down their instruments, hung above the fire place. Unoka would play with them, his face beaming with blessedness and peace. Sometimes another village would ask Unoka's band and their dancing egwugwu to come and stay with them and teach them their tunes (p.5).

In other accounts the narrator's voice merges with Unoka's as he expresses Unoka's passionate love for the "blood-stirring and intricate rhythms of the *ekwe* and the *udu* and the *ogene*... "and" his own flute weaving in and out of them, decorating them with a colorful and "plaintive tune"(p.6). Further, while not endorsing his idleness and lack of success, the elders who continue to lend Unoka money until his death, share the narrator's affection for his feckless talent: "But Unoka was such a man that he always succeeded in borrowing more, and piling up his debts" (p.6).

It is important to note that although the narrative voice is critical of Okonkwo's excessive commitment to aggressive power and his literal adherence to narrow masculinity, it does not condemn Okonkwo's final action, the killing of messenger, through any narrative strategy. Similarly, although the narrative voices sympathise for Nwoye's gentle imagination, Nwoye's decision to join the church and attend the mission school is not endorsed. Nwoye is driven to join the church,

the narrator suggests, because it tolerates what his father defines as weakness and because it provides safety for those who have been banished by the clan because they are thought of as aberrations. The church that Nwoye joins, however, is represented as instrumental in the disintegration of the clan, and Nwoye becomes, by implication an agent in the destruction of the traditions and values that held those village societies together.

While it is evident that the above passages in which the narrator reports these beliefs, and the practices associated with them, imply a certain measure of understanding of their ways, it would be clearly absurd to suggest that the voice identifies with them at any level of the intellectual make-up. The narrative voice occasionally lapses into the knowing tone of the anthropologist. For instance, he will explain: "Darkness held a vague terror for these people, even the bravest among them" (p.11). The narrator and his modern audience, presumed to be unafraid of darkness, believe they can know 'these people' more fully than these people know themselves. It is especially instructive in this regard to note the way in which the bewilderment of the villagers at the survival of the Christians in the Evil Forest affords the narrator scope for an indulgent satire upon their conceptual naivete, as determined by the collective belief system. This naivete takes on a more ominous character in Obierika's account of the white man by the people of Abame, who tied up his 'iron horse' (i.e., a bicycle) to prevent it from running away to call his friends (p.143). The Ibo people could not identify the bicycle as an inanimate object. It is also significant that later in the novel, as a demonstration of the inadequacy of the traditional world view, we are informed of the test of efficacy posed by the new medicine introduced by the missionaries: "And it was not long before the people began to say that the whiteman's medicine was quick in working" (p.188).

In another chapter (Ch.10), the narrator shows us the *egwugwu* judging a material dispute. We are told that the women of Umuofia never asked questions about the *egwugwu* cult. They "might have noticed that the second *egwugwu* had the springy walk of Okonkwo," and they might have noticed "that Okonkwo was not

among the men of title and elders” (p.94), but if they did, they kept these thoughts to themselves. Perhaps it was never possible that any reader of the novel should believe that the *egwugwu* were ancestral spirits returned to earth, but, it is clear that the narrator himself does not believe. The reference to a possible doubt among spectators advertises the distance of the narrator from any faith in the world he describes.

The insistence of the narrative voice on the fundamental weakness of the traditional cognitive system is thus unmistakable and it raises the issue of the skeptical distance that the narrator is obliged to maintain from this system, and indeed the intellectual detachment from the world he represents, despite his deep sense of cultural involvement in and affective engagement with his material.

The shifting perspectives we encounter in the novel and the varied tones of the narrative voice afford pointers to the fact that the novel is written out of a consciousness on the part of the author. Background (i.e., the Ibo culture and perception) functions for Achebe not as a reference for an objective structure of knowledge, but rather for the novelist’s narrative construction and imaginative purpose. It is a touchstone of an aesthetic as a stock of imaginative symbols enriched with an affective value that does not depend on belief or devotional commitment for force of appeal. The relation of Achebe to his material is thus comparable in some important aspects to that of the Western author to pagan mythology, and even to aspects of Christian beliefs that are no longer capable of commanding the writer’s intellectual assent or even emotional identification. In a sense, the narrative voice’s tacit acceptance of the supernatural and the seemingly irrational, and a valid portrayal of the events associated with them, add richness to the tragic vision of the novel.

3.4. The Figural Narrator

The first question that inevitably arises as soon as the reader begins reading the first line of a prose narrative is the identity of the narrator, i.e., whose voice the

reader is supposed to be hearing, and therefore, whose version of events the reader is let to perceive. The answer to this question is in the fact that the novel, **Land of the Yellow Bull** is told by a voice at an extradiegetic level. As we read, we discover the story told by an extradiegetic narrator who is not involved in the events of the story. The narrator is a heterodiegetic one at the same time. The narrator is a sexually indeterminate teller of the events of the story in the novel.

The novel, generally speaking, is told by an authorial-figural narrator, i.e., a narrator who has both the features of a figural medium and an authorial one (See Section 2.2.1.1.2.). At the beginning of the novel, the voice of the narrator is less overt. This is the voice of a less distinctive narrator with a vague exposition of the setting because the narrator goes on describing unspecified natural scenery and characters, of which the reader's mind may inquire an explanation:

*It was spring early in October 1995. The bees were buzzing from one tree to another collecting nectar and pollen. The air was filled with the fragrance of medical herbs and flowering plants. The Hamar girls, looking after their sorghum and maize fields, were on their quiet watching and synchronizing their movement with a song (p.9).**

The narrator is not a co-operative story-teller. He conspicuously flouts the maxim of addressee-oriented (reader-friendly) exposition which is normally expected by the reader at the beginning of a novel. Hence, at the beginning paragraph of the novel, quoted above, thus far into the text, we don't know where we are, we don't know who the characters, 'the Hamar girls', are, and also how many of them there are. The only thing the reader learns at this point is that the scene opens in some exterior natural scenery at an afar field, evidently, and there are some girls in the field. It won't take the reader long for the vague exposition goes on:

* The page numbers without other details in this chapter (Sections 3.4 to 3.5) refer to pages in Fikeremarkos Desta's *Land of the Yellow Bull*, (2003).

The air was hot with brisk winds and, as usual, the Hamar hamlets appeared to be covered in colorful fashion. A thrill of excitement ran through everyone's mind during this memorable season (p.9).

From this exposition, what we learn more is that the setting begins at some sort of villages with non-Christian settlers for it says 'hamlets', a small village without a church. Note how easy it would have been to the reader and for the cooperative narrator to indicate things plainly. But it should be noted that such a style of a beginning exposition does not mean an inferior narrative technique. And yet the reader can be dead certain that the author (Fkeremarkos) knows exactly what he is doing by using such a technique and such a narrator. Thus, it is clear that the passage is both a hetrodiegetic one and a less overt one, with a less projected voice of a narrator with minimal interference between the reader and the events in the story, minimal interference only revealed by the narrator's description of the setting, which, according to Chatman (1978) is a sign of minimal overttness (See Section 2.1.2.2.1.).

In addition to the above technique of displaying just the picturesque setting, there are also times, when the narrator delegates perspective to the characters and leaves them to speak for themselves. In this case, we, the readers, are presented with a record of direct speech, a dialogue of characters among themselves. In the novel under discussion, we hardly find a page without witnessing the characters in the novel speaking to one another. The following citation is only an example:

*"Delti," she called him, nibbling his ear-lobe.
"Charlotte," he said and laughed softly.
"We have finished packing our luggage. Now we are ready to go..."her voice stalled as she gazed at him (pp.10-11).*

Such direct speeches are found, for example, on pages 14, 17, 31,33,36,37. In

these lines and many others throughout the pages in the novel, the reader is presented with quoted speeches of Delti, Charlotte, and Kello, only to mention the most important characters in the novel, with the minimal interference of the narrator. It is minimal since the narrator's temporary absence creates the illusion of a reader witnessing the story by himself or herself. The narrator, thus, by adapting the mode of objective reporting, and the direct presentation of the utterances of the characters facilitates a seemingly direct involvement of the reader in witnessing the events in the story unraveling. It should be noted, however, the narrator, at any line of the story is at the same time unavoidable. It is he, after all, who decides when it is contextually appropriate for the characters to be left to speak for themselves, for he is still there pulling the strings, and that is why we can expect the objectivity of the narrator revealed by the narrator's minimal possible interference in rendering the story.

The reader hears a minimal distinctive voice of the narrator at this beginning page of **Land of the Yellow Bull**, only revealed by the narrator's description of setting. The descriptive setting above is displayed to the reader by the narrator's language, showing the narrator's interference between the events in the story and the reader in any way. The setting and the characters, after all, have to be introduced to the reader, anyway. Hence, the reader of the novel, further, witnesses the narrator's prior knowledge of the characters in the story, (e.g. 'Hamar girls'), at the beginning of the novel, as the narrator exposes their identity for the reader. Hence, the relation of the narrator to the story's beginning is in medias res, (See Section 2.2.1.1.2) i.e., to the issues and characters involved, is one of suspense on the part of the reader, and irony on the part of the narrator, who is withholding vital information and is entitled for the possibility of omniscience, as a narrative convention, for he is a heterodiegetic narrator. Hence, in **Land of the Yellow Bull**, the reader identifies this narratorial voice distinctive from characterial voice which he or she encounters in the dialogues between the characters.

Here lies a modern technique of narrative voice as this novel exhibits. It exhibits

the contrasting features of both figural and authorial narrative situations, producing a mixed-mode narrative situation, which is narratologically called ‘authorial – figural narration’ (See Section 2.1.2.1.2.). There is a figural voice, which is indicated by the subdued medium as in the above situation, and also an overt authorial narrator, signaled by the overtness textual indicators. See below. Now we move from the figural to the overt authorial narrator in the novel.

3.5. The Overt Authorial Narrator

The narrator in the novel, being, in some places, figural, and dominantly authorial one at some instances in the text, we can assert the presence of an overt authorial narrator’s voice, too. Consider, for example, “Then, suddenly, and mysteriously, she ended up in the hands of the Hamar hero, Delti Geldi” (p.18). Here, the words ‘suddenly’ and ‘mysteriously’ reveal the intrusion of the narrator between the events in the text and the reader, the interference we find from an overt voice. An additional example can clarify this further:

*Later on, when she [Charlotte] had conducted her research and unveiled their life style, astonishingly, Charlotte found herself bounded in romantic relationship with an indigenous people the virgin nature of **Land of the Yellow Bull** (p.18).*

From these quoted instances, it is obvious that the reader is at a stance of listening to the events of the story as told, judged, and perceived by the overt narrator, not at the level of a seemingly witnessing stance of the events of the story as it happens with a covert story teller, one who tells a story with the minimal possible meddling between the story and the reader. Furthermore, as an overt intrusive teller, the narrator also summarizes what the characters in the novel have thought, said, and done, e.g.: “Telepathically, they agreed that the spark pinpointed that the time was up” (p.34). In such a summary, we do not witness the character’s

voice, but a summary report of the narrator. This is among the signs of the overtness of a narrator since there is a distinctive block between the story and the reader, a third person as a medium between the two parties, the reader and the events in the story.

As indicated in Section 2.1.2.1.2., a heterodiegetic narrator is somebody who is not, and never was a character in the world of the story; conceivably, one who reads the above two quotations from the novel can easily discover the narrator to be an outsider from the events in the story, but just an external observer and teller of the story. The third-person pronouns 'she', 'her', 'their', 'herself' are also additional evidences of the externality of the narrator. This is because the narrator is distancing himself from the characters involved in the story since he is not one of them. Hence, the reader can identify that the exposition is presented by somebody who is above and beyond all the people and things in the story because when the story gets going throughout the novel, all characters in it are third-person characters. Furthermore, omniscience and omnipresence are the characteristics of a heterodiegetic narrator, and the reader can see this from the following quotation: "Life and death are inevitable aspects of human existence. She believed that those who have conceived a mission to their lives do not assess success merely by surviving..." (p.25). In this passage, the word 'believed' shows omniscience of the narrator. It is only the heterodiegetic narrator who is allowed access to internal workings of the mind of a character in a story. Thus, apparently, the narrator knows all the facts 'she believed', yet nobody is going to ask him how he came by that impossible knowledge, for all humans are denied to what is called the 'other mind', (See Section. 2.1.2.1.1.). But the heterodiegetic narrator typically assumes the power of omniscience as if this were a natural thing in the world to enter the mind of people, just by a narrative convention.

To sum up, the overtness of the narrator can be seen from his subjective expressions "suddenly, mysteriously, astonishingly", and even from his philosophical orientation. Hence, the reader, obviously enough, comes across a

very distinctive, heterodiegetic narrator, expressing an easily distinctive voice, which is called an overt authorial narrator's voice.

Hence, unlike at the beginning of the novel, towards the middle and end, the more objective voice gradually turns to a more subjective one. The author utilizes objectivity at the beginning to let the reader learn the facts in the story by himself or herself, but bit by bit, the interference of the narrator becomes more overt and tries to direct the reader subjectively not only by telling the events directly, but also by winning the voices of Kello and Charlotte to his side. The author creates the illusion of neutrality of the above authorial narrator in some parts of the novel as follows.

Throughout the text, Kello, a character in the novel, functions as the balancing, neutral voice of the text. As a Hamar by birth and an outcast from his culture and people as a *mingi*, i.e., an abnormal child because he lost his upper teeth before the lower ones, by accident, by stumbling and falling, he becomes a balancing voice between Charlotte and the Hamar people, a balance between two cultures.

Charlotte could not conduct her anthropological research, living among the Hamar people. The people marginalized her from their social life and even physical closeness. When she was socially shut out both by the Hamar men and women, the only person she could talk to is Kello. Unlike his Hamar cousins, Kello has been introduced to modern education. He is a sociology student at the university. So Charlotte tells him what happened to her at the meeting of the Hamar men. She was immediately expelled from their meeting when she approached them. Desperate by her exclusion, she comes to Kello seeking a solution to her problem. Kello's response is made by the author to be a voice of balance between the Western culture, represented by Charlotte, and the Hamar culture. After a few stares, Kello advises her to compromise her Western values with the Hamar ones:

Listen, I have felt your pain and fear in your commitment to understand this strange way of life in Hamar. You grew up in a

different world and missed it when you came to Hamar... I am quite sure they are not avoiding you. (p.104).

The narrator of the text uses Kello to represent him to talk and comment on the Hamar way of life. It is more convincing for the reader to agree with Kello's judgments and stories about the Hamar for he is a Hamar than Charlotte, a Western girl, with little knowledge of the Hamar culture. Besides, if the narrator himself forwarded his judgments and stance of the Hamar culture, still the reliability of the judgments can most probably be doubted, because the more a narrator becomes intrusive, the more the reader doubts his or her reliability, and can reduce the reader's temporary 'suspension of disbelief'.

Now, even for Kollo, a Hamar boy, the Hamar culture is 'strange', see in the above citation, because he was practically its victim as a *mingi* who was to be stoned to death in the forests. By using Kello, the narrator reveals his doubts about some of the Hamar ways for the narrator never comments on Kello's speech. But, at the same time, the narrator makes Kello to defend the Hamar culture by assuring Charlotte that they were not avoiding her. Furthermore, he enlightens her that the difficulties she is encountering are not really because of her being an outsider of the Hamar culture, but of her being a woman:

Had you been a man, you wouldn't have encountered any problem. But you are a woman. There is no doubt about it. Because they believe that their 'constitutional' rules bind on the Hamar women also apply to all women of any race (p.104).

In this passage, the narrator hides behind Kello, and Kello's voice is made neutral in the gender case as indicated. He neither supports nor comments the Hamar's marginalizing the woman in some of their affairs. Further through the text, however, we find Kello supporting the patriarchal Hamar culture, and his stance and his voice is one of a traditional Hamar aligning himself with his culture, and at the same time, one who comments on it as he says, " Although there are many

traditional constraints, a woman is a gift created only to help, amuse and serve a man”(p.104), and he even goes on displaying specific labor divisions of the woman, like preparing and serving tobacco to men, tilling the land, milking cows, and bearing and raising children (p.104). Women, on the other hand, are not supposed to sit with men and discuss community affairs equally with men (p.104), and, he tells her to balance her stance and view: “... before you start blaming them, see your own side. You are a stranger who does not have any sort of clue” (p.104). Here, Kello represents a person at crossroads between two voices, one meant to balance the other.

After Kello’s lecture to Charlotte, of the Hamar culture, the narrator himself snatches Kello’s voice and sides himself with Kello, supporting Kello’s advice to Charlotte on how to behave in order to continue her research, while there are not any narratorial comments on Kello’s stance: “Unless she re-adjusted her research approach, it was clear that her dream wouldn’t be fruitful (p.105). Hence, as per Kello’s advice, she begins to make a move to be a member of the Hamar community by announcing that she is single and by going to the *invangadi* dance, which is permitted only for unmarried girls. At *inavagadi*, she invites the hero of the Hamars, Delti Geldi, to the dance floor as the culture allows, and just like a Hamar girl, she dances and enjoys the moonlight sexual ecstasies in her first introduction to the Hamar culture. In this episode, we see Kello’s and the narrator’s voice merging, which indicates Kello being the voice of the text, the neutral voice.

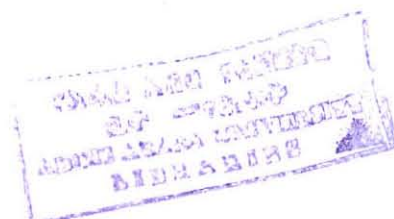
A day after Charlotte’s *invagadi* experience, the narrator enlightens the reader with a summary presentation. When she wakes up in the morning the next day, things go on as usual after she has gone to the *ivangadi* and made love with a married man; or in other words, her first introduction to the Hamar culture. The narrator passes an ironic comment on this:

The sun was streaming through the tent. Charlotte slept until ten O'clock in the morning. Then she woke up and touched her face. Her face was ruddy and healthy. That was odd... she felt nothing (p.111).

Charlotte thought that it was difficult to introduce herself into the Hamar culture and it took her long to decide to be one. But when she lastly makes her mind up, things were simple. Hence, the narrator passes this ironic comment by saying that “Her face was ruddy and healthy. That was odd... she felt nothing.” It should be noted that we do not hear the voice of Charlotte. She is not the one wondering about the oddness of the aftermath of her experience. It is the narrator who is commenting on enormous fear and despair of Charlotte, and her external comment of the Hamar culture to be baseless. When she practically experiences it, we do not see her regret or feel any unease, or any emotional or physical disturbance. Here, the narrator totally sides with the Hamar ways with an indirect comment on Charlotte’s first worries. Even, the narrator goes on telling the reader that she is rather sexually overjoyed:” “She had an affair with a married man. Their sexual fantasies were unique and special”(p.112).

The narrator, who was indirectly siding with the Hamar men, now passes a philosophical judgment sympathizing with them: “The Hamer men aren’t alcoholic horses. Dancing and entertainment is part and parcel of their tradition” (p.113). The narrator contrasts the Hamar men with the Western men, who date their love for a dinner with a treat of some liquor to drink in their romantic evenings, but the Hamar men use dancing, instead. Here, we observe an overt comment of the narrator siding with the Hamar culture.

Moreover, the narrator enlightens the reader about the character of the Hamar man: “They don’t use force to attain sexual gratification. There haven’t been escalation of gang violence in Hamar villages” (p.113). The narrator here depicts the naturalness and peacefulness of the romantic relationships of the Hamar man and the Hamar woman. Their sexual affairs are based on mutual consent and understanding, and it ends with mutual satisfaction of the two parties. This voice of the narrator, therefore, is the voice of the Hamar people, and Charlotte, who has practically involved herself, is reported to the reader to begin to sympathise with the Hamar way and merge into the narrator’s stance: “Charlotte herself has seen



and confirmed this”(p.113). The narrator furthermore, reports Charlotte’s thoughts and judgments of the *invagadi* dance and its sexual courtesty and enjoyment:

Charlotte had understood that the right kind of dance had the power to make people merge together and swim up and down with maximum interest to attain great pleasure. She was impressed by the exciting nature of the dance and its coordination, and moreover by the ability of Delti to take care of her feelings (p.115).

Through descriptions such as the above depictions, the narrator influences the reader to appreciate and involve himself or herself in the Hamar culture, and to understand Charlotte’s outsider comment and fear of the Hamar way to be groundless.

In another episode, the narrator stands neutral: “It was absolutely contradictory to the horrible story she had heard from Kello”(p.99). The narrator is endorsing the fearfulness of the story she heard from Kello, i.e., the decision of the elders to cast out Kello, the child, for his being a *mingi*. Here, the narrator’s voice merges with Charlotte’s stance in making a humanistic, opposing comment on some harmful traditional practices of the Hamar people, as unreasonable in relation to a helpless child for losing his teeth by accident, being punished finally, to be stoned to death and as if it were a crime. Here, the narrator’s voice is one of opposition to the Hamar culture in terms of human values. Immediately, the narrator shifts his siding, and balances his voice by upholding an opposite stance to the above, i.e., a positive part of the culture of the Hamar people. The inhumanity that was seen in deciding to get rid of Kello is overlapped also with the humanity and forgiveness of the people. The narrator reveals this deep humanity of the Hamar people in general, and the relatives of Kello, in particular as follows:

On the other side, she saw Kello’s relatives and the other Hamars welcoming him by saying, ‘the son of Horra Shala’ and approaching him by presenting him different gifts (p.99).

Charlotte is a little bewildered with this overlap of cultural rigidity and immense humanity as being inseparable as the two sides of the coin: “Charlotte thought she couldn’t grasp the impulse of the Hamars in that period of time” (p.99). Here again, the narrator summarizes Charlotte’s thoughts, and emotional sympathy with the reaction of Kello’s family when they see their lost son and brother coming back from the dead, one who was destined to die in the bush stoned by the village elders. This shows that their action is a necessary evil that may have to be done to preserve the cultural norms that kept them together. His reunion with his family is an emotional moment:

She [Charlotte] was surprised, particularly, when she saw Kello's mother and sisters, clad in goatskin, treated Kello by showing their sincere apology beating their chests and weeping. She was deeply touched by their actions (p.99).

This passage shows that the narrator reports Charlotte’s sympathizing with the reaction of Kello’s family to be an emotional reaction because, there is not any single word or sentence that shows the narrator’s comment on the people’s reaction against what has been done to Kello.

Once again, we find the narrator sticking to the stance of Charlotte, i.e., upholding the way of life of the Hamar people. Furthermore, her research focused on gender, in general, and on the Hamar marriage ritual, in particular. She realizes that she had to leave her modern life style behind and decides to be lead by her gut instinct (p-99). The narrator summarizes the obstacles she faced as follows: ‘Nevertheless, her progress certainly had been hindered because of the cultural imposition of ‘woman rights’ (p.100). The reader here can identify from this observation not only the narrator being the mouth piece of Charlotte, for he assures the reader that her research was facing impediments, because of the Hamars cultural impositions on the rights of women. This vividly shows the narrator at the crossroads between supporting and, at the same time, criticising, and even judging the Hamar way of life.



to know in Hamar” (p.171). Further, the voice of the narrator ironically comments on modern life “Charlotte had of course missed some of the trappings of modern life” (p.172).

To sum up, the narrator’s voice in **Land of the Yellow Bull** strives to balance his stance by hiding behind the characterial voices of Kello and Charlotte. However, the alternating stance later comes to one of generalization and a sympathising move with the Hamar culture, and the voice through the text inclines to move from a seemingly neutral one to an overt authorial voice.

confirms the externality of the focalizer. From the angle of the perceptual fact of the focalization employed in the novel, one can still confirm the externality of the focalizer. The novel begins with a panoramic description of the arrival of the white man in Africa and the beginning of destruction of the old order in the reconstructed Ibo way of life in the novel. The external focalizer is the only entitled agent for such a bird's eye view.

Temporally, since this external focalizer is unpersonified throughout the text, the focalization is panchronic, a focalization without the human limitation of time, i.e., it is only the external focalizer who has access to all the temporal dimensions of the story, the past, the present, and the future. All these facts can assure the reader the externalness of the focalizer from the story in the novel. Besides the above facts, there is an instance in the novel where the protagonist, Okonkwo, becomes both the focalizer and the focalized object through the technique of interior monologue:

"When did you become a shivering old woman," Okonkwo asked himself, "you, who are known in all the nine village for your valor in war? How can a man who has killed five men in battle fall to pieces because he has added a boy to their number? Okonkwo, you have become a woman indeed" (p. 67)

In the above monologue, it is Okonkwo's perception which orients the presentation of the event, Okonkwo being an internal focalizer, and at the same time, he himself is also the object of focalization (i.e. the focalizer and the focalized merge into one).

It should be noted, therefore, that since the pervading focalization in the novel is external, what matters here is not who focalizes, but how the object of focalization is manipulated and managed. A variety of objects are focalized throughout the text including characters, actions, events, traditions and even atmospheres. This, in a way, indicates that a focalization technique of window shifting is used in the

novel. In fact, although the narrative is, generally speaking, focalized through Okonkwo, there is a shift of focalization from character to character, character to event, event to character, etc., to treat themes such as individualism, communalism, and colonialism.

Functionally, Achebe employs scenic presentation, especially in the first part of the novel, for a temporal slowness and pause, as a narrative technique which helps the author to control the manner and speed in which the reader assimilates the different aspects of the Ibo culture, the progression of the plot, and the complexity of the novel's characters, especially the protagonist. In fact, most of the actions and events serve more than one purpose. For example, Okonkwo's treating of his second wife at the sacred Week of Peace tells us both about the Ibo culture and the character of Okonkwo.

In sum, the effect of the shifting of windows of focalization is therefore, threefold. First, the shift enables us to assimilate the world of the Ibo people, orienting the reader to the different aspects of the self-contained Ibo cosmology. Second, they form our knowledge of the characters. Lastly, the shifting moves the novel from incident to incident and in a way facilitates the coordination of important events. All these effects, it seems evident, have as their aim the reader's comprehension of a complex story through an undercurrent leitmotif of two but contrasting windows, as narrative technique of focalization through juxtaposing opposing dualistic events, views, atmospheres, actions, characters etc. This overlap of windows is achieved by introducing the mutual interference between concurrently active windows of focalization in the events of the story.

4.2. Window Shift at Macro-narrative Level Focalization

Achebe employs an ambivalent, double point of view throughout the novel. This ambivalence, as stated above, is achieved by using two main underlying narrative techniques of window shifting and window overlap. In a way, a double perspective is reflected in managing and manipulating the focalized data in the novel through which the drama of events in the novel unfolds itself.

In different interviews and writings, Achebe repeatedly stated that the principle of duality is at the core of the Ibo philosophy and cultural traditions, as a necessary condition of existence. He interprets the Ibo proverb “Whenever something stands, something else will stand beside it” to mean:

... that there is no one way to anything. The Ibo people who made that proverb are very insistent on this—there is no absolute anything. They are against excess – their world is a world of dualities. It is good to be brave, they say, but also remember that the coward survives.... If there is one God, fine. There will be others as well. If there is our point of view, fine. There will be a second point of view (Moyers 1989:333).

It is in this sustained view of the duality of the traditional Ibo society that the novel consistently focuses on, in order to intensify the sense of tragedy and to help the reader grasp the dilemma that shapes and destroys the destiny of Okonkwo, the central character in the novel.

The traditional Ibo society that is reconstructed in the novel is ritualistic and rigid, and yet in many ways flexible. Outwardly, Umuofia is a serene and organic society, but it is filled with the individual’s tensions and doubts. In other words, on the one hand the novel presents a positive image of a tribal society which emerges with its coherence and especially the distinctive rhythm of its various forms of life, and on the other hand, the reader is made aware that this coherence is a precarious one, deriving from an inflexibility of social norms that places an enormous psychological and moral burden on individuals. As a result, the novel reveals a corner of human endeavor that is marked by the web of contradictions.

Within this web of contradictions, the most striking feature of the novel is its creating a complex and sympathetic portrait of a traditional village in Africa, which shows the author’s superior skill in utilizing a narrative technique which can sustain his purpose. This very African culture and clan is seen from the

African and an inside African perspective. Focalizing the material from the African spatio-temporal stance and from an African focalizer is evident from the information at the beginning of the novel that there was no idea of an outsider, let alone a whiteman, and all the traditional life of the Ibo was going on well and as usual. Furthermore, creating the impression of a sympathetic portrait of Africa's encounter with the white man still strengthens the African perspective of seeing the material. Hence, the psychological facet of the focalization is subjective, i.e., the focalizer seems involved in the material and the presentation of the event coloured. It should be noted, however, that Achebe is trying not only to inform the outside world about Ibo(African) cultural traditions, but also to remind his own people of their past and to assert that it had much value. When *Things Fall Apart* was first published, Achebe announced that one of his purposes was to present a complex, dynamic society to the Western audience which perceived African society as primitive, simple and backward, and at the same time to remind his own people of their past: "I would be quite satisfied if my novels (especially the ones I set in the past) did no more than teach my readers that their past with all its imperfections was not one long night of savagery from which the first European acting on God's behalf delivered them"(Achebe, 1975: 44-45).

These themes are skillfully managed and manipulated by the juxtaposition of narrative windows into the material, and by creating coordination between macro- and micro-narrative levels. At the macro-level, the novel is divided into three macro-narrative windows: Part one, chapters one to fourteen, Part Two, chapters fifteen to nineteen, and Part three, chapters twenty to twenty-five. Though the three macro-windows are concomitant with the three parts of the novel, it is necessary to identify them also as macro-windows of focalization in order to show their cutting arrangements of single scenes as smaller windows, i.e., their relationship with the micro-windows. As indicated in Section 2.2.2.3 above, the macro-window forms a holistic pattern of various arrangements and cutting patterns of focalization, whereas the micro-window partitions the extended heterogeneous passage into homogeneously focalized windows. The macro-windows of the novel are considered below.

4.2.1. First Macro-window of Focalization

As stated above, the first macro-window of focalization covers the first fourteen chapters of the novel, Part One of the novel. This first part of the novel, constructs a complex portrait of Okonkwo and the Ibo society so that the reader can understand the nature of the man and his future actions. Spatially, this window in the novel is unified, anchoring its angle of focalization in the same locale, Mbaibta. Besides, this window is the largest one in the stretch of events of the novel, showing the self-contained, serene life in Umuofia. The second macro-window, chapters fifteen to nineteen focuses on Okonkwo's exile, and the white man's taking a strong hold in Umuofia. The third window, chapters twenty to twenty-five, depicts how events unfold quickly to change the existing African culture with the interference of the intruding white man.

As indicated above, this first window provides a detailed portrait of Ibo culture, Okonkwo and his family (particularly his father's legacy), and the events that lead up to his exile. The novel opens with the block-characterization of Okonkwo by the external focalizer. Okonkwo, the first focalized object in the novel, was a brave man as a young warrior of Umuofian clan, a skilled wrestler, who at the age of eighteen, defeated Amalike 'the cat', and who had been unbeatable for over seven years. Further, Okonkwo is also established as a formidable, short-tempered man, who has no patience for the idle, weak, and unsuccessful. In this beginning chapter of the novel, Unoka, Okonkwo's father, who has been dead for ten years, is introduced in the novel as a foil character, who highlights certain features of Okonkwo. In his time, Unoka was known as lazy and irresponsible, even improvident to his own family. Okonkwo's tragic flaw is fear, or rather a strong sense of insecurity and this flaw is indicated in three different variations: his fear of laziness or weakness, his fear of forests and nature, and his fear of the feminine principle for unsuccessful Ibos are referred to as *agbala*, i.e., a woman. At a

macro-level analysis, these contrasting descriptions of Okonkwo and his father, Unoka, introduce Okonkwo's tragic flaw: his fear of the kind of failure and weakness that his father exemplified. In depicting the Ibo culture, the cultural significance of the *kola* is introduced. The first chapter ends by setting up a psychological backdrop for Okonkwo's motivations throughout the novel: "Fortunately, among these people [the Ibo] a man was judged according to his worth and not according to the worth of his father" (p.8). This quotation further strengthens that Okonkwo's fear was groundless and hence his tragic flaw. As Okonkwo is the dominant focalized object in the first chapter, in the second one, the Ibo culture prevails. Okonkwo hears the *ogene* calling all men to a council of war, an urgent message requesting the gathering of all Umuofian men, the next day, at the market place. Okonkwo can sense that something is wrong; significantly, it is a moonless evening, which the Ibo culture identifies as a sign of trouble. This gives the reader some idea about the Ibo schemata. In the meeting, it is disclosed that there is a dispute between Umuofia and Mbaino, and the latter backs down by paying a tribute, two hostages, to atone for the death of an Umuofian woman.

In this chapter, readers become aware of the power of the Oracle of the Hills and the Caves, as well as the Ibo methods of mass communication, styles of oration, and religious practices. *Agbala*, the Oracle of the Hills and Caves is introduced. Here, and throughout the novel, *Agbala* and its priestess, *Chielo*, play a commanding role as the primary decision makers for the clan. In this chapter, too, there is the description of Okonkwo's wealth and status in the clan. His compound is quite substantial, and it includes his own hut, a separate hut for each of his three wives and their eight children, both filled with the sign of a wealthy man, yams, and even a small medicine house that keeps his religious icons. At the end of this chapter, Okonkwo's tragic flaw surfaces: "But his whole life had been dominated by fear, ... fear of the forests, and of the forces of nature" (p.13). This is also emphasized by Okonkwo's fear that his son, Nwoye, is beginning to resemble his

grandfather; Achebe states that Nwoye “was then twelve years old but was already causing his father great anxiety for his incipient laziness “(p.13).

The third chapter goes back to give some glimpses of Okonkwo’s background .He is a self-made man, of which he should be proud. More information is given about Okonkwo’s earlier years. Because of Unoka’s inability to provide for his family, Okonkwo took over the responsibility of providing for his father, mother, and two sisters .The story of Unoka tells us about the belief in *chi*, each man’s personal god. The story shows the importance of the oracle within Ibo society and its impact on Okonkwo and his family. The narrator tells a story of a time when Unoka went to consult the Oracle of the Hills and the Caves about his unsuccessful yam harvest. The priestess scolded him for being a lazy farmer and sent him back with the advice that he had to work like a man to reap a man’s harvest.

4.2.2. Second Macro-window of Focalization

This macro-window covers chapters fifteen to nineteen, Part Two of the novel. In this particular window of focalization, the narrative focuses on Okonkwo’s period of exile, during which he learns that the white missionaries have settled in Umuofia, and members of the clan, including Nwoye, his son, have betrayed the clan by converting into the new religion of the white man. In other words, this part deals with Okonkwo’s seven-year exile in his motherland, Mbaino, and the beginning of western intrusion into Ibo society.

In Part One, we were introduced to an intact and functioning culture. It may have had its faults, and it accommodated deviants like Okonkwo with some difficulty, but it still functioned as an organic whole. It is in Part Two that things begin to fall apart. Okonkwo’s exile in Mbaino is not only a personal disaster, but it removes him from his home village at a crucial time so that he returns to a changed world which he can no longer adapt to.

Okonkwo goes to live with his mothers' clan in another village. The hyper-masculine Okonkwo is being punished for the 'female' version of the crime. The first chapter of the second window also has Okonkwo questioning a traditional saying, almost in despair:

A man could not rise beyond the destiny of his chi. The saying of the elders was not true that if a man said yes, his chi also affirmed. Here was a man whose chi said nay despite his own affirmation"
(p.131)

Okonkwo has the opportunity for re-instruction, as he must learn the importance of the mother, of the feminine. Uchendu's lessons to Okonkwo, about the significance of the feminine reflects the hero's essential flaw, his rigid hypermasculinity. Okonkwo is so concerned not to be considered weak like his father that he allows for no flexibility in interpretation of the rules, (for example, his participation in Ikemefuna's death, when the law only required his acquiescence).

This chapter includes a further explanation of the *chi*. Before his accidental crime, Okonkwo was at the height of his solid personal achievement but his *chi* has turned against him; "Clearly his personal god or *chi* was not made for great things." (p.131). The novel's gender theme manifests again when Uchendu counsels Okonkwo, defining the role and symbolism associated with the mother supreme. Furthermore, Okonkwo's eventual suicide by hanging is foreshadowed when Uchendu describes his own experience of suffering: "I did not hang myself, and I am still alive" (p.135).

Obierika visits Okonkwo in the second year of his exile, with more news of the white man-the destruction of Abame. Again he informs Okonkwo that a new day is arriving coupled with an illustration of the white colonizers' response to offenses: one white man is killed by the village, so the entire village is massacred

by the whites. This Abame event marks the first confrontation between the Ibos and the colonizers. This conflict is exemplified by an apparent lack of communication between traditional Ibo and Western value systems that will cause significant havoc later in the novel.

In the protagonist's fourth year of exile, Obierika visits Okonkwo again and updates him on the missionaries' recent activities. Obierika reports that the white man has been successful at converting a handful of Ibo men into his religion. Besides, Obierika tells Okonkwo of the conversion of the latter's son, Nwoye. Nwoye's conversion to Christianity is a significant event in the novel. It is his reaction and his deep-seated disgust for the clan's practice of leaving twins to die in the evil forest and Okonkwo's killing of Ikemefuna. Nwoye's 'parched soul' is watered by 'the poetry of the new religion' (p.147).

All the above points show us Okonkwo's learning about the intruding white man off-stage, and the white man's religion and government taking over in Umuofia. The unity of the Ibo culture begins to fall apart. With all these conditions at hand, Okonkwo arrives at his fatherland from a four-year exile only to find it a changed Umuofia.

4.2.3. Third Macro –window of Focalization

This macro-window covers chapters twenty to twenty-five, Part Three of the novel. This last window shows the return and final tragedy of Okonkwo. When Okonkwo finally returns to Umuofia, his presence goes practically unnoticed because the missionaries' church and government have profoundly influenced and distracted his people. In the midst of this disruption of traditional Ibo values, Okonkwo, overwhelmed with fear and anger, realizes that his clan is falling apart and the Western culture is taking over. Finally, he reacts by beheading one of the messengers of the white authorities, and knowing that he has now sealed his fate, he hangs himself.

respect is evident in the religious debates that Akunna, a great Ibo man, has with Mr. Brown. Moreover, Akunna sends his son to Mr. Brown so that the boy can learn at a Western school, i.e., Mr. Brown's school.

At the end of chapter twenty-one, Mr. Brown's health fails because he seems to have over-worked himself. In the end, Mr. Brown leaves his mission, a sad and disappointed man. Mr. Brown's return to England marks an important plot event, since the man who will replace him is much less tolerant. The Rev. James Smith is the exact opposite of the Rev. Brown, and has a dualistic view of the world. Smith is a 'fire and brimstone' preacher with no tolerance for 'heathens'. The new intolerant environment allows over-zealous converts such as Enoch, the son of the snake cult priest, to thrive. It is not surprising then, that Enoch publicly unmasks an *egwugwu* during an annual ceremony for *Ani*, the earth goddess. Enoch's actions are not tolerated by the Ibos and cause chaos among the clan. In retribution for Enoch's blasphemy, the *egwugwu* band destroys Enoch's compound and then the church that was constructed during Mr. Brown's time. Enoch's act is a symbolic murder of the ancestral spirits, and is the climactic moment when the Ibo and Christian religions come into a direct clash.

The novel may seem to parallel the two missionaries, flexible Brown and rigid Smith, to the two Ibo leaders, flexible Obierika and rigid Okonkwo, thus demonstrating that the differences in treatment belong to individuals and, not to cultures or religions.

4.3. Window Overlap at Macro-narrative Level Focalization

Among the most basic and pervading overlap of narrative windows in the novel is the opposing overlap of the Ibo's male-female principle. This juxtaposed view, which is reflected at the spiritual level, is the organizing and unifying macro-narrative overlapping focalization, especially in the first thirteen chapters. Besides, in relation to this male-female focalized window, we come to identify

that the root of Okonkwo's troubles and conflicts lies in his interpretation of the clan's construction of masculine identity.

4.3.1. The Male- Female Macro-overlap of Windows and the Gender Theme

In the juxtaposition of the gender theme, the male principle of the Ibo people dominates the first part of the novel (i.e., the first six chapters). Umuofia is a male clan since each of the nine village of Umuofia has its own male ancestor, one of the first ancestor's nine sons, making each village have a male lineage and linkage. The narrative focalization reflects this patriarchal culture by depicting male dominated activities to be foregrounded windows of focalization in the first six chapters: the oratory of men before the gathered clan, the possession and harvest of farmlands, strength and manliness in wrestling and war, the giving of girls blessings for marriage and taking of brides, are the main ones. This patriarchy is particularly evident in the portrayal of the political institution of justice. The Umuofians' central political power is invested in the *ndichie*, a council of elders, and the *egwugwu*, masked spirits of the ancestors, who come to visit the judgment over civil and other critical disputes. This focalized window of the male principle is further enriched by the details of Okonkwo's oppressingly manly and sometimes vicious behavior, and the hard work in the production of the 'man's crop', the yam. Even the celebration that concludes the sixth chapter is the manliest of sports, wrestling, the same sport through which Okonkwo first achieved fame, as reported at the beginning paragraph of the novel, ending the window of the novel as it began, with wrestling, the manliest sport.

This emphasis on male and manliness of the Umuofians has a significant thematic implication. Since the image that the author presents in the narrative is that of a primitive agrarian clan, it has no choice beyond the purely muscular for dealing with the exigencies of the natural world. Since the Umuofians are confronted with a precarious material situation, they have to accord primacy to manliness, as a manifestation of existence as its most physical, elevated into a norm of personal

suggests a necessary balancing of the two principles. Hence, this male-female dialectic serves to maintain an effective and ideological balance of the group which corresponds to a certain primary perception of a felt duality of the cosmic order of the Ibo way of life. This wider plane of juxtaposed, contrasting but balancing views of the Ibo culture leads us to the interpretation and understanding of Okonkwo's actions that uncover the character of the protagonist and in a way his tragic flaw, which makes him unable to perceive this balancing principle.

4.3.2. Macro -window Overlap and Portrayal of the Protagonist's Character

Through a technique of window shifting and overlap, Okonkwo's partially flawed code of values and his character are contrasted with the Ibo code of values and other characters in the novel. As indicated above, Okonkwo's basic troubles and conflicts emerge from his faulty interpretation of the Ibo's principle of masculine identity. He fails to recognize the principles of harmonious duality that structure the world view of Umuofian clan. As a result, the focalized narrative presentation is critical of Okonkwo's excessive commitment to aggressive power and his literal adherence to narrow masculinity. The narrative focalization juxtaposes the contrasting predominant focalized windows, supplemented by various individualized evaluations of certain occurrences, a narrative technique which promotes relatively frequent changes of perspective showing overlap of views and actions to reveal Okonkwo's excess, and also to balance and modulate the reader's response to the protagonist's actions and views against the compromising dualistic principle of the Ibo view.

Throughout the novel, Okonkwo is portrayed as a man whose life is ruled by one overriding passion to become a successful and powerful lord in the clan of Umuofia:

shocking decree, in the end, disregards Ezeudu's advice and accompanies the men in the brutal task: "Okonkwo got ready quickly and the party set out with Ikemefuna carrying the pot of wine"(pp.60 – 61).

This contrasting mixture of feeling of the focalized object, Okonkwo, is revealed from within his contradicting actions and feelings as an extension of his tragic flaw on the occasion of killing the hostage boy. Okonkwo walks behind the other men and gradually draws to the rear at the time of execution; indeed he looks away when one of the men raises his machete to strike the boy. But his sick obsessed insistence on manliness forces him to deal with the fatal blow:

As the man who had cleared his throat drew up and raised his machete, Okonkwo looked away. He heard the blow. The pot fell and broke in the sand. He heard Ikemefuna cry, "My father, they have killed me!" as he ran towards him. Dazed with fear, Okonkwo drew his machete and cut him down. He was afraid of being thought weak (p.63).

So extreme is his desire that he should not appear weak that he should not be like his father, that Okonkwo blinds himself to the wisdom of the advice of the elder Ezeudu. Okonkwo is so determined in his effort to be known for achievement, which his society reveres, that he gives no heed to the wisdom of age, which his society respects: "Age was respected among his people, but achievement was revered"(p.9). So his excess in one aspect has always flawed him in another aspect of the Ibo values.

Yet, another overlapping window shows the other side of the protagonist. Okonkwo is not wholly depicted as a brute. Even at the very moment of his violence against Ikemefuna, we observe the human side in him "as the man who had cleared his throat drew up and raised his machete, Okonkwo looked away" not because he is a coward, not because like his father, he could not stand the sight of blood; he has killed five men at war. Okonkwo looks away because this brutal act is too much even for his eyes and his locked humanity struggles to express

itself. These juxtaposed, focalized windows subtly contrast Okonkwo's contradicting actions. They reveal the submerged human responses of Okonkwo which unfold Okonkwo's tragic dilemma and modulate the reader's views on him and reactions to his character, i.e., this ensures the reader's pity for the protagonist in understanding his tragic flaw.

The whole mission of Okonkwo's killing of the boy is further contrasted with his moment of greatest mental turmoil in the immediate aftermath of his killing of Ikemefuna, revealing the focalized object from within:

Okonkwo did not taste any food for two days after the death of Ikemefuna. He drank palm wine from morning till night, and his eyes were red and fierce like the eyes of a rat when it is caught by the tail and dashed against the floor. He did not sleep at night. He tried not to think about Ikemefuna, but the more he tried, the more he thought about him. Once, he got up from his bed and walked about his compound. But he was so weak that his legs scarcely carried him. He felt like a drunken giant walking with the limbs of a mosquito. Now and then a cold shiver descended on his head and spread down his body (pp. 65-66).

In this passage, the author skillfully describes the physical and mental state of the protagonist, seeing the focalized both from without, his weak physical stance, and from within, his suppressed but disturbed feelings about killing the boy. Hence, the passage reemphasizes the human aspects of Okonkwo which he struggles to suppress, lest he should appear weak. This is his reaction against his own violence which very clearly reveals the tragic aspect of Okonkwo's character. Through this overlap of windows of focalization, the narrative presentation not only reveals Okonkwo's character, but also balances the reader's response to him.

This same passage has significance in further revealing the character of Okonkwo. Even at his moment of greatest mental turmoil, we are provided with hardly any insight into the happenings within his troubled soul. Okonkwo is mostly focalized from without, without any entry into the inner workings of his mind as a fully

realized individual. The point here is that, despite the occasional glimpses the focalization affords into states of mind that are also occasions for introspection on the part of the character, the focus narrows the reader's gaze to focalize on what is presented as essential to his make up: "Okonkwo was a man of action, not of thought"(p.71). This shows that, it is not the psychological depth of his portrayal that leads Okonkwo to his power of fascination, but rather his very physicality in such a way as to constitute him as the incarnation of his society's ideal of manhood. This is the ideal that Okonkwo translates in his attitude and manners into an overbearing muscularity and masculinity. This narrative presentation calls to attention the distortion of the communal ideal by Okonkwo in such a way as to suggest a narrative commentary upon the social and moral implications of the ideal.

Okonkwo's limited and flawed view of masculinity is further revealed by contrasting Okonkwo's view against that of other characters through the technique of multiple focalization. Obierika, Okonkwo's best friend and an elder, reasserts Ezeudu's advice to Okonkwo on the mission of Ikemefuna's killing: "If I were you, I would have stayed at home... if the Oracle said that my son should be killed I would neither dispute nor be the one to do it"(p. 69). The same case is viewed differently, on the one hand, by Obierika and Ezeudu, and on the other hand, by Okonkwo. The way which both Ezeudu and Obierika espouse is the way of compromise, of which Okonkwo is incapable. Okonkwo still argues that he has carried out the orders of the gods: "The earth cannot punish me for obeying her messenger," Okonkwo said (p.69)

Furthermore, Okonkwo's inability to comprehend the fact that those feminine attributes he vigorously suppresses in himself are necessary for greatness is also revealed in his naïve comments on the death of Ogbuefi Ndulule and his eldest wife, Ozoemena:

"It was always said that Ndulue and Ozoemena had one mind," said Obierika, "I remember when I was a young boy there was a song about them. He could not do anything without telling her." "I

did not know that," said Okonkwo. "I thought he was a strong man in his youth." "He was indeed," said Ofoedu. Okonkwo shook his head doubtfully. "He led Umuofia to war on those days," said Obierika (p.71).

The sudden death of Ozoemena is strange, as Ofoedu, Obierika and Okonkwo agree. Yet as characteristic of Okonkwo, he can receive and respond only to the obvious and well-defined. What Okonkwo cannot understand in this episode, despite Obierika's explanation, is the full significance of Ozoemena's death. The union in life and in death of Ndulue and Ozemena is a symbolic dramatization of the union of the masculine and the feminine attributes essential in a great man. Ndulue was a great warrior and a great man, the respected elder of his village, because he was able to find that balance of strength and sensitivity, of the masculine and the feminine principles. And it is this union, men as Ndulue and Ezeudu, are able to achieve and which Umuofia respects and seeks in its leaders. But for Okonkwo, one is either a man or a woman and there can be no compromise. He is baffled by Ndulue's relationship with his wife, Ozoemena, for him a strong man would in no way depend on a woman. This one-sided view and concept of what it takes to be a man determines Okonkwo's actions and attitudes, and in fact his troubles and his tragic death in the end.

Traumatized by his father's failure owing to his gentleness and idleness, Okonkwo determines to be all that his father was not, firm and active. But in living up to this design, Okonkwo becomes inflexible and his action allows no room for reflection or relaxation. Even after his code fails him and necessitates his exile, Okonkwo cannot see the limitations of that code in its denial of the feminine principle. While in exile in his mother's land, Okonkwo is lectured on the importance of the feminine principles by the elder Uchendu, but still Okonkwo fails to see the truth:

"Can you tell me, Okonkwo, why it is that one of the commonest names we give our children is Nneka, or 'Mother is Supreme'? We all know that a man is the head of the family and his wives do his bidding. A child belongs to his father and his family and not to its mother and her family. A man belongs to his fatherland and not to his motherland. And yet we say Nneka- 'Mother is Supreme'. Why

is that?" There was silence. "I want Okonkwo to answer me," said Uchendu. "I do not know the answer," Okonkwo replied (pp.137-138).

Through probing questions, Uchendu deliberately attempts to lead Okonkwo to understanding of the importance of the feminine which Okonkwo seeks to deny. He reminds Okonkwo that the consequence of his denial which has already resulted in Okonkwo's alienation from his clan, his family, and himself, is doom. But Okonkwo is too 'manly' and too single-minded to deal with subtleties which do not fit easily into his own well-defined code of action. Hence, he cannot respond to Uchendu's questions, for they do not fit to his rigid philosophy of life. Uchendu, like Ndulue and Ezeudu, represents the traditional way of life which allows for flexibility and compromise within its exacting system. And in rejecting compromise and flexibility, Okonkwo rejects the values of the very society which he determines to champion. In contrasting these two antithetical modes of perception and patterns of action, the focalization illustrates the extent to which Okonkwo has alienated himself from his society.

The contrasting modes of action are also shown to determine the different reaction of Uchendu and Okonkwo to Obierika's tales of the killing of the white man on the 'iron horse,' in Abame, which in turn led to the death of a large number of the villagers. Hearing this tale of disaster and death, Uchendu ground his teeth together audibly and then burst out: "Never kill a man who says nothing. Those men of Amabe were fools. What did they know about the man?"(p.144). As is characteristic of a wise and prudent man, Uchedu blames the people of Abame for not being cautious and for fighting a 'war of blame' which the society condemns. But Okonkwo sees the whole situation as supporting his method of turning to violence as a solution to all problems. Instead of questioning and seeking a compromise between conflicting views, Okonkwo demands a violent action, "They were fools," said Okonkwo after a pause. "They had been warned that danger was ahead. They should have armed themselves with their guns and their machetes even when they went to market"(p.145).

Throughout his life then, Okonkwo is bound to violence. He rigidly commits himself to a code of values which negates human response and alienates him from his traditional roots. Even at crucial moments when all indications point to the limitation and inadequacy of his rigid system, Okonkwo still holds firmly to his own values, even until his death. When he returns from exile, Okonkwo faces an altered society, a society in its flexibility has allowed place for the white Christian missionaries. Okonkwo views the situation in terms of absolute, irreconcilable antipodes. When the entire clan gathers to decide how to check the inroads by the missionaries, Okonkwo's response is predictable. He will think no compromise and demands a violent repulsion of the new religion. But this recourse to violence is not the view of his society any more now than it was in the past. Indeed, Okonkwo's views set him apart from his clan at this moment as earlier in his exile. If the society will not violently repel this threat, Okonkwo will. Compelled by his own uncompromising attitudes as they confront and clash, Okonkwo turns to the only means he knows to solve the problem, i.e., violence:

In a flash Okonkwo drew his matchete. Okonkwo's matchete descended twice and the man's head lay beside his uniformed body. The waiting back cloth jumped into tumultuous life and the meeting was stopped. Okonkwo stood looking at the dead man. He knew that Umuofia would not go to war. He knew because they had let the other messengers escape. They had broken into tumult instead of action. He discerned fright in that tumult. He heard voices asking, "Why did he do it?" He wiped his matchete on the sand and went away (p.211).

When the society does not respond as he does, Okonkwo comes to a sudden realization that he is alone, set apart from his clan by the values he holds. This last act of violence finally breaks the precarious link between Okonkwo and his people. It shows that the people of Umuofia have deserted Okonkwo and in the process betrayed themselves. In this context, therefore, the wiping of the matchete acquires a special double significance. Okonkwo is shown to remain true to the martial ethos that his people have abandoned, here represented by the warrior's

care of his weapon; at the same time, he symbolically dissolves his connection with his people, wiping away the blood bond that has joined them. This gesture is especially resonant because in killing the messenger he is shedding the blood of a fellow Ibo. And lastly, in taking his life, Okonkwo has simply preceded his people in their communal destruction—once again he leads the way. His suicide becomes an abomination, an offense against the earth as Obierika remarks at the end of the novel. In death, as in life, Okonkwo's commitment to achievement through violence ostracizes him from the very society he sought so desperately to champion and honor.

Through multiple focalization, Okonkwo's actions and values are markedly contrasted with those of Nduke, Ezeudu, Uchendu, and Obierika. Through the narrative technique of juxtaposing Okonkwo's views and actions against the other characters', the narrative focuses on the contrastive duality in Okonkwo's code of values, his violation of his tribe's values which he really wants to honour and champion. Besides, through juxtaposing his contradicting actions, as during and after the killing of Ikemefuna, the narrative focalization reveals two contradicting traits of Okonkwo: his outwardly violent action against his inwardly locked tenderness and humanity.

But we must also recognize that Okonkwo's errors are essentially virtues carried to an extreme, and that while he is obviously not perfect, he nevertheless represents some of the best qualities of his culture as Obierika remarks: "That man was one of the greatest men of Umuofia" (p.242). Further, Okonkwo's killing of the messenger, his failed attempt to rouse his people to action, and his subsequent suicide present the events of the novel largely from an African perspective, equating Okonkwo's death with the collapse of Ibo culture. The indigenous society's cultural dislocation corresponds to Okonkwo's self-immolation, especially at the closing irony on the District Commissioner's naïve comment that Okonkwo's suicide, that it is worth of a reasonable paragraph (p.215). In other words, the parallel between the story of Okonkwo and that of his society is made

central to the narrative development. This can be seen in the interrelations between, on the one hand, the rise and fall of Okonkwo, and on the other, the dislocation of the culture and way of life of the Umuofia people. Both Okonkwo's and his people's simultaneous fall seems to be the working of the forces of history which were provoked by the harsh circumstances of a traditional society's encounter with a more powerful alien culture as it generally happens.

Okonkwo's representative status of his society and culture is also revealed when he is compared to Rev. Smith. Despite their differences in character, of the two missionaries neither Brown nor Smith is really able or willing to cope with the nature of African animism. Their total lack of interest in Umuofia's language and culture may thus be regarded as a logical expression of the ethnocentric prejudices of their Christianity. As becomes particularly visible in his aggressive sermons, Smith's Eurocentric Christian outlook on life deprives him of any understanding for foreign cultures. Under these circumstances, the novel shows that Christianity is perverted into an ideology that presents an irrational approach towards reality. In this respect, Smith becomes Okonkwo's European counterpart. This collective human trauma will more clearly be explored below, Section 5.2.5, under the ideological dimension of the focalization in the novel.

4.3.3. Macro-window Overlap and the Image of Umuofia

The narrative window focalizing 'on the picture of Umuofia is at the same time sympathetic and critical. One cannot fail to discern an ambivalent undercurrent of point of view that produces a disjunction in the novel between its overt ideological point of view, its contestation of the colonial enterprise which is formulated in the closing chapters and highlighted by its ironic ending, and its dispassionate and even uncompromising focus on an African community in its moment of crisis. This crisis is especially revealed through the moral ambiguity of the principal character, Okonkwo, and by the dissonances that this sets up in the narrative

development. This subject matter finds its expression in the novel's formal design, namely, the structural device of contrastive arrangements of actions and episodes.

The relationship between Okonkwo and his son, Nwoye, is delineated in such way to transfer the border of cultural conflict to the personal level. We hardly need to ponder over the cleavage between father and son to realize that it provides the most potent sign of the disintegration of Umuofia society, provoked by the introduction of Christianity. Through Nwoye's conversion, or disaffection, the narrative focuses on the wider social conflict between two different ways of life at the personal level. It is thus significant to note that the earliest converts include the outcasts and particularly the mothers of unfortunate twins. Consequently, Nwoye is to be seen as a typical representative of those Africans who made possible the effective establishment of Christianity with the joining of the marginal people or oppressed and expelled members of the clan. For such people, the new religion's provisions of basic human equality, the universal fatherhood of God and the universal brotherhood of man, lead to an awakening of submerged hopes, the resurrection of a sense of human worth long buried under the grave mound of custom. This implies that although colonialism challenged and ruined the indigenous way of life, it could only overthrow the old order because of that order's inherent deficiencies. These deficiencies make Nwoye to readily accept the Church's philosophy because this new religious institution answers the emptiness within caused by actions such as the abandonment of the twins. The fate of Ikemefuna, its stark revelation of the grim underside of the tribal ethos, endangers the emptiness in the heart that predisposes Nwoye to Christian conversion. The terms in which his conversion is described mark clearly the conjunction between social and moral issues as the determining factor in the conversion. This is presented as an inner drama of sensibility, in which a new poetry takes the place of the ancient, filling a spiritual and affective void and thus coming to satisfy a need to which the traditional order is no longer capable of responding:

It was not the mad logic of the Trinity that captivated him. He did not understand it. It was the poetry of the new religion, something

felt in the marrow. The hymn about brothers who sat in darkness and in fear seemed to answer a vague persistent question that haunted his young soul-the question of the twins crying in the bush and the question of Ikemefuna who was killed. He felt a relief within as the hymn poured into his parched soul. The words of the hymn were like the drops of frozen rain melting on the dry plate of the panting earth (pp.151-152).

Nwoye's story closes a family history that revolves around the troubled relationship between fathers and sons. Centered as it is on the personality and tragic fate of Okonkwo, this family history constitutes the novel's thematic framework and functions as an allegory of the very destiny of the society they inhabit. What this allegory signifies, in the particular historical and cultural context of the novel, is the state of internal crisis into which this society is plunged, a crisis that we have come to appreciate as intrinsic to its presiding ethos. This crisis is only rendered especially acute by the arrival of the white man, so that the major irony of the novel is that it is this historic event that provides a resolution. This becomes an outcome that we sense as highly ambiguous, insofar as it marks the harsh intrusion of the outer world into the tribal universe, leading to the loss of its autonomy as a sphere of existence and expression.

Therefore, it is not enough to see the novel as simply a statement of cultural and racial retrieval, as a novel that embodies a discourse of nationalism. Rather than a unilateral reevaluation of the past, the central preoccupation of the novel revolves around the deeply problematic nature of the relationship of the past to the present in Africa. What is at issue here, in the most fundamental way, is the bearing of the past upon the present, fraught as this is with implications for the future presentation of the continent. This underlying technique of juxtaposition of contrasts works well in articulating the complexities and contradictions of Umuofia, of Okonkwo, and of the dilemma which arises when the Umuofians confront Christianity.

4.3.4. Macro-window Overlap and Ideological Focalization

Beyond its moral facet, the novel recovers and articulates the point of view which had been buried or rejected by the colonial narratives of Africa. Many European writers, such as Cary and Conrad, have presented the continent as a dark place inhabited by people with impenetrable minds. Achebe terms this reductionist portrayal of Africa racist, especially in his essay "Racism in **Heart of Darkness**" pointing out that Conrad, who wrote against imperialism, reduced Africans to mysterious, animistic, exotic 'others' in his book **Heart of Darkness. Things Fall Apart** challenges western notions of historical truth, and urges readers into questioning our perception of pre-colonial and colonial Africa. Unless Africans can tell their side of their history, Achebe believed that the African experience would forever be mistold, even by such well meaning authors as Joyce Cary in

Mister John, which portrays a comic African who slavishly adores his white colonialist boss, to the point of gladly being shot to death by him. Achebe says: "One of the tools of colonization is storytelling: make a more palatable story, justify their actions" (Achebe, 2000:607). In a 1962 radio interview, Achebe said that it was his indignation at Cary's **Mister John** that inspired the writing of **Things Fall Apart**: "It was clear to me that this was a superficial picture of not only of the country, but even of the Nigerian character and so I thought if this was famous, then perhaps someone might try and look at this from the inside" (Duerden and Pieterse, 1972:4).

On the other hand, we observe Achebe defending colonialism in some respects which reveals that his colonial experience seems to create in him ambiguities: "I am not one of those who would say that Africa has gained nothing at all during the colonial period, I mean this is ridiculous. We have gained a lot" (Duerden and Pieterse, 1972:13). Achebe's preoccupation with Ibo principles of duality, therefore, are also evident in the ideological framework within which he expressed

his opposition to colonial representations. This ambivalent view of the author against colonialism finds expression rhetorically. The descriptions in the novel are used simultaneously for both functional and aesthetic purposes. The narrative style moves from a mythic orality at the beginning to a written style and history at the end.

The novel sets itself against the construction of the African image as attempted within Western fiction. In the context of African literature, the myths and legends in the novel are important sources for the construction of an African world view. **Things Fall Apart** tells a story that begins in the register of myth and ends on a note of chronicle, a transformation that is reflected in its narrative style.

The author opens the novel with factual and mythic details about Umuofia and Okonkwo's place in the clan. It seems helpful, thus, to remark upon the narrow range of the physical setting reduced at the beginning sentence of the novel: "Okonkwo was well known throughout the nine villages, and even beyond." The vagueness with which the reader is indicated to the outer limits of Okonkwo's fame reflects the tribe's limited awareness of its location in space, of its specific place in the world. This accords with the indefiniteness of its name, Umuofia, which means 'people of the forest,' a name that also doubles as that of the novel's locale, designating a community firmly situated within the natural world. The contraction of the tribe's understanding of space is further closely associated with its bounded experience of time. The same opening paragraph of the novel in which we are introduced to Okonkwo provides us with a passing view of the tribe's myth of origin, a wrestling contest between the founder of the town and "a spirit of the wild":

Amalinze was the great wrestler who for seven years was unbeaten, from Umuofia to Mbaino. He was called the cat because his back would never touch the earth. It was this man that Okonkwo threw in a fight which the old men agreed was one of the fiercest since the founder of their town engaged a spirit of the wild for seven days and seven nights(p.3).

The tribe's myth of origin sets the keynote of the entire mode of self-apprehension and structure of knowledge of the Ibo cosmology. In this very passage, history recedes into myth, as the narrative presents the seven-year reign of Amalinze and the seven-day struggle of the founder of the village in epic terms, here seven obviously functioning as a convention rather than a naturalistic number. In effect, the idea that Okonkwo was a great man whose destiny was linked with that of his people is immediately established in this celebrated opening of the novel and serves both to connect Okonkwo with the beginning of Umuofia (through his wrestling exploits, he is compared to the village's symbolic progenitor) and to look forward to his own and his people's end (the 'spirit of the wild,' representing that nature will be replaced by the more powerful alien force of colonialism in the closing paragraph). The larger effect of Achebe's opening is to establish Okonkwo as particular kind of tragic protagonist: the great warrior who carries with him the fate of his people. This is not to say, however, that Okonkwo epitomizes all the values of Ibo culture, or that he himself is without fault. Indeed, Okonkwo is a tragic hero with a tragic flaw.

The novel provides an image of an African society, reconstituted as a living entity and its historic circumstances: an image of a coherent social structure forming the institutional fabric of a universe of meanings and values. This image of Africa carried a considerable ideological weight in the specific context of the novel's writing and reception. The novel, without idealizing the past, attacks the colonialist view that the Whiteman woke up the Blackman into history.

The compressive scope of Achebe's depiction of a particularized African community engaged in its own social processes, carried out entirely on its own terms, with all the internal tension this entails, challenged the simplified representation that the West offered itself of Africa as an area of darkness devoid of human significance. Thus the novel, beyond its ethnographic interest, articulated a new vision of the African world, a view from the inside, and gave expression to a new sense of African experience that was more penetrating than what had been provided by the West.

The very warmth of the narrative focalization on the traditional world, especially in the first thirteen chapters, with their elaborate representation of setting, positively upholds the cultural context within which the fictional characters have their existence. The Ibo tribal world emerges here in all its specificity, its daily routines and seasonal rituals attuned to the natural rhythm of its living environment. Especially, in the first part of the novel, the author weaves a rich fabric of tradition, culture, religion, history and communal life. This makes the people of Umuofia part of an old civilization of mankind. We understand that the civilization has existed for so long that its survival is already a matter of routine. It is obvious that there has been the time to examine the nature of the world; there has been the time to discuss observations and to come to conclusions, and to produce stories and sayings, which are already considered old. These stories and sayings constitute the cultural wisdom and have been passed down. In a culture without a written script, the arts of conversation and oration are prized, and wisdom is transmitted through proverbs, stories and myths. The agrarian cycle of seasons, with their manual work, culture and festivals, the palm wine, the importance of music and dance, all could be noted and compared to similar Western mores. At the same time, the dialogue that elders such as Ezeudu and Obierika engage in with their own culture throughout the novel points to the process by which the principles governing the world concept and value of the tribe are constantly debated, reexamined, and in this way, retrospectively rationalized. Thus, by representation, contrary to the discourse of the colonial anthropology, Umuofia, the primordial village, emerges as a locus of reflective civilization.

The ideological project involved in the novel's writing, however, comes fully to the fore in the ironic ending. We see the colonial officer in the final scene contemplating to decide on the structure and nature of native life in Umuofia:

As he walked back to the court he thought about that book. Every day brought him some new material. The story of this man who had killed a messenger and hanged himself would make interesting reading. One could almost write a whole chapter on him. Perhaps not a whole chapter but a reasonable paragraph, at any rate.

There was so much else to include, and one must be firm in cutting out details, he had already chosen the title of the book, after much thought: The Pacification of the Primitive Tribes of the Lower Niger (p. 215).

It is the decision taken by a historian to recount the process whereby a whole world was overturned. Okonkwo, we are told, will get the briefest of mention in the monograph on the 'pacification' of the Lower Niger. But we know, as readers, that the novel which this episode serves as conclusion centered all around upon this character who, as the figure of the historical African, the work endeavors to re-endow with a voice and visage. He is allowed to emerge in his full historicity, tragic though this turns out to be in circumstances. More than two-thirds of the novel is devoted to a careful and detailed representation of the culture that produced him. The total lack of sensitivity of the Commissioner destroys and ensures the last chance for the necessary communication between the two cultures. The irony is even further emphasized in the last two lines of the novel, where the Commissioner mentions the carefully chosen title of his intended study: 'The Pacification of the Primitive Tribes of the Lower Niger.' Through this irony, the narrative focalization demonstrates how the cultural prejudices of the European towards the Africans have actually resulted in a revelation of the true character of colonialism.

By ironically undermining the perspective of the Commissioner, by exposing his personal ignorance (not a 'whole chapter') and political interest (the 'pacification' of Lower Niger), the author seeks to confront and finally to discredit the entire discourse of colonialism, i.e., those quasi-historical, quasi-anthropological writings by the West that have treated Africa as a place devoid of human interest.

Furthermore, one can see that this ending ironically views events from the heavily prejudiced perspective of the Commissioner. Ibo culture is now presented not from the inside as vital and autonomous, but from the outside as an object of anthropological curiosity, and its collapse is not understood as an African tragedy

but as a European triumph. This is carefully made to contrast with what the major portion of the novel is devoted to. The major portion of the novel, indeed, deals with the practices and teachings and the culture of a pre-colonial society. The concentration of the story on the pre-colonial society serves to celebrate it and to fulfill the need to remember it well and also be mindful of its importance as a part of history, which has been too long silenced and forgotten. The detailed account of this society heightens the enormity of the atrocity committed by one group (i.e., the white invaders) against another group (i.e., the Ibo, and by extension, all Africans). Achebe, by foregrounding the ancient civilization and values of the Ibo(Africans), wipes away the ideology of the West that the victims (Africans) needed help of the aggressor (the colonizer)to wake them up to history and civilization!

4.4. Instances of Micro-window Overlaps

The juxtaposition of contrasting views is not only manifested on a wider plane as in the gender theme and characterization of the protagonist, etc., as discussed above, but also on single scenes. A contrasting concomitant rigidity and flexibility of the Ibo people is revealed in many scenes of the narrative; such scenes that demonstrate the domestic conflict between Uzowulu and his wife Mgbafo (pp.91-98) , the decree of the gods to kill the hostage boy , Ikemefuna (p.59), and Okonkwo's accidental killing of a clansman, are among the most marked contrasting juxtapositions .Following are the contrasting instances.

The episode that demonstrates the domestic conflict between Uzowulu and his wife Mgbafo reveals at the same time the rigidity and flexibility of the Ibo code of values. Mgbafo flees to her parental family to save her life from her bullying husband, Uzowulu, who repeatedly and severely beats her. While such conflicts are usually settled on a personal level, Uzowulu is the kind of man who will not listen to anybody except to the decisions of the great *egwugwu*. This ceremony is conducted with marked ritualistic procedures. Almost the whole of chapter ten, devoted to this domestic problem, the prominent focalized object is the ritualistic

procedure of the ceremony: the stereotyped exchange of greetings, the way the leading *egwugwu* appear (pp.92-93), the ritual greetings between the *egwugwu*, and the plaintiff and defendant in the case, "Uzowulu's body, I salute you" and Uzowulu's response, "Our father, my hand has touched the ground" (p.94), and even the gestures of these masked spirits.

This formality of the ceremony defines the seriousness with which the community deals with internal problems, even trivial ones that undermine or threaten the peaceful coexistence of the clan. Hence, the focalization dramatizes the fact that the peace of the tribe as a whole takes procedures as a collective prerogative over personal considerations. Among the objects of focalization in this scene are also people, especially the two parties involved in the conflict. They are viewed from without, their standing position in the crowd, the way they complain and debate, and the other ritualistic steps of the ceremony they follow. We are not allowed to view these people from within- from what they feel and think. This once more seems to confirm that the focal point in the scene is the procedure, leading the reader to the process of assimilating the Ibo culture. This rigid formality, however, does not exclude dialogue, probing, and debate. Hence the parties involved in the case are allowed to present their opposing, even hostile views. The way this domestic issue is resolved reveals the emphasis the Ibo people and culture place on peaceful coexistence.

The firmness with which the society controls excess is also manifested at the spontaneous communal feasting and the coming of the locusts (pp.57-59). The decrees of the gods are always carried out no matter how much inhuman, as in the case of Ikemefuna, the sacrificial boy and the throwing away of twins. Immediately preceding the coming of the locusts, the narrative focuses on the sleepy atmosphere of a noon -day in Umuofia in a sharp contrast to the unexpected turn of the village to life and joy, as it is told: "But almost immediately a show of joy broke out in all directions, and Umuofia, which had dozed in the noon-day haze, broke into life and activity"(p.58). This sudden occurrence demonstrates the joy of the clan as a whole when not troubled by

internal conflicts. The abundance of locusts creates uncontrolled happiness and no one spares either time or effort in responding to this unexpected communal feast. For the moment, Umuofia is at peace and happiness; Okonkwo and his sons are together sharing the joy of the community. Achebe has hardly created a harmonious and happy atmosphere, when he is already concerned about its destruction:

Okonkwo sat in his obi crunching happily with Ikemefuna and Nwoye, and drinking palm-wine copiously, when Ogbuefi Ezeudu came in ... he said to Okonkwo: "That boy calls you father. Do not bear a hand in his death." Okonkwo was surprised, and was about to say something when the old man continued: "Yes, Umuofia has decided to kill him" (p.59).

By juxtaposing these contrasting events, the focalization orients the reader to the alternating patterns of spontaneous joy and disturbing justice, against the joyful harmonious rhythm of this event, the controlled formalism of the judgment of the *egwugwu* stands in sharp contrast.

Similarly, in order to call attention to the rigidity of the Ibo code of values in requiring the exile of Okonkwo for the accidental killing of Ezeudu's son, Achebe skillfully orchestrates the circumstances of the boy's death by marked focalization of the action and the atmosphere of the situation without individualizing Okonkwo's role:

The drums and the dancing began again and reached fever-heat. Darkness was around the corner, and the burial was near. Guns fired the last salute and the cannon rent the sky. And then from the center of the delirious fury came a cry of agony and shouts of horror. It was as if a spell had been cast. All was silent. In the center of the crowd a boy lay in a pool of blood (p.128).

This careful focus on the circumstance and its atmosphere markedly intensifies the sense of accidental occurrence of the killing. The death of the boy is viewed to be as a result of the situation, not as any deliberate act on Okonkwo's part. With this

sense of accident highlighted and established, the scene intensifies the rigidity of the tribal law in dealing with this accidental event: "The only course open to Okonkwo was to flee from the clan" (p.128). This deliberately enables the reader to understand the cultural implications of the episode. Further along, describing the organized destruction of Okonkwo's compound by the villagers after his departure, the focalization provides us with this insight into the mores of the land: "They had no hatred in their hearts against Okonkwo. His greatest friend, Obierika, was among them. They were merely cleansing the land which Okonkwo has polluted with the blood of a clansman" (p.129). This illustrates the function of the focalization in a comprehensive readjustment of perspective on the Ibo culture.

In these subtle ways, the focalization reveals the inflexibility of the code of values of the Ibo people collectively while responding to any threat to the overall stability of the clan, no matter how small, as in the scene of the domestic conflict, no matter what an accidental mistake, as in the case of Okonkwo's killing of a clansman, and no matter how inhuman as in the fate of Ikemefuna. To insist, however, that the Ibo code of values is entirely inflexible is viewing only one half of the picture. The Ibo people can adapt their code to less successful men, like Unoka, though solid personal achievement and manly stature are given unqualified emphasis according to their standards of excellence. This adaptability to changing or different situations is more clearly demonstrated in Ogbuefi Ezeudu's comment on the punishment meted out to Okonkwo for his violation of the sacred Week of Peace:

Ogbuefi Ezeudu, who was the oldest man in the village, was telling two other men who came to visit him that the punishment for breaking the peace of Ani had become very mild in their clan. "It has not always been so," he said. "My father told me that he had been told that in the past a man who broke the peace was dragged on the ground through the village until he died. But after a while this custom was stopped because it spoiled the peace which it was meant to preserve" (p.33).

This enables the reader to view and sense that in some ways the Ibo social code is responsive to change. We can see here that the Ibo people modify certain contradictory elements of the code provided that their amendment does not conflict with the will of the gods. This receptibility to change is coupled with a willingness to accept and accommodate even those who do not perfectly conform to their ways, in accordance with the proverbial wisdom, "Let the kite perch and let the egret perch too. If one says no to the other, let his wings break" (p.20). Though Unoka was a failure, he was not cast out, and even the albinos, whom the Ibos consider aliens, were accepted members of the clan, for as Uchendu indicates to Obierika:

"There is no story that is not true," said Uchendu. "The world has no end, and what is good among one people is an abomination with others. We have albinos among us. Do you not think that they came to our clan by mistake, that they have strayed from their way to a land where everybody is like them?" (p.145).

Through juxtaposing contrasts, the narrative provides this complex, dualistic nature of the customs and traditions of the Ibo people of Umuofia in the novel. These cultural elements are set in an apparent opposition to one another to give a complete view of the society. To accept and emphasize only one aspect is to have a limited perspective, as does Okonkwo in the story. It is against this balanced view of the self-contained traditional Ibo society that the narrative directs the reader to view and evaluate the actions and tragic life of Okonkwo, the protagonist. Such an examination enables the reader to identify the problems of Okonkwo's relationship with the culture of his people and his hamartia or 'tragic flaw'. The organicism that privileges the interests of the group has been observed above as a fundamental feature of the tribal community, essential within the realm of necessity. Now we turn to the truth of individual human yearnings and drives through the theme of Okonkwo's struggle for recognition and the larger existential implications of this theme in its evocation of the universal human predicament.

This theme is framed by the tragic structure of the novel involving Okonkwo's rise to prominence at Umuofia, interrupted by his banishment and life in exile at his maternal village, and his disastrous return to the place of his early triumphs.

It should be noted that this part (Section 5.3.) is just devoted as an elaborating section of instances of micro-window overlaps. Such instances can also be analyzed in each of the previous macro-window overlaps. To this end, the micro-window overlaps in this section, too, can be gathered together to form a meaningful unifying pattern as a macro-window overlap revealing the concomitant 'rigidity and flexibility' of the Ibo people and their traditions as reconstructed throughout the novel.

In summary, Achebe, generally speaking, uses window shift and window overlap as an underlying technique of focalization in the novel.

4.6. Character as Focalized From Within

Fikiremarkos like Achebe utilizes an external focalization totally in his novel **Land of the Yellow Bull**. The narrator-focalizer orients most of the presentation of the events in the story which results in an active interferences between narratorial and reflectorial conceptualizations, that is, the juxtapositions of two windows. While the reflector lends his or her sight the narrator substitutes his or her words.

The following textual stylistic markers can help categorize the type of the focalizer as used in the events of the novel: "Just before she left Hamar, Charlotte fought against time to complete gathering her research" (p.10);* "Hamars are also caught between conflicts with their ethnic neighbors" (p.13). From the personal pronouns 'her', and 'their' in the above two statements, the reader identifies a distinctive focalizer positioning himself or herself as an outsider observer of the events in the story. Furthermore, from its psychological fact of focalization, the focalizer passes a total knowledge to the reader since he or she has unrestricted

* The page numbers without other details in this chapter (Sections 4.5 to 4.9) refer to pages in Fikiremarkos Desta's **Land of the Yellow Bull**, (2003).

knowledge: "Her emotions were surging when she contemplatively gazed at her own breasts ..." (p.22). This type of perception of the focalized from within (omniscience) allows the reader to share the inner life of the focalized character (Charlotte in the above instance). The spatio-temporal position of the focalizer is panoramic and panchronic, respectively. All these facts show the externality of the focalizer in relation to the events in the story.

This, however, does not mean to deny the existence of instances of internal focalization in the events of the novel:

"Come what may, I want my child's father to be a man full of natural emotions and courage. I don't want people in England to say, Oh, what about the man of yours here ..." she mumbled (p. 14)

By the technique of interior monologue, the one who orients the presentation of the events of the story and the one who is an object of this focalization is the same person – the character who mumbles the above utterances. Such stream of consciousness of the internal focalizer is again used on page 27: "Hamar...research... A beautiful British..." In the absence of internal focalization as a pervading technique, the significant critical aspect which needs attentive assessment is how the focalized object is introduced and handled. Hence, in the course of the events in the novel, we come across such objects of focalization as characters, actions, traditions, etc. indicated by window shift from one object to the other. Besides, there are spatio-temporal shifts, too.

The beginning pages of the novel start with the temporal typical of the narrative: "It was spring early in October 1995" (p.9). With some block expositions of the natural world of an unspecific place, the story goes on to tell about three of the most important four characters in the story: Charlotte, Kello, and Delti.

Kello Hora, who is, for the first time, mentioned on page30, is focalized in the

has no clue to why he reacts the way he does: "Charlotte had sensed his impending feelings before he refused his co-operation" (p.36); "Charlotte had, again, sensed of his sorrowful impression caused by her request" (p.41). Hence, the focalization directs the reader into the mental workings of Kello from within:

The mentally matured Kello intended to build a psychological bridge that reconciled the present self and the abused child that suffered childhood injustice in the past (p.40).

Suspense, obviously, is the narrative technique in a story which makes the reader guess how the story will turn out, and impels him or her to read on to find answers to such a guess. Kello's disturbance while considering going back to Hamar is somewhat a suspense to the reader. The author has used two devices of mystery, an unusual set of circumstances for which the reader craves an explanation, and placing Kello in a dilemma, a position in which he has to choose between staying in Addis Ababa, or to go to the Hamar village with Charlotte.

Although suspense cannot be devalued as a technique, the author has simply introduced suspense in the novel artificially, by simply withholding vital information as to why Kello is hesitant to go to Hamar, his birth place and the village of his family and relatives. This use of suspense in the story surprisingly ends somewhere in the middle of the story. We see Kello suddenly opening up to talk about his past with no obvious reason for such a radical turn in his behavior. It is quite unlike Kello to tell about his background, his life, and his feelings. Examining its legitimacy, the reader can doubt the purpose of withholding that information. The suspense and the surprise seem to exist simply for their own sake. There is no justification of their introduction, i.e., neither to open up or to reinforce the meaning of the story that furnishes illumination, nor a reversal of expectation in the unraveling of the story.

4.7. Gender and Window Overlap: Girlhood Freedom vs Womanhood Servitude in the Hamar Culture

Among the Hamars, the ecstasy of free love is exercised and cherished by young unmarried girls and men of any age and marital status. Hence, sexual ecstasy is not the primary objective of getting married for a man, but to become a rich person in the village: "The Hamar men marry women in order to become wealthy" (p.75). By getting married and having babies, especially baby girls, in a family will determine the future wealth of the family since a young man who wants to marry has to pay a huge dowry to the parents of the girl. The bride wealth includes live stock, goats and honey.

The Hamars, being a polygamous society, a Hamar man can get married to as many women as he can afford to pay the bride wealth. consequently, marrying as many wives as one can, is a chance to more wealth: by the same token, a man with many wives has a better chance of becoming rich in a relatively short period of time"(p.75).

A Hamar girl has freedom in her girlhood time. The transition from girlhood to womanhood is marked by her getting married to her fiancé after he finally pays bride wealth to her family. Although their married life puts a lot of restriction on much of their past freedom, they do not regret turning to womanhood: "The time of girlhood would be over. Surprisingly, she would be more exhilarated than regretful" (P.74). As indicated above, a wife is a limitless source of wealth to the family by giving birth to girls. She is compared to the fertile land which gives good yield: "His wives are considered as his farm with seeds that bring offspring" (p.76).

It should be noted, however, that although the birth of a baby girl is glorified, a baby boy is also happily accepted for he will tend his parents' livestock, defend his father's honor and his clan, and hunt animals and bring wild honey to feed the

family: “Even if a baby girl is the principal source of getting his new wealth, a baby boy also has significant advantage” (p.76).

Love, in the Hamar culture, seems to reign supreme during the time of girlhood. Both men and unmarried young girls meet at a night dance called *evangadi* in moonlight. Girls have their limitless freedom to choose an evening lover and make love; even a girl who has a fiancé who has not yet paid off bride wealth can also freely indulge with any other man she chooses for sexual intercourse:

In Hamar girlhood is the sweetest part of life. Girls' freedom of choice is respected very much ...Hence forth, the dramatic turn in her life will come when her fiancé finishes paying the bride wealth and she comes to his house (p.80).

In the Hamar culture, a girl won't be blamed for losing her virginity before marriage, and, she can make love with a man based on her own complete willingness. Her future life is not endangered by her pre-marital free sexual act. If she accidentally becomes pregnant; she needs to terminate the pregnancy according to her culture:

If she conceives in the meantime, she would have an abortion and continue with her indulgence... To control such a catastrophe that could result from this, there are experienced abortionists, mostly old women perform an abortion (pp.80, 82).

Once the girl is married, she will be transformed into a new way of life. There is not any more dancing, singing, and free love with any man she chooses. She begins to live under the heavy hand and single mind of her husband: “She becomes his property and starts living under his authority’ (p.80). Now, she no more cares even about her beauty. Her sole responsibility after marriage is to serve her husband and to give him children:

...her sexy way of wiggling goatskin braid will be changed; she does not have to worry about her attractiveness. Her hair starts to be smeared

with 'Asele' (a soft sticky substance made of the mixture of soil, butter and gum) for the rest of her life ... From that time onwards, she will only bear children and do very hard work (pp.80-81).

Unlike a married woman, a married husband is allowed to live an unchanged life of indulgence with other girls to look for another girl who could possibly be a future wife to give him more children:

Indeed, the husband has the right to take part in the evening happy hours and flirt with girls... If he meets a girl who would bear many children for him, he can go forward to make her his wife by paying the necessary bride wealth to her family (p.81)

The Hamar woman is neither jealous nor sad about her husband's lust, nor even his having another wife to share with her. On the contrary, she would encourage her husband to marry more so that the new wife can help her with her household work: "...even his first wife would encourage him to marry another wife because she would have someone to help with the household chores" (lp.82).

4.8. Sexual Ecstasies at Ivangadi and Window Overlap

Charlotte is almost frustrated in pursuing her research endeavor, i.e., her sole objective to be among the Hamar people. Her Western manners and behavior are not compatible with the Hamar culture and their cultural rules on how girls and woman should behave. She had already been driven away when she tried to approach the men's gathering under the big tree. They have been wondering and irritated why her father and her husband let Charlotte to be alone and wandering a long way off her people and home. Hence all men and women alike could not be honest and genuine in their communication with her "Unless she re-adjusted her research approach, it was clear that her dream wouldn't be fruitful" (p.105). Charlotte felt that under such conditions, her scholastic commitments and the efforts she has exerted so far, all seemed to be shattered. Hence, although it took

her some time to make her mind, she sought another way to try her chance to fulfill her objectives.

To break the cultural barrier she thought of conducting an experiment..... If I want to become successful all I need to do is learn how to enter the Hamar world, she thought and clamped her jaw and swallowed hard (pp.106, 107).

From the above passage, one can easily understand that she had to do it not because she was in a crazy adventure to comprehend the culture of the world, but because she need to do it as a means to an end to carry out her research. That seems 'why she clamped her jaw and swallowed hard' when she decides to go through anything that can bridge her to the Hamar world. She then announced that she was an unmarried woman. Her announcement spread to every Hamar village and reached the ears of the young men, women and the hero of the Hamar people, Delti Geldi. Hence the Hamar began to accept her being alone among them. For her first act of socialization comes to her rescue, i.e., she went to the ivangadi dance (the night dance) with Neima, Kello's sister. She joined the dance ceremony which is allowed only for unmarried girls, but all men:

A moment's walk from tranqiul Shanko village, they entered the exciting vibrant life of the community. They enjoyed extravaganza under the cover of darkness and the crescent moonlight (p.107).

Although Charlotte had a previous dance training experience, it seems the *ivangadi* dance comes with its particularities to learn yet. Hence, the narrator criticizes her first attempt at dance: "She had an excellent training and experience in belly dancing, however, she only proved to be a mere toddler during the ivangadi dance" (p.108).

In the Hamar cosmology, there is a boundary of time and people. Any individual is entitled to be a Hamar provided that he or she becomes a good Hamar, i.e., one who obeys all the ways of the Hamar culture. Hence there is no room for racism

and ethnicity among the Hamar. Time is also simply felt as a continuous coexistence among the people: "The Hamar have their own unused time in their time account" (p.111).

Their time use reveals their exoticness and self-containedness in the mode of their life. They do not count time by the clicking of the second nor do they bother about counting the days by Monday, Tuesday, etc., and by months like January, February and so on. they simply live time:

They still enjoyed a period of peaceful aesthetic coexistence. They sleep, then wake up and eat by sharing and wander around what is usually termed 'life', trusting that tomorrow will bring enlightenment (p.111).

The following day, after her ivangadi dance, Charlotte found out that a girl's romantic affair during the evening dance was an accepted act rather than being something embarrassing for a girl to borrow a married man for an erotic dance and to make love with:

She did not notice anything special among the villagers. It is not embarrassing for a girl to be tired after having an erotic dance at ivangadi... She had an affair with a married man (pp.111, 112).

Charlotte now comes to understand part of the Hamars' way of life that can help her carry out her research. She discovers the unlimited sexual freedom of the unmarried Hamar girl. The Hamar girl can freely court any man of her choice at the dance with no sexual harassment of a so-called bullying man: "She [Charlotte] voluntarily submitted herself to him and satisfied her sexual urge without any sexual harassment" (p.112). Hence, here we understand that when she acts like a Hamar girl, she makes a move to the Hamar ways. Her first imperfect attempt reveals the trials and errors of an adult's learning of a new culture and a new way of life. It shows that her determined adventure is at its very infancy of coming to the Hamar universe. The ivangadi dance has five different kinds of dance steps

and Charlotte is a fast learner to pick them up: “Charlotte realized that each of the steps and movements were coordinated in such a way as to sexually rouse the dancers” (p.108).

In the *ivangadi* dance, girls and men gather together and they begin to dance to the rhythms of the music. First, ladies and men warm themselves up, relax their muscles. Then girls spin in circles changing their tracks while the men follow them. After some moments a one- to- one union follows and men would pass their naked thighs under those of the girls and would hug them tightly so that they would feel erection pressing crutches (p.108). This takes the dancers to sublimity and they are transported to another emotional world:

This erotic contact produced an electric current and the generator and the operators pushed their ways out of the dance stage to a near by forest consummate in their love dancing... excitement... and all last snuggling down together... that was certainly the best of the most amusing events (p.108).

Both Delti Geldi and Charlotte did not use any common spoken language at the *ivangadi* dance. They rather got along through the universal language of emotional union: “The language barrier did not buff them at all; and their natural feelings communicated through nature’s code, without any overlap” (p.112).

Such romantic relationship with the opposite sex is not any new experience for both Delti and Charlotte. Charlotte had already been in the arms of many men and Delti too had put his powerful arms round the waists of so many girls (p.112).

Though her adventure to the *ivangadi* dance was to introduce herself to the Hamar culture, the dance itself becomes a subject of interest to her. She feels an uncontrollable sexual urge during the dance: “She loved it when the men squeezed her bottom at the dance” (pp.112, 113). Meeting by accident, Charlotte approached and invited Delti to dance according to their traditional style:

He lovingly stroked her bottom and slipped into her thigh. She felt his erection pressing against her. Suddenly she felt as if an electric shock passed through her whole body. Perhaps he had lost his guts too. However they submerged into an innocuous love affair innocently. Thus, without hesitation, both of them started up their emotional engines and fled away together (p.113).

In the middle of this emotional involvement, her emotion betrays her and she surrenders to the Hamar hero, Delti. Hence, during the last dance, she finds Delti naturally sexy in every thing (p.114). His thigh swung back and forth in hers and she switched on abruptly to the rhythms of the music. The civilized Western girl was beaten by the natural but erotic dance of the primitive hero: “The whole action gave her the ultimate sexual thrill. She tried to control herself but had no energy to do so” (p.114). She lost control over her emotion and she was defeated, “A new research confronted the researcher” (p.115).

Charlotte, a day after the dance, begins to recollect things in her tranquil emotional state and wonders at the art of dance among the Hamar to rouse the natural emotion buried in every humane being. The researcher, from practical experience, comes to learn a new way of emotional union between man and woman, at the ivangadi dance.

Charlotte had understood that the right kind of dance had the power to make people merge together and swim up and down with maximum interest to attain great pleasure. She was impressed by the exciting nature of the dance and its coordination and moreover by the ability of Delti to take care of her feelings (p115).

Her additional lesson from her previous ecstasies with a married man was also to her understanding the absence of jealousy among the Hamar women. Theirs is a polygamous society, and still, outside his wife or wives, a married man can freely have an affair with a girl at the *ivangadi* dance. Since she has come from a different culture, she wonders why wives are not jealous of what their men do at the ivangadi dance:

She was also surprised that all those who had seen her rush to the bust with Delti last evening never cared or dared to ask her about that incident. The absence of jealousy in the community was an added surprise to her, 'what a civilized manner' she murmured (p.116).

Hence her first introduction to the Hamar culture is an appreciation of the Hamar way of life, not a criticism of any sort. This is evident that the perspective is African (Hamar) way and the focalization shows that the primitive Hamar society has also some truly valuable indigenous things to teach the 'civilized' world.

4.9. The Ideological Focalization and Window Overlap

As a general assumption, the author is the reader's guide, not only to what the narrative contains, but also to how it is to be interpreted. We as readers easily understand that the characters have limited view of some things, and of course, the reader has the mind style of character as a comparative yardstick.

The way in which Charlotte views the world in the novel, **Land of the Yellow Bull**, is an obvious case, where we are prompted to compare her view of the world with the account through the eyes of the Tesmay and Hamar people, two of the clans mentioned in the novel.

During their journey to Hamar, Charlotte and Kello make a break to take some rest and stay the night in the 'Wayto' desert, which is inhabited by the Tsemay people. After their daily engagement, the Tsemay people arrived at their village to hear some strange breaking news of the arrival of aliens to their village.

...and incidentally, they heard unusual news, A white vehicle, a white woman, having long hair, a dark-skinned man wearing clothes, had pitched their tents and set up camp near their village (p.66)

Among other things, Charlotte's colour of her skin is a wonder to the Tsemay people; and her long hair too. Their amusement comes the contrast of the colour

of their skin to hers they were astonished at her unique colour and style” (p.67). Further, Kello’s, skin is common to their knowledge but his wearing clothes is some how bizarre to their knowledge of the world. The Tsemay people’s world view depicts the idea of their spatial isolation from any other world, which in a way indicates a people with a self-contained culture and way of life, and their specific way of looking at life.

The Tsemay people, moreover, have no idea of the existence of any language other than theirs: “It a miracle! Emm!.. you see that There are people on earth who don’t speak Tsemay language ...” (p.68).

On the part of Charlotte, we see her marveling at the idea of attending the call of nature in the bush, like the village people around: “ But she couldn’t accept the idea of going to the bush to relieve herself (p.69). To the inhabitants, there is not any other alternative to their knowledge except going to the bush. The narrative, hence, seems to show the reader the difference of two worlds and the way in which two different people view the world: “Creatures of two different worlds, speaking in their own way, tried to understand each other”(p.68). The author, while depicting the differences of two worlds, and two different ways of viewing the world, also describes the possibility of coming to understanding of these two people. Besides, while showing the alienation and self-contained life of the Tsemay people, the author also reveals some awareness of the Tsemay of people and things other than theirs. This seems to indicate that the Tsemay people are self-contained, but not ignorant.

Although the Tsemay people wondered at their encounter with Charlotte, at the same time the reader is informed that, they have heard of people called ‘ferengi’ with some medical items they used to trade with animals and honey. So when they finally asked her identity, one among the crowd said “She is ferengi ;”(p:67) and they in reply said, “Oh!- If she is a feregni she might have the bullet shaped medicine which we exchange for goats and honey from the merchants “ (p.67).

Mind styles of the two worlds, among other things, (See Section 2.1.2.2.2.), is also revealed by extreme differences of cultural beliefs. No Hamar girl is allowed to wash her body waist down to her knees, because, if she does so, she will be sterile:

The Hamar girls never allowed to water touch their body parts below their waist and above their knees. Any contact of their sexual organ with water is believed to lead to infertility. However, Delti had seen the new lady [Charlotte] washing herself away (p.146)

Charlotte's washing herself is an unusual sight to Delti, and the narrative in a way, is displaying the mind style of the Hamar, which of course is faulty as the reader is well aware that washing the body will not make a woman barren. The Hamar people, even, categorize some animals into holy (cows, oxen, and sheep) and other as evil (donkeys, horses, hyenas). The narrator shows this to display their primitive way and their primordial culture, not communicating with the other civilized world:

In the Hamar tradition cows, oxen and sheep are considered to be holy creatures because they grow teeth on their lower jaws while donkeys, horses, hyenas are said to be evil because they grow teeth on their upper jaws. Generally, human beings are considered holy. In rare cases there are exceptions (p.84).

Besides, norm and normality is also a necessity for survival according to the Hamar culture. Uniqueness has no place in their culture and community: "Exception in Hamar is the sign of uniqueness" (p.84). When a child naturally does not grow his first milk teeth on the lower jaw, it is considered exceptional and "... such children are regarded as a nuisance of their community, rivals of their fathers. Due to this fact, they are considered as 'mingi' (abnormal and unfortunate) and rejected (p.85). Even if a child loses its lower teeth even by accident, it is still considered to be a 'mingi', and such children must be pierced

to death and thrown into the forest. Kello was rejected and pierced to death by the custom of the community for losing his lower teeth by accident:

I too was a mingi,... One day in the absence of my father two elderly individuals, who abandoned the mingi children, came to our humble hut.... They took me to a sheer cliff face.... I had barely turned when one of them threw his spear at my shoulders. The spear pierced my body and I groaned in great pain. They then pushed me down the abyss (pp.85, 87, 90).

Although the above differences of two different worlds, the narrator at the same time shows us some indications of changes of some Hamar villages from the self-contained way with some moves towards civilization. The narrator's window overlaps with the distinctiveness and self-contained way of the Hamar life on the one hand, and also with their beginning to communicate and take some values from others. Although he respects the indigenous culture, he seems to support their introduction to some modern life, as we can see it below.

Among the Hamar districts, there is a visible contrast among villages in their move towards civilization. The two notable small rural towns in the Hammar districts are Dimeka and Turmi, which are inhabited by the highlanders and the lowlanders, respectively. Comparatatively, Turmi is a better urbanized town than Dimeka for its location. It is situated on the roadside that passes to Omorate, one of the towns found on the bank of the Omo River (p.96).

Unlike any other Hamar village, Turmi has a peculiarly attractive small hotels, tea and coffee houses, local bread shops, and a couple of wayside shops where a passerby can buy commodities such as soap, dry battery cells, different shawls, matches (p.96-97). Hence it being a trade centre, the town especially is lively during market days. On such days, local business people from Konso, one of the villages, and other areas exchange *borde*, a type of ale, *sadagora*, a piece of cloth worn around the waist by men, beads, bracelets, maize and sorghum (p.97). Furthermore, Turmi is also a centre for social functions for the Hamars from different villages. Some Hamar men and girls also hang around some local bars in

Turmi for some traditional drinks and men also to meet some beautiful Hamar girls:

On market days one can observe Hamar men appearing attractive, and will certainly see them, in local bars for a drink if only to escape from the draught atmosphere in the village. The small bars also provide meeting places for young men and girls and outlets for flirting. (p.97).

The Hamars, in general and the elders, moreover, gather under the particular acacia trees that stand in the middle of Turmi to settle disputes and to discuss different affairs and plans to follow. One can thus observe the particularity of Turmi among the Hamar villages, as taking a pioneering move towards modernization compared with the other traditionally self-contained villages in Hamar, "In general Turmi is a fascinating town that elevates into a status of town only in contrast with the Hamar village" (p.97).

By contrast, Dimeka is found far away from the main road and consists of tall thatched cottages. Down below the town, there is the Keske River, along which there is an irrigated farm where the Catholic missionaries grow banana, papaya, maize and other crops and plants.

The Hamars depended on nature for their subsistence. Their agriculture totally relies on the rain cultivated corn, sorghum, and such other crops. There was not any idea of irrigation among the Hamar before its introduction to their place by the Catholic missionaries (p.98). This, among others, shows an example of an external agent of their introduction to civilization, for example, according to the modern way of agriculture, which is somehow a sign of relative independence from seasonal rain.

The Catholic missionaries, moreover, have introduced the modern garage shop, indicating urbanization of the villages being introduced to civilization. The new building of the missionaries and the garage shop lay on one side of the town giving Dimeka the appearance of township (p.98).

Unlike Turmi, in Demeka, during market day, one can find only 'tej', a type of mead brewed from honey, in one of the four houses, but neither a single bar nor a restaurant exists. Demeka is between a rural village and a town, compared to Turmi and the other Hamar rural villages.

The two towns, however, are still largely dependent on their natural surroundings and the Hamar bond:

Despite this difference, the two Hamar towns are connected to the remote hamlets of Lala and Shanko , near Buska mountain to Meno; from Mirsha and Meen to Angude... bounding the life line of the entire Hamar community, by the Keske River. Cattle , sheep, goats, birds, plants and the Hamars... every creature as a whole depends on this river water.(p.98)

The Hamar's culture of open-door policy to other people and culture is revealed by their hospitality to strangers. Another window overlap in focalization is revealed when their hospitality is contrasted with their rigidity in following some strict cultural principles of their forefathers. When they arrived in Hamar, Charlotte and Kello are warmly welcomed by the Hamars. About two months elapsed since they camped at Shanko village, not far away from Demeka town. The Hamar people welcome any new-comer and their hospitality is substantiated by their saying:

'If a goat is lost and reaches a village, you will take it to the goat kraal... whereas, if the lost one is human you will take the stranger to your house... he is human like you, his need is exactly similar with yours... it is therefore your responsibility to look after him...' (p.99).

Every Hamar greatly respects his or her people's culture. The very Hamar who attempted to get rid of Kello as a mingi, are meant to carry out their cultural principle. When they saw Kello again , their welcoming gesture to the lost kid of Hamar is just opposite to their previous acts to execute him. Charlotte is left to

reflect and brood on these contradictory cultural manifestations of the Hamar people:

It was absolutely contradictory with the horrible story she had heard from Kello. On the other side, she saw Kello's relatives and the other Hamars welcoming him by saying 'the son of Horra Shala' and approached him by presenting him with different gifts (p.99).

Charlotte could not comprehend the impulse of the Hamars in their second encounter with their once lost kid. She was also marvelled to see Kello's family, his mother and sisters, treating Kello with their sincere apology of what happened to him as an unfortunate child, beating their chests and weeping, happiness and helpless regret merging together an incomprehensible emotional reaction: "She [Charlotte] was deeply touched by their actions" (p.99).

Charlotte was welcomed both by the community and even by every individual, "It had only been a few months but everyone had been so kind to her" (p.100). The hospitality of the Hamars has brought Charlotte close to the bosom of the Hamar culture reducing the possible challenges she can face in the encounter of two opposite cultures, her Western one and the Hamar culture. Their hospitality has drawn her close to their community, "This attitude [their hospitality] had in turn helped her come closer to the community..."(p.100). The Hamars live in their isolated, self-contained cosmos, "The Hamars exist a secluded life... completely cut off from the outside world" (p.93).

Unlike her Western culture, women's position in the Hamar culture is totally dependent on men and their husbands. For Charlotte, to be taken to the Hamar culture, as a member, she has to act like a Hamar woman. In the Hamar way, women are supposed to be funny and smiling and men are expected to be serious and gentle. While a young girl lives under the protection of her father, it is her husband's responsibility to take care of her and protect her after marriage, "Women are absolutely dependent on men, this makes the Hamar men proud and confident" (p.100):

It, therefore, was strange and unacceptable for the proud Hamar men to see Charlotte all by herself, and traveling alone. The Hamar men seriously criticized her 'husband' to let her wander alone. "Yea! What can she do? The fault lay with her owner. They were absolutely at fault in sending her where she wants to go. What a foolish father or husband she had" (p.101).

Hence, for Charlotte to be a member of the Hamar, she had to be a good Hamar, one who obeys all the norms of the Hamar culture, one who accepts to serve the man. To meet her objective, although against her way of life, she was forced to follow Hamar ways of living. Thus, though they have this hospitality and allowing a stranger to be a Hamar, their culture is based on hard and fast cultural rules. The Hamar people are a spiritual community who believe in Borjo, i.e, God. Borjo is honoured and worshiped by every Hamar, man, woman, child, and is praised in all walks of their life. Even Hamar girls charged with watching the sorghum field would praise him with a song:

*'Borjo, you the creator of Bankimoro,
The source of the blessed rain, and
The master of our breath...
Give us the best manifestation of love... ' (p.9).*

As much as birth is important to the community, which is celebrated by feast at the name giving ceremony, death also marks an important event. In order to put an end to the flesh, all Hamars would face death, however, they believe every dead person's presence in their land spiritually; hence after death:

*... the spirit will join the forefathers' spirit. Then, the spirits will remain around the **Land of the Yellow Bull**. If the spirits say something is good, it becomes good. If they say something is bad, it becomes bad. Whatever happened, whatever is happening and whatever will happen that is with the blessing of the spirits. The Hamars believe that no matter what happens their bondage and responsibility never broke anywhere (p. 170).*

The Hamars burial has its own style, i.e., facing towards the direction of the origin of their forefathers, as the direction of the gate of their huts, a burial ceremony is prepared according to the heroic status and age of deceased person.

The ancestral spirit of the Hamar, they think, is always at their disposal in time of need. When Delti's father gives his blessings to his son, although enemies are always at arms length, they won't destroy them for the ancestral spirits are always there: "our enemies are living at the feet of the mountains. They will not come near you because my father's bones and his spirit frighten them off" (p.129). This shows that the Hamar believe that the dead are always nearby in spirit and are the mighty defenders of the clan. Hence, a Hamar man is taught to be a hero and not to be afraid of an intruder: "Don't be frightened by your enemies" (p.130).

Any Hamar is taught simplicity of life, but the strength of a survivor. Delti is blessed by his father as follows:

Sleeping in my father's skin mat, eating your Kurkufa, drinking your Shefro coffee look up at Borjo's (God's) stars, and watching the Hamar chain of mountains. Decorating yourself with your father's soil taking care of Bakimoro bees, eating honey and smell the fragrance of the flowers (p.129).

Bankimoro, the holy messenger of *Borjo*, has laid down the principles that a Hamar should live by: "These rules are rigid principles, designed by the holy man Bankimoro" (p.141).the village elders are entitled with the utmost power to implement every principle of Bankinoro: "The elders have been accredited by the society of Hamar as a supreme body. Every one should listen to their advice" (p.73). Delti receives blessings from his father and more principles to respect, in addition to the above:

Honour your pledges. Respect my father's rules and traditions. Be kind and generous. Take orders from your elders and be at their command... If ever you transgress my father's instruction, you have no way to run(p.130).

The life and survival of the Hamar people, hence, depends on nature, the loyalty of every Hamar to the Hamar code of behaviour, and the manliness of its men. Among their principles, for the Hamars since, "The essence of the Hamar is to become a Hamar," any one who respects their culture and follows their principles of life can be a member of the Hamar as far as he or she is a peaceful one. If an intruder, however, threatens their well being, they will defend their land and community. For this, a Hamar man is expected to exercise heroism for himself and also to defend his land and community.

The initiation of a Hamar boy to manhood, among other things, is to try himself in hunting wild animals in the forest and kill an enemy from another community. Delti and his friends went hunting to face the challenges in their journey to manhood, in the forests of Hamar:

Although they suffered from hunger for a certain period of time, they were eventually able to kill antelope ..., which is considered as the opening of the gate to enter manhood (p.131).

Delti, the hero of the Hamars, is renowned for his heroism. Away in the forests with his friends, in less than a week, he became a killer of a giraffe and a buffalo. When they returned to their village, they were received with a heroic welcome, and: "Girls particularly honoured Delti, the lion-hearted, who killed a giraffe and a buffalo, by putting their necklaces round his neck" (p.137).

Delti went to his relatives singing the traditional war songs and they, in turn, gave him gifts, goats and sheep, for his heroic deeds. By pouring the blood of goats and sheep on his back, a ritual was performed to ward off the evil spirit that might have followed him from the bush. The new heroes were treated and taken care of for four months by the community. They were fed with a diet made from meat, honey, and animal blood and milk: "This is the way of the forefathers in which the Hamars approved their young warriors with respect" (p.138). They glorify a tradition of courage, dedication and achievement to protect and keep the clan

together. Heroism is the dream of every Hamar boy and a hero Hamar always wins the love of the beautiful girls and the respect of his community:

The ritual passage for manhood is through the killing of an individual from their ethnic enemy and the next best thing is killing a rhino, an elephant, a lion, a buffalo or a giraffe (p.136).

Shortly after his hunting glory, Delti took part in the war with the Mursi, a neighbouring ethnic group. He proved himself a great hero by killing two Mursi men, and taking three of the enemy's guns home.

Among the Hamars heroism also means economic benefit and wealth. By selling the two guns, Delti bought several cattle. Girls from near and far were ready to surrender themselves to the hero; many were willing to be lifted up and carried away into the bush by this hero for romantic ecstasy. And he married two wives with the new wealth he got. He had displayed courage and acquired wealth at an early age.

Delti's prowess was beyond comparison with any other Hamar young man, and this made him grow to be a more confident brave son of the Hamars. One day, he goes to the forest alone, and kills a lion, as a result of which his fame echoed from village to village. Girls and shepherds sang for him, and he became the icon of a good Hamar youth. Delti is the symbol of the much desired manliness of a Hamar.

The Hamar people's codes of life specified by Bankimoro are long practiced rules. Several hundred years have passed since the Hamar began to follow these traditional laws and they are intact to this day: "New individuals or anyone in the community entering the arena would enjoy life if he obeyed the rules of this traditional law (p.142).

As far as an individual is governed by the principles of Bankimoro he or she is free to achieve eminence as a warrior and can excel by performing feats that are acceptable by the whole community: "There is no freedom outside this [community] principle" (p.142). The individual's freedom, hence is confined to

respect the communal principles, and the free actions need to be pursuant to the will and common well-being of the community: "Hamars are a swarm of bees that flow together following the Bankimoro principles" (p.142).

Delti Geldi is the embodiment of the Hamar principle of life and practical adherence to traditional rules. Since his childhood, he has never overlooked the value of keeping his honour and his rights carefully and lived in mutual respect with the other members of the community (p.143). As a symbol of his culture, Delti is dismayed by Charlotte's behaviour which is not a lady-like according to the Hamar world and principle of how a woman should behave. She wanders alone without the presence of a husband or a father, she smells different from the 'appropriate' smell of butter and gum. Hence, as a defender of his culture, in order to shape her, he thinks of marrying her and whip her to conformity into the Hamar way. Nothing can hinder him for he is a brave warrior who already killed two enemies of another ethnic group, and is the best huntsman who killed three wild animals. Furthermore, he is a rich man who has: "Three kraals* full of cattle, many goats, and numerous beehives in the forests" (p.145).

The Hamar culture is also shown to have its own problems in relation to individuals. This is especially displayed by the idea of mingi and Kello's predicament. Charlotte on her way to the Hamar people passes through the Woyto desert which is a settlement of the Tsemay people. In her encounter with the Tsemay and their way of life, she finds things to be almost totally beyond her expectations, and the mixture of two cultures and two people almost seems impossible. While she is in such puzzled mood, Charlotte, for the first time, begins to learn some traits of Kello from what he, himself, says: "It was gratifying to see Kello's intention to talk to someone without inspiration" (p.70) which are withheld keeping the reader in a state of suspense. Further, Charlotte found out and was already used to his being a very private person, who is not upto

*A building in which cattle are lodged

communicating with people: “She knew that he didn’t appreciate talking and giving appropriate feedback” (p.70). Asking for his permission, the anthropologist, Charlotte, makes her tape recorder ready for her first data collection. Charlotte, before personally meeting the Hamar people, comes to discover one of the harmful traditional practice they do, from the words of Kello: “I am a *ming*, Charlotte,” he said (p.71).

In the Hamar culture, the village elders are the highest decision-making body in all walks of life of the Hamar people and culture: “The elders have been accredited by the society of Hamar as a supreme body” (p.73). Even a Hamar child needs the knowledge and blessing of the elders” (p.72). For example, if a Hamar girl becomes pregnant before marriage, she must abort it. Even if she conceives after marriage, she needs to break the news to the elders, who would pass a decision that she should be abstained from any sexual intercourse until the baby is born and grows milk teeth: “Once the elders know about her conception she will not have sex with her husband until the child is born and grows milk teeth”(p.74). Any child born outside the knowledge and permission of the elders is an unnecessary child which must be killed: “In general , if a child is born without the knowledge and blessing of the elders, he or she is regarded as unwanted and is not allowed to survive” (p.82). Failure to abort an unwanted pregnancy will finally end in throwing away the baby after birth into the forest.

In the Hamar culture, no exception is tolerated and every individual and every occurrence must conform to the general code of conduct. For example, a baby ‘growing of his or her lower milk teeth first is considered exceptional, and a *mingi*, that must be executed. Further, the loss of the upper milk teeth before the lower ones of a growing child is an unfortunate sign, and the child is taken to be an abnormal (i.e., ‘mingi’) and he or she must die!:

Apparently, no matter how normal the teeth grew in the lower jaw, the removal of these teeth should precede the teeth of the upper jaw. Otherwise, if they lose their upper teeth naturally or lost by accident ... nobody would interpret it as a fortune. Such children

are considered as a mingi and are abandoned from the community (p.85).

Kello is a victim of this cultural practice. In the story, we find him declaring himself to be among the unwanted, unfortunate kids of the Hamar society: "I too was a mingi" (p.85). Kello was pierced and thrown to the forest because he lost one of his upper milk teeth by accident, losing his balance running after his family's calves which he tended. The Hamar culture has rigid and stubborn insistence on the adherence to their cultural principles, i.e., it has not any compromising way to exception. The reader, then, is relieved to discover Kello's internal conflict, and his troubled soul, which had so far been a mystery putting the reader in a suspense. This suspense, however, is at the expense of the reader's attention to characterization to focus on how the suspense will be resolved in the end. In the story, this does not show any technical purpose to the narrative structure in the novel. On the contrary, the reader's attention, stolen by the suspense, may not allow due attention to details which can help the reader identify and understand the characteristic traits of Kello, and other characters in the narrative.

Now, the events in the story continue to disclose Kello's background details. He relates his place of birth and his family. The author uses an external focalizer where the narrating I tells his past life in retrospection:

I was born in the Lala village beneath the Buska Mountain where it is believed the Hamars first came to live. My mother is called Benti Hailo. My father is Horra Shela. My mother is the fifth wife to my father and had given him five children (p.86).

Kello's mother tries her best to save the life of her unfortunate son. His mother's venture becomes futile since the village elders are informed of the abnormal condition of Kello.

When I was a child my mother covered me with the skin she wore and cried holding me against her body and scraped my upper jaw milk teeth against a rough leaf called 'Chewanza' ... My mother had been rubbing it with the rough leaf just to make it appear... (pp.86-87).

Any Hamar individual must be absolutely loyal to the elders and the community. Telling a lie or withholding such this information will be considered as violating the Hamar culture values, and will result in a bitter curse from the community:

Lying to the elders mean violating the whole traditional system. So as to secure their life and retain their strength lying is cursed violently by the whole community (p.87).

With this traditional norms of the Hamar people at hand, Kello's parents are at a tension between their filial intimacy and love to Kello and their duty to respect the values of their culture. Kello remembers: "Knowing the outcome of this event, my parents life was messed up and they were filled with discomfort" (p.87). In the end, however, two village elders come by and claim Kello according to their tradition.

Shocked by their coming, Kello remembers that "his mother produced an intense pain in her throat and her lips were ashen" (p.88). Finally, since she must conform with the traditional ways, although deeply hurt and mournful about her unfortunate son, she gives her kid to the elders: "Finally, without protesting to the elders' request, she gave a sorrowful sigh and pushed me in their direction" (p.88).

Kello's bad luck and his execution is nothing more than a tragedy of only his own family. Such this practice is normal and usual in the village except for his family, the other Hamar family continue with their usual life without being disturbed by the misfortune of Kello as he says: "Despite our family shock, the other Hamar families were enjoying a leisurely stroll in the sunset ... I wasn't significant to any one except to my mom..." (p.89). Kello's moaning soul was rescued by passers by the forest where he was thrown to die.

Kello was taken and raised by his rescuers and had had no communication with his biological parents and the rest of the community. Kello gets the opportunity for modern education by his new family. After all that pathetic experience, even Kello attempts to justify to all what happened to him:

But later on I realized that my mother could not do anything when the elders dragged me away like an ox. I concluded, through time that all that had happened to me was because of the culture and my relatives were not naturally cruel. So I decided to forgive them (p.92).

In summary, the reader of the novel is provided with the overlap of windows of rigidity and flexibility, gender equality and patriarchy, love for peace and warriorship. For example, they are challenged by the temptations of war for survival and the struggle for peace, i.e., the Hamars are a peace-loving society and exercise hospitality at their best, but they are also always in danger of conflicts and war that can put the clan in a crisis.

CHAPTER FIVE: Conclusion

5.0. Introduction Summary

In this chapter, a summary of the findings of the study is presented. Hence, in both the novels, the authors used sexually indeterminate, heterodiegetic, authorial-figural narrator. Besides, the pervading focalization is an external focalizer in both the novels. In **Things Fall Apart**, window shift and window overlap is an underlying narrative technique. In **Land of the Yellow Bull**, however, window overlap is the dominant focalization technique throughout the novel, though there are instances of window shift.

5.1. Voice in Things Fall Apart and Land of the Yellow Bull

The voice of a sexually indeterminate, heterodiegetic narrator tells the story in the novel, **Things Fall Apart**. It is a predominant omniscient voice which is supplemented by various individualized evaluative voices of characters. There are instances which move the narrator to the realm of overtones in the continuum: there are vivid signs of the presence of the author i.e. authorial interventions. For example, the narrator introduces and acquaints, and even generalizes about his characters to the reader.

Inside the overall narrative matrix, there are seven embedded narratives which are narrated by intradiegetic narrators. All those narrators are heterodiegetic in relation to the story they relate. Besides, all but one, are second degree narratives. The Kite myth is the only third degree narrative told by a third degree narrator.

Owing much to the tradition of oral story-telling, the dominant voice of the narrative is the voice of the village story-teller. But the reader observes a duality in the narrator's voice which suggests a cultural dimension other than that of the traditional story-teller. There is a self-conscious individual, a 'modern' narrator

of the novel, who takes over the last one-third of the novel. Or rather, the reader witnesses a narrator whose voice changes and adapts itself to time, which could be a reflection of the Umuofian society's change and adaptation in the process of survival.

The voice of the village story-teller is effectively signaled by the use of oral art in the novel. The double movement of the narrator is essentially and fully manifested at the level of language. It proceeds from the vigorous rhetoric of traditional life that infuses its early chapters with their peculiar energy, to the bare discursiveness that predominates the later chapters. In the early chapters, the language of the characters is a constituent of Ibo culture, woven into the fabric of social experience, creating a vocal characteristic which can be regarded as a sociolect. In the later chapters of the novel, there are fewer and fewer sayings or stories from the elders. The style of the narrative changes from being alive with images and customs to a more of chronological retelling of events.

Achebe writes with an authentic African consciousness, interpreting his own traditions and culture in a language that is essentially native- Ibo- derived English. Ibo proverbs, idioms and stories are included in the novel. Besides, some Ibo words are used in the narrative. These indigenous traces in an English text refer to a whole world that cannot be adequately translated. This is manifested by juxtaposing two different languages of the two different cultures.

Another major aspect of the interplay of the oral and literary traditions in the novel is the phenomenon of the story-within the story. The seven stories embedded within the narrative matrix of the novel provide a lucid example of the interplay of narrative and literacy, central to the duality and contrasting narrative technique in the novel.

Besides, the voice of the village story-teller is juxtaposed with the voice of the self-conscious literate narrator of the novel. The narrator as an observer tries his best to relate the truth. He mostly remains un-opinionated, this is so that the facts

are recognized and are not anyone's opinions of the truth. The narrator, and by extension the author, is in fact situated at the point of intersection between two world orders, the pre-colonial African and the Euro-Christian African, that impinge upon his creative consciousness. Thus events in the novel are narrated from the more distanced perspective of the oral story-teller.

This is a voice that seems to speak often from the margins of the traditional culture. The narrator adopts the tone of objective narrative, a tone derived from the convention of literate discourse. Its impassibility reflects the distance that he is obliged to take with regard to his narration. This tone is evident in the direct accounts of customs and of beliefs and other notations related to the tribal way of life, passages in which the skepticism natural to the rational viewpoint is barely held in check, masked only by the neutral tone of the narrative voice. This suggests that the perspective the narrator projects upon the traditional world is that of an external observer, a perspective that implies a cultural distance from the background of life, of thought and manners, that provides the concrete reference to his fiction.

The reader can sense the way in which this skepticism is held back in the long description of the search for ezinma's *iyi uwa*, a special kind of stone which forms the link between an *ogbanje* (i.e., a possessed person) and the spirit world, (pp.78-90). The narrator recounts what happened without any comment or irony which makes the reader suspend his or her disbelief. Likewise, later in the novel, a militant Christian who dared to kill a sacred python falls ill and dies. When later in the novel the killer of the python is himself killed, the reader has to suspend disbelief as he/ she is given only the Umuofia point of view. Similarly, Ekwefi's reminiscence of her encounter with an evil spirit is juxtaposed with a realistic, almost irrational, explanation of her vision.

These juxtapositions reflect the workings of the narrator's mind as it hovers between fascination and disbelief, between an impulse towards an embrace of the cultural values suggested by his imaginative explanation of the setting and the

narrative elaboration of the context, and a rationalistic outlook inescapable from liberated consciousness.

Further, interspersed with the seemingly uncompromising judgments of Unoka's laziness and failure, there are lyrical descriptions of his musical accomplishments, which reveal the narrator's empathy with him. It is also important to note that although the narrative voice is critical of Okonkwo's excess, it does not condemn his final action, the killing of the messenger. Similarly, although the narrator voices sympathy for Nwoye's gentle imagination, his decision to join the white man's church and attend the mission school is not endorsed.

While it is evident that the above mentioned instances in which the narrator reports these beliefs, and the practices associated with them, imply a certain measure of understanding of their ways, it would be clearly absurd to suggest that the voice identifies with them at any level of intellectual make-up. The narrative voice occasionally lapses into the knowing tone of an anthropologist. For example, the bewilderment of the villagers at the survival of the Christians in the Evil Forest affords the narrator scope for an indulgent satire upon their conceptual naiveté, as determined by the Ibo society's collective belief. This naiveté takes on a more ominous character in Obierika's account of the white man's killing the people of Abame, who tied up his iron horse (i.e. bicycle) to prevent it from running away to call his friends. The Ibo are portrayed taking the inanimate bicycle for an animate being that can run and even communicate with people, thereby confirming their naiveté.

To sum up, through this narrative strategy of juxtaposition of opposites, the focalization and the voice have contributed to the novel a foregrounded narrative form of duality and contrast. This narrative techniques provides an ambivalent view of the Umuofian people and Okonkwo. In other words, this scheme artistically articulates the complexities and contradictions of umuofia, of Okonkwo, and of the dilemma which arises when the Umuofians confront the

White Man and his religion, Christianity. Besides, the author's (narrator's) being at the cross-roads of two mutually exclusive worlds (i.e. Africa and the West) implies his preoccupation with the relationship of the past of Africa to its present, i.e., the essential bearing of the past upon the essential present. This narrative technique foregrounds the need to compromise and balance the two in order to live better in the present. So far, we were summarizing findings in **Things Fall Apart**.

Similarly **Land of the Yellow Bull** is told by an extradiegetic authorial-figural narrator who is the combination of both the more objective figural narrator and the more subjective authorial narrator. Besides, the story is told at an extradiegetic level by a narrator, extradiegetic, and also hetrodiegetic at the same time. Furthermore, the narrator is sexually indeterminate; therefore, is referred to as 'he' in the analysis throughout the chapter following Lanser's rule.

Although the novel is dominantly told by an authorial narrator, there are several textual instances where we find a figural medium with little interference between the story and the reader. The novel begins with unco-operative story teller, one who provides the reader nothing more than a vague expository setting, which the reader looks for an explanation to understand the story from the very beginning. It is the figural narrator who conspicuously flouts the maxim of reader-friendly exposition. At the beginning paragraph of the novel, the reader is left to wonder where the story takes place, except viewing a spring season natural scenery. Besides, the reader encounters with non-english worlds, like 'Hamar girls', which might need an explanation.

Moreover, in some of the beginnings of chapters or sections, the reader is left by himself or herself to infer rather than informed by the narrator, as it is true with the authorial narrator, for example, the expression 'Hamar hamlets' is used in the third paragraph of the first chapter of the novel. The reader can conclude that the setting is a place, perhaps inhabited by non-Christians, for it says 'hamlets', which in English may mean a small village without a church. If the narrator were an

authorial one, he could have told everything plainly. We, the readers, too are certain that the author knows what he is doing. Hence, we can easily discover that the narrator is a covert, heterodiegetic one with minimal possible interference between the events in the story and the reader. It should, however, be noted that the figural narrator reveals unavoidable interferences in the story. For example, it is the narrator who has prior knowledge of the setting and the characters in the novel. In some texts, however, this figural narrator delegates perspective to the characters and leaves them to speak for themselves, the reader being presented with a dialogue of characters among themselves, and this creates a reader illusion of witnessing the story by himself or herself. This is a narrative technique that helps to maximize a reader's suspension of disbelief. Therefore, the relation of the narrator to the story's beginning is *in medias res*, that is to the issues and characters involved, it is one of suspense on the part of the reader and irony on the part of the narrator, for he is capable of omniscience, a literary convention, which is a typical feature of the authorial narrator, and its absence makes a narrator more of figural than authorial.

This figural narrative technique in the novel, however, begins changing to an authorial one. The subdued figural medium begins to have a distinctive voice, the authorial narrator's voice. For example, let us consider the following sentence from the novel: "Then, suddenly and mysteriously she ended up in the hands of the Hamar hero, Delti Geldi" (p.18). The words 'suddenly' and 'mysteriously' indicate the impression of the narrator, which in a way reveals the interference of the narrator between the events in the text and the reader. Here, the reader is at a listening end as perceived, told, and judged by the narrator, a narrative stance which diminishes the reader's seeming ability to witness the events in the story. This is a typical feature of an authorial narrator. It should be noted, however, that although it is possible to shift from heterodiegetic to homodiegetic, in such a shift, the above authorial narrator is still heterodiegetic.

Further, through the text, we come to find out that the narrator is not only authorial, but also a highly overt voice. This can easily be understood from the following statement: "The Hamar men aren't alcoholic horses" (p.113). This

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mostly focalized through the sensibility of Okonkwo, there is a shift of focalization from character to character, character to event, event to character, etc. Functionally, Achebe adopts variable focalization for a three-fold purpose. It is to control the manner and speed in which the reader assimilates: (a) the culture of Umuofia, (b) the progression of the plot, and (c) the complexity of the novel's characters, especially the protagonist. All these three effects, it seems evident, have as their purpose the reader's comprehension of a complex story through a foregrounded narrative technique of duality and contrast, through the strategy of juxtaposing contrastive dualistic views, action, characters, etc.

The narrative focalization juxtaposes contrasts both at micro- and macro- textual levels. In other words, the juxtaposed contrasts of views, actions, etc., are realized both on wider planes and particular episodes in the text. In fact, the scope and width of the plane of contrasts are relative. The relatively wider planes of contrasts include: the male-female principle, the rigid vs. the flexible Ibo code of values, Okonkwo vs. other characters in the story, the oral vs. the written styles, and the ethnographic details vs. the ironic ending of the novel.

The most basic and pervading dualistic view in the novel is the duality of the male-female principle. This duality is found in the organizing and unifying focalization, especially, in the first six chapters of the novel. While the male principle dominates the first six chapters, the second six chapters glorify a powerful female principle side by side the male principle. In this way, the narrative focalization establishes the clan's subtle interfusion of the two principles of the masculine and the feminine; in a sense, the Ibo's governing system suggests a necessary balancing of the two principles.

Through juxtaposing contrasts, the narrative provides this complex, dualistic nature of the custom and traditions of the Ibo people of Umuofia in the novel. A concomitant rigidity and flexibility of the Ibo code of values is revealed in many instances of the narrative, for example, the scenes that depict the domestic conflict between Uzowulu and his wife Mgabfo, the decree of the gods to kill Ikemefuna,

actions are contrastingly juxtaposed against those of these characters. In this way, the focalization reveals the contrastive duality in Okonkwo's code of values, his violation of his tribe's values which he really wants to honour and champion.

Language serves as a narrative device that facilitated and adds to the ideological focalization in the novel. The novel tells a story that begins in the register of myth on an epic dimension and ends on a note of chronicle, a transformation that is reflected in its narrative style. The interaction between the evocative parts of the novel and the realist mode of its thematic progression is expressive of the interface between the oral and the written that is central to the narrative technique of juxtaposing contrasts. This transition of the style from an epic mode to the fictional mode provides an indication of the changing modes on the historical plane. In other words, this change in tone and style mimics the changes occurring in the life of Umuofia, i.e. a fatal movement of history recorded in the novel. And finally, the Commissioner's intention to write down his adventures in Africa transfers the mythic beginning of the novel into a realist chronicle in history though in a sarcastic vein. At the same time, the spatial scheme in this chronicle becomes transformed, enlarged and, in the process, impoverished i.e. from the lively compactness of Umuofia to the bare and generalized Lower Niger.

The ideological project, involved in the novel's writing, comes fully to the fore in the ironic ending. As mentioned above, the narrative style begins with a mythic morality, and this myth of origin and its rhythms of life provide an image of an African society, reconstituted as a living entity and its historic circumstance. This image of Africa carried a considerable ideological weight in the specific context of the novel's writing. The Ibo tribal world emerges here in all its specificity, its daily routines a seasonal rituals attuned to the natural rhythm of its living environment, which makes the people of Umuofia part of an old civilization. The whole depiction of the Umuofian society is contrastingly juxtaposed with the ironic ending of the novel. We see the colonial officer in the final scene contemplating to decide on the structure and nature of the native life of Umuofia.

Through this irony, the narrative focalization demonstrates how the cultural prejudices of the Europeans towards the Africans have actually resulted in a revelation of the true nature of colonialism and not of African culture. The irony undermines the perspective of the Commissioner, by exposing his personal ignorance (not a 'whole chapter' but a 'reasonable paragraph') and political interest (the 'pacification' of the Lower Niger). The author seeks to confront and finally discredit the entire discourse of colonialism.

The narrative focalization is at the same time sympathetic and critical of Umuofia. Outwardly, Umuofia is a serene and organic society, but inwardly, it is filled with individuals' tensions and doubts. In other words, on the one hand, the narrative presents a positive image of a tribal society with its coherence, and on the other hand, the reader is made aware that this coherence is a precarious one due to the inflexibility of its social norms in certain individual members of this society. In this way, the novel weaves a web of contradictions. Thus, one can easily identify that the narrative focalization of the picture of Umuofia is at the same time contrastingly sympathetic and critical, which helps the reader discern an ambivalent undercurrent of point of view that produces a disjunction in the novel between its overt ideological points of view, and its dispassionate and even uncompromising focus on an African community in its moment of crisis, a crisis that we have come to appreciate as intrinsic to its presiding ethos. Therefore, it is not enough to see the novel as simply a statement of cultural retrieval, as a novel that embodies a discourse of nationalism. Rather than a unilateral revaluation of the past, the central preoccupation of the novel revolves around the deeply problematic nature of the relationship of the past to the present in Africa. We have been looking at **Things Fall Apart**, let's turn to the other novel, **Land of the Yellow Bull**.

Generally speaking, the author of **Land of the Yellow Bull** has used a technique of an external focalization. Since the events in the story are oriented by the consciousness of the narrator focalizer, for the purposes of a critical analysis, the

attention of the reader is forced to direct towards the focalized rather than the focalizer. Seeing the focalizer from its psychological facet of focalization, it shows characters in the novel not only from without, but also from within which reveals the external focalizer's unlimited knowledge of the characters. From the perspective of perceptual facet of focalization, the focalizer's spatio-temporal position is panoramic and panchronic, respectively. It should be noted, however, that there are some instances of internal focalization in the text. For example, we are led to know the internal happenings of Kello by the technique of stream of consciousness on page 27: "Hamar... research ... A beautiful British..." These are fragments of ideas going on in the character's consciousness. In this case, both the focalizer and the focalized are Kello, the character himself.

As indicated above, in the absence of a pervading internal focalization, the reader's critical analysis focuses on the focalized. Therefore, in the story, we encounter such objects of focalization as characters, actions, tradition, etc., revealed by window overlap from one object to the other, including spatio-temporal shifts.

Among other things, characters like Kello, Delti, and Charlotte are the ones who frequently are focalized throughout the novel. At the beginning of the novel, we see Kello who is dominantly focalized from within at the beginning of the story, and somehow almost equally focalized from without to the middle of end of the novel. Delti, the hero of the Hamar people, is focalized from without since we are shown his physical appearance and told about his legendary heroism, rather than his inner feelings.

Spatially, the focalization begins in Addis Ababa, when Charlotte meets Kello at the university, and travels through the Woyto Desert to the Hamar villages across the thick bushes. Hence, there is this shift in the focalized space. Temporally, it is clearly stated that the story took place 'in spring early in October 1995' (p.9).

Gender is a dominantly and recurringly focalized object throughout the novel. The author has utilized window overlap of focalization to describe the concept of gender of the Hamar people. Generally speaking, the Hamar are patriarchal society, and at the same time, girls enjoy their maximum freedom during their girlhood days. In the Hamar culture an unmarried girl is free to do anything under the Hamar principles of life which should be observed by every Hamar. A girl for example, can choose any man for dance at the *ivangadi* moonlight enjoyment and can make love to any man, married or unmarried. The Hamar girl is not a victim of any harassment or of force: "In Hamar girlhood is the sweetest part of life. Girls' freedom of choice is respected very much" (p.80).

But once a girl gets married, her freedom is turned into servitude, Although a married Hamar is free to dance at the *ivangadi*, and even make love with unmarried girls, the married Hamar woman is denied all these. A married woman becomes a servant and property of her husband. When Kello discusses issues of the culture with Charlotte, for example, he says: "Although there are many traditional constraints, a woman is a gift created only to help, amuse, and serve a man"(p.104).

Therefore, the author uses a technique of window overlap to show this contradictory concept of the status of the woman in the Hamar culture. With a similar technique of widow overlap, the author shows the seclusion and rigidity of the Hamar people. They live under rigid, hard and fast code of behavior and if one wants to be a Hamar, one has to follow this rigid code. Their principles, they think, came from Borjo, their God, through his messenger, Bankimoro. No Hamar individual dares to break these cultural rules. If an outsider wants to be a Hamar, her or she needs to observe these principles. For example, Charlotte was accepted by the Hamar society to be a Hamar regardless of her origin when she accepted their way of life and acted accordingly. Besides, although the Hamar elders decided to leave Kello, the child, to death for accidentally losing his upper teeth

before the lower ones, when he fortunately escaped death and was rescued, they whole-heartedly welcomed him to join the his relatives and his society. The Hamar people are also depicted as a peace-loving society, but according to their culture, a boy's transition to manhood, among other things, is to be a good warrior, and a killer of a man from an enemy clan. The author shows these opposite sides to reveal their love for peace and their readiness to prevent destructive war from intruders.

Therefore, in both the novels under discussion, the authors adopt a double point of view throughout the novels which is achieved by utilizing two main underlying narrative techniques of window shifting and window overlap. In a way, a double perspective is reflected in the manipulation of the materials in the novels.

To sum up the present study attempted to explore the modern narrative of focalization and voice in **Things Fall Apart** and **Land of the Yellow Bull**. Further research should be encouraged and conducted in other African prose narratives in the future for a better and deeper understanding of narratology in general and the African novels in particular.

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Declaration

I, the undersigned, declare this dissertation is my original work under the guidance of my advisor Dr. A. Subba Rao, Professor of English, AAU. All relevant sources used for dissertation are dully acknowledged.

Name: YIDEG ALEMAYEHU

Signiture:



Place: Addis Ababa University, Addis Ababa

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