

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

**A STYLISTIC STUDY OF CHARACTERISATION AND POINT OF
VIEW IN CHINUA ACHEBE'S *ANTHILLS OF THE SAVANNAH*: A
FUNCTIONAL-SEMANTIC PERSPECTIVE**

BY

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Thesis submitted to the Department of English of the Faculty of Arts,
University of Cape Coast, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for award
of
Master of Philosophy Degree in English

FEBRUARY, 2012

DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original work and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

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Supervisors' Declaration

We hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the thesis were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

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ABSTRACT

Following insights from stylistic studies on European literature and a few earlier attempts on the stylistic analysis of African literature, there has been a recent growing interest in the stylistic analysis of the African novel. The present study is meant to contribute to this growing body of studies by using the Hallidayian model of transitivity to explore Achebe's *Anthills of the Savannah*.

The aim of the study is two-fold. First, foregrounded transitivity patterns associated with six characters are explored in relation to character and the thematic concern of the novel. Second, the study investigates the relationship between point of view and the transitivity patterns in which a character is inscribed.

The study demonstrates that five of the six characters, namely, Sam, Beatrice, Ikem, Elewa, and Agatha are stereotypes of key social actors in post-independence West Africa. These stereotype characters create a background for Achebe to foreground his socio-political ideology. Through systematic changes in the transitivity patterns Chris is associated with, Achebe urges the enlightened but apathetic citizen to rise up and transform his society through struggle. Regarding point of view, the study reveals variations in the presentation of character through transitivity patterning across the various narrative viewpoints used in the novel.

The study confirms Systemic Functional Linguistic theory that the linguistic features of a text normally reflect its ideational concern. It also has implications for further research in narratology, stylistic studies, and studies on *Anthills*.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Writing a thesis is a very stressful endeavour and cannot be successful without the assistance of other people. I, therefore, wish to express my sincere gratitude to a number of people who assisted me in the course of the study.

First of all, I express my profound gratitude to my supervisors, Professor Lawrence K. Owusu-Ansah and Dr. Joseph Arko, both of the Department of English, University of Cape Coast (UCC), for their enormous contributions to this study. I thank you for your patience and for enduring the pressure I put on you. I also thank you for the encouragement you gave me, for your constructive criticisms and for the many reading materials you gave me.

I give special thanks to Professor Yaw Sekyi-Baidoo, a Visiting Associate Professor of the Department of English, UCC, for the innumerable assistance he has given me. Professor Sekyi-Baidoo guided me in choosing a topic and in selecting a novel for this study. He again taught me how to use Microsoft excel to analyse my data, not to mention also the encouragement and faith he had in me.

I thank Dr. G. S. K. Adika, University of Ghana, Mr. R. S. Ngula and Mr. R. Asempasah, both of the Department of English, UCC, for reading my work. I thank Dr. V. K. Yankah and Mr. Emmanuel Saboro for offering me reading materials. I also thank Dr. Dora F. Edu-Buandoh, Dr. J. B. A. Afful, and Mr. Leonard Acquah for their frequent enquiries on my progress, which made me more determined to finish this work in time. It was in fact Dr. Edu-Buandoh who advised and persuaded me to pursue the M.Phil (English) programme.

I thank Mr. Daniel O. Adjei and Mr. Daniel Okyere-Darko, both of the Department of English, UCC, for showing interest in my work and encouraging me to finish in time. I also thank my mates - Adamu Musa, Alfred Owusu-Ansah, Rita Arhin, Charity Yamoah, Rauf Abudulai, Eunice Eshun, Betty Dontwe, Mrs. Helen Ahiale, and Mr. George Sackey - for their assistance and encouragement. I am most proud to have you as my mates. I thank WinCharles Coker for innumerable guidance and assistance. Osei Y. Akoto, thank you for being one of my raters for the inter-reliability test.

I thank the administrative and library staff of the Department of English, especially, Annabel A. Ackon, for their various forms of assistance. I also thank the following people for other forms of assistance: Christabel A. Sam, Samuel A. Kwapong, Phyllis Boffah, all of UCC; Winston Mills-Lamptey and Ernest Bansah, both of Sammo Senior High School; and Matthew Bediako, Bibiani SHS.

Finally, I thank my parents, Mr. M. V. Charles and Mrs. Clothilda B. Vendogfu as well as my uncles/aunts, brothers, and sisters for their encouragement, love, spiritual backing and financial assistance. But for space, the list could be longer than this. I say a sincere thank you to all other people who helped me in one way or the other in the course of this study.

DEDICATION

To my parents

Mr. Charles V. Mwinlaaru and Mrs. Clothilda B. Vendogfu

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

Literature is said to be an imaginative piece of work. Thus, unlike historical records, parliamentary documents and other forms of ordinary language use, literature is a fictional representation of the world of consciousness. Yet literary texts are produced under certain historical, social, cultural and political circumstances and they tend to reflect these circumstances. The source of themes, characters and even the events we find in literary works is society. Creative writers often represent both their individual experiences and the collective experiences of their societies in their writings. A literary work can thus provide an in-depth depiction of the cultural, social, religious, economic and political outlook of a people more than history textbooks and anthropological records always do (Diamond, 1989).

Although the extent to which literary works approximate social and cultural reality may vary across historical epochs and literary genres, African literature in essence and origin is tied with historical, cultural and societal issues. The African novel, for instance, emerged as a kind of reaction to the negative views about the history of Africa and Africans, which were developed in Europe in order to justify the Transatlantic Slave Trade and colonialism (Reddy, 1994). In the years immediately before and a few years after the independence of many African states, the novel was meant to

reconstruct and assert the true cultural identity of the African people and assure them “that their past—with all its imperfections—was not one long night of savagery from which the Europeans acting on God’s behalf delivered them” (Achebe, 1965, p.30). This is exemplified in the works of writers such as Chinua Achebe, Ngugi wa Thiong’o, Elechi Amadi, and Camara Laye.

The post-colonial African novel has been critical of the continually degenerating African society, occasioned by poor governance and the reckless life style that has become so prevalent in modern urban centres. Ayi Kwei Armah and Amu Djoletto, for instance, have criticised the political and social corruption of the Ghanaian society in several novels. In the post-colonial period, women writers such as Flora Nwapa, Ama Ata Aidoo, Buchi Emecheta and Mariama Bâ have also become critical of the patriarchal structures in African societies and thus question the source of the traditional privileges men enjoy over women. It is this essential connection of African fiction with society that has motivated scholars (e.g. Okpewho, 1992; Reddy, 1994) to assert that it has a functional value.

But the functional value of African fiction goes beyond a passive reflection of society. The works of African writers, like those of other cultures, are ideological responses to the dominant political, social, historical and cultural world-views of the society in which they are produced. Writers may want to criticise or affirm these dominant ideologies. They may also want to effect a social or political action among members of the society for which they write (Syal, 1994). What we come to encounter in the literary text is thus a product of the mediation of social phenomena, a reorganisation of society by the writer in his/her own consciousness to achieve a desired effect (ibid).

Literature, in other words, is a discourse which does not reflect reality in a neutral manner but helps to interpret, organize and classify this reality (Fowler, 1986).

African fiction has increasingly garnered much interest in literary research within the last three decades, among both African and non-African scholars alike. Many studies have explored the themes and critical issues in the African novel from, inter alia, sociological (e.g. Yankson, 2000; Ennin, 2005; Adjei, 2010), psychological (Cook & Okenimpke, 1983), political (e.g. Udumukwu, 1996), and philosophical (e.g. Yankson, 1994; Okolo, 2007) perspectives. These studies have emphasised “the tremendous potentialities of the African experience” as it is actualised through literature (Reddy, 1994, p.7). Others have also examined the integration of oral literary forms into the African novel (e.g. Asempasah, 2006; Opoku-Agyemang & Asempasah, 2006) as well as the structure and form of this novel (e.g. Innes, 1990).

While these studies on African literature have made insightful interpretations of the subject matter and meaning of the African novel, less is known of the discursive techniques employed by writers to encode their message and/or how, as readers, we arrive at certain meanings and interpretations of the text. A study of the style of a writer in encoding a message is not only rewarding in itself but normally it ends up in revealing a deeper understanding of the message. The discipline that studies the linguistic patterning of a literary text in order to reveal the writer’s style as well as the aesthetic and thematic value of the text is termed ‘stylistics’ (Zhang, 2010).

Following insights from stylistic studies on European and American literature (e.g. Halliday, 1971; Short, 1996; Leech, 1985; Rodrigues, 2008)

and few earlier attempts on African literature (e.g. Ngara, 1982; Oduaran, 1988; Yankson, 1994; Syal, 1994; Yankah, 1995), there has been a recent growing interest in the stylistic analysis of the African novel (See, for instance, Makokha, Barasa & Daramola, 2010). The present study is meant to contribute to this growing literature by exploring Chinua Achebe's *Anthills of the Savannah* (1987/1988) (henceforth, *Anthills*) from a functional-semantic perspective.

Motivation for the Study

The primary impetus for this study is provided by personal experiences I have had as a student of literature and a teaching assistant at the University of Cape Coast. During my undergraduate studies, my colleagues and I were always uncomfortable when asked to discuss the language of a literary work. We always found it difficult to identify which linguistic features were relevant to the aesthetic quality and thematic value of the text, and when we had managed to identify some linguistic features that were prominent in the text, we still could not actually tell the literary significance of these features to the text. I have made the same observation of students that I have worked with both as a teaching assistant and a graduate assistant for the past four years.

Admittedly, many teachers and scholars have already identified this problem, and in consequence, have provided sample analyses for students to emulate. Notable among these scholars are Carter (1982), Adika and Denkabe (1997) and Yankson (2007). However, there is still the need to further explore some of the linguistic models of literary appreciation, especially by applying them to texts with unusual narrative structure such as Achebe's *Anthills*.

Statement of the Problem

The personal motivation for the study indicated above is linked with an exploration of the critical reception of *Anthills* and literary studies that employ the transitivity model. Although many critics have explored characterisation in *Anthills* (e.g. Reddy, 1994; Udumukwu, 1996; Greenwald, 2002), not all characters have been given equal attention. Again, the study of characterisation in the novel has mainly focused on using the characters to illustrate a thematic interpretation of the novel. Besides, studies on *Anthills* are primarily limited to the subject matter of the novel (e.g. Diamond, 1986; Reddy, 1994), Achebe's use of multiple narrative techniques (e.g. Innes, 1990) as well as his exploitation of African oral literary forms (e.g. Asempasah, 2006).

However, as Acquah (2010) notes, the message a writer addresses may be similar to or even the same as the message addressed by other writers, but what makes his/her work uniquely his/her own is his/her technique. And as far as technique is concerned, a stylistic approach, which involves a close study of the linguistic organisation of a writer's work, "will yield far greater insights into his art and message" (Acquah, 2010, p. 83). To the best of my knowledge, no study has studied characterisation in *Anthills* from such a linguistic perspective.

Further, since Halliday (1971), many researchers in Applied Linguistics and allied fields such as literary studies and translation studies have applied the transitivity framework to the study of characterisation (e.g. Kennedy, 1982; Silva, 1998; Ji & Shen, 2004, 2005; Iwamoto, 2008; Rodrigues, 2008). (See Chapter Two, pp. 21 - 32 for a detailed discussion on

the transitivity framework). These studies have demonstrated that the transitivity framework is a viable tool in exploring the encoding of experience in literary texts. Also, some researchers (e.g. Silva, 1998; Rodrigues, 2008) seem to have taken the potential of the transitivity framework in revealing information about character for granted so that they overlook the possible influence of key pragmatic factors such as point of view. An exploration of whether point of view has an influence on the construction of a character through transitivity patterning will both add to our knowledge on the functions of language in literature and inform future research. It is in the light of these issues and those which have already been mentioned in this section that the present study explores transitivity in Achebe's *Anthills*.

Purpose of the Study

The aim of the study is two-fold. The first objective is to examine the stylistic significance of transitivity patterns in Achebe's *Anthills*, with particular focus on the presentation of six characters. The second objective of the study is to exploit the complex narrative structure of *Anthills* to find out whether point of view has a relationship with the transitivity patterns in which a character is inscribed. (See Chapter Three, pp. 76-77 for a description on the narrative technique of *Anthills*). In this study, point of view is defined in relation to the traditional narrative techniques employed in narratives, namely, first person point of view, third person limited point of view, and third person omniscient point of view (See Chapter Two, pp. 38-42 for how point of view is conceptualised in this study).

To achieve the objectives identified above, the study concerns itself with the systematic choices made in the transitivity system by the writer to present and develop character. The discussion on the stylistic significance of transitivity patterns to character presentation and development is situated within the socio-historical context of the text, and in relation to the writer's world-view of this context and the social actors within it. Generally, the study examines how Achebe employs particular kinds of transitivity patterns to stylistically weave into the text his thematic construction of a post-colonial African nation-state.

Research Questions

The following research questions address the concerns of the study:

1. What do the transitivity patterns attributed to characters in the narrative reveal about these characters and the writer's thematic concern?
2. How do point of view and transitivity patterns interact to construct character?

Assumptions Underlying the Study

The study is premised on three basic assumptions. The first assumption is that the choice of linguistic forms in a literary work is motivated (Simpson, 2004). This assumption recognises that there are often several ways in which a writer can use the resources of a language to express the same experience or event in a text. In the creative process, literary writers either consciously or unconsciously choose certain linguistic items over others to represent an experience or event for stylistic effects. Thus, in this study, it is assumed that

Achebe will associate or foreground particular transitivity patterns with particular characters for ideological, thematic and/or aesthetic effects.

The second assumption is that the choice of discursive features in a particular text is constrained by pragmatic factors. This assumption draws from the fact that discourse and context simultaneously shape each other (Gee, 1999). The selection of linguistic elements in any discourse to a large extent depends on the setting, the participants in the discourse, the nature and mode of interaction, the speaker/writer's attitude to both the listener/reader and the topic. Thus, competent users of a language will always select some discursive features over and above others to suit the situational or circumstantial variables surrounding the text they create.

The final assumption of the study is that the language in a literary work is "placed within a particular socio-cultural and historical setting" (Syal, 1994, p. 5). Literary texts are often produced within certain socio-cultural and/or historical circumstances and the pragmatic factors affecting their production are the effect the writer wants to achieve within these circumstances. The language of the text is normally invested with ideologies that will help achieve the desired effect. That is to say, a literary text is "ideologically constituted to make certain kinds of statements or transport meanings of particular social, cultural and political value" (Syal, 1994, p. 6). The meaning that a text projects will, therefore, always have an ideological orientation, which depends on the social, cultural and historical framework within which the text is produced.

Significance of the Study

The study is justified by its significance to research, theory, and pedagogy. First, it will contribute to the growing explorations on the interface between language and literature. The study employs transitivity, a functional linguistic concept, to analyse the style of a literary text. Besides, the findings of the study will reveal the relationship between point of view and the linguistic choices that are made to present character. Thus, as Simpson (2004) observed of stylistics, this study does not only explore how a linguistic framework can help us in understanding literary texts, but also what literature can tell us about linguistic structure and function. Such an interdisciplinary approach to text analysis as the one adopted here will obviously contribute to our knowledge on the link between literature and linguistics as academic disciplines.

Second, the study would be a contribution to the scholarship on Achebe's novels, in general, and *Anthills*, in particular. Achebe is a very prominent African novelist and his novels have been the object of many studies in literary criticism (e.g. Diamond, 1989; Reddy, 1994; Udumukwu, 1996; Greenwald, 2002; Asempasah, 2006) and also literary stylistics (e.g. Syal, 1994). However, to the best of my knowledge, no study has explored the patterning of meaning and the representation of experience in the novel selected for this study from a functional-semantic perspective, as the present study seeks to do. By exploring how characters are constructed through the grammar of the clause, on the one hand, and how point of view affects characterisation, on the other hand, this study will be adding a new dimension to the studies on Achebe's narrative style.

The study also has theoretical significance. The transitivity model of text analysis was developed in Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG) by Halliday in the late 1960s (e.g. Halliday, 1967-8), having borrowed some ideas from the Prague School of Linguists. It has since been applied to texts in several disciplines. In literary stylistics, it has been used to explore characterisation (e.g. Kennedy, 1982; Simpson & Montgomery, 1995), power relations in texts (e.g. Burton, 1982; Iwamoto, 2008), the interaction between character and theme (e.g. Ji & Shen, 2004, 2005), and the pragmatic organisation of narrative discourse (e.g. Adika & Denkabe, 1997). Simpson (2004) has also demonstrated its potential in exploring generic features of texts. As part of exploring characterisation, the present study examines the interaction between point of view and the transitivity patterns that are used in presenting character. Thus, this exploratory study raises questions about point of view that have hitherto been taken for granted in the transitivity analysis of literary texts for consideration. The findings of the study will, therefore, have implications for the theoretical application of transitivity to the study of character.

Finally, the study has pedagogical significance for the study of literature in Ghana. Many scholars and teachers have bemoaned the method of teaching literature in Ghana, which is basically thematic analysis, and the inability of students to engage a literary piece to bring out the writer's techniques and style through the linguistic organisation of the text (e.g. Arko, 2006; Yankson, 2007). At times, students are at a loss as to what stylistically relevant linguistic features to identify in the text and when they have done so, they are still unable to explain their effect on the literary work. This study

demonstrates how a linguistic model can be used to explore characterisation as well as how the construction of characters through linguistic choices affect themes and contribute to artistic beauty in the narrative. Such an analysis could be a model for students and teachers of literature in Ghana and obviously other countries.

Delimitation of the Study

The analysis of transitivity in the narrative focuses on only events related in narratorial voice. Fiction writers develop characters and their stories principally in two modes, dialogue and narratorial voice. On the one hand, dialogue helps readers to judge a character from what the character says or from what is said about him/her. On the other hand, the narratorial information, which often integrates action, interior monologue, authorial comments (and even dialogue), is a description and sometimes an explicit judgment of characters and incidents (DiYanni, 2002). Focusing the analysis on narratorial voice is thus very significant because the aim of the study is specifically to explore the writer's construction of the characters in incidents in which they are involved in the narratives.

The study also focuses on six characters, namely, General Sam, Christopher Oriko, Beatrice Okoh, Ikem Osodi, Elewa and Agatha. The motivation for selecting these characters is that they are relatively consistent and more involved in narrative action and events than the other characters that are not selected. This involvement in narrative action is crucial for a meaningful analysis of a character from a systemic-functional perspective. Chris, Ikem, Sam and Beatrice are the protagonists in the novel and three of

them (Chris, Ikem and Beatrice) also serve as narrators of the story. Elewa and Agatha are relatively minor characters and their salience in the narrative (in terms of frequency of appearance) is of varying degrees, with Elewa featuring in the text more than Agatha does. These six characters also represent different categories of people in the society which Achebe constructs in *Anthills*.

Overview of the Thesis

The study is organised into six chapters. Chapter One has created a general context for the study. Specifically, it has identified and focused the problem of the study, and outlined the assumptions and significance of the study.

Chapter Two reviews literature related to the study. The chapter begins with a discussion on the theoretical perspective of the study. Then, it proceeds to discuss some key concepts employed in the study. The chapter concludes with a review of previous studies that have applied the transitivity model to literary texts and studies on Achebe's *Anthills*. Unlike the discussion on the conceptual framework, the review of previous studies is analytical and it is partly meant to show how the present study is related to and different from previous scholarship. The analysis and discussion of the text are also situated within the context of these previous studies.

Chapter Three first describes the socio-historical context of the text selected for the study, and this is followed by a plot summary of the text. The chapter then defines the motivation for the choice of *Anthills* for the study and describes the research design chosen for the study. It concludes with a description of the methods and procedures employed in analysing the text.

Chapter Four analyses, interprets and discusses the text in relation to research question one; Chapter Five continues with the analysis, interpretation and discussion of the text in relation to research question two.

Chapter Six is the concluding chapter. It first summarises the methods and approaches employed in the study, and the research findings. It then establishes conclusions and draws implications from the findings. Finally, it makes recommendations for further research.

Summary of Chapter

This introductory chapter has provided a general context for the study. First, it discussed the background of the study and the motivation for which it was conducted. This is followed by the statement of the research problem, the purpose of the study, the research questions, and the assumptions underlying the aims of the study. The chapter also discussed the significance and delimitation of the study and concluded with an overview of the thesis.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

This chapter reviews related literature on the topic of the study. The chapter begins by presenting the theoretical perspective of the study. It proceeds to discuss the conceptual framework of the study, which comprises the transitivity framework and other key concepts that are relevant to the study. The chapter also reviews studies that have employed the transitivity framework in analysing literary discourse and critical studies on Achebe's *Anthills*. The purpose of reviewing these studies is primarily to demonstrate how the present study is both similar to and unique from previous research, and also to provide a conceptual context for the discussion of findings of the study.

Theoretical Perspective

As stated earlier (see Chapter One, p. 9), the study is conducted from the perspective of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). SFL as a linguistic theory was developed by Halliday (e.g. Halliday, 1966, 1967-68; Halliday & Hassan, 1976; Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004), who borrowed his fundamental ideas from the Prague School of linguists. Specifically, two theoretical conceptions of SFL, namely, the notion of 'system network' and the three metafunctions of language are employed to guide the study. The first of these to be discussed in this section is the system network.

System refers to a set of linguistic items which stand in opposition to one another in such a way that they offer choices to the language user as potential meaning making resources. A system is normally presented diagrammatically as being made up of an ‘entry condition’ and a set of two or more ‘signs’, each of which serves as a potential choice for the language user (Eggins, 2004, p. 194). The signs in a system are categories of linguistic items and the entry condition is a common feature shared by these linguistic items. Figure 1 below is a diagrammatic representation of a system:

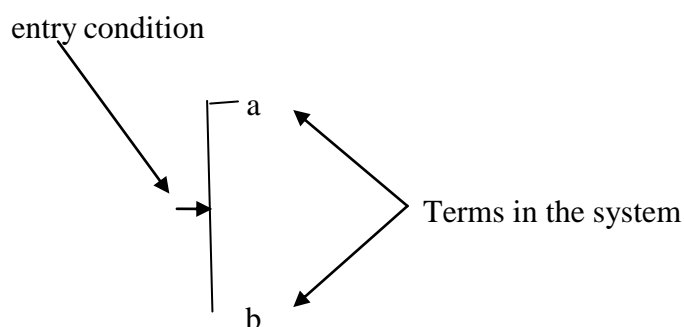


Figure 1: Basic System (Source: Eggins, 2004, p. 194)

A linguistic item in a system obtains its meaning by entering into both paradigmatic and syntagmatic relations with other items (Eggins, 2004). A paradigmatic relationship is the relations of opposition or choice that exist between linguistic features while a syntagmatic relationship captures both the linear relationship that exists in any structural arrangement of words as well as the collocation that exists among particular lexical items. It is the interconnection that results from signs simultaneously entering into both paradigmatic and syntagmatic relationships that establishes a system network.

Thus, a system network represents a class of linguistic choices available to the language user and specifies how these choices are realised as structure, which is a sequence of ordered linguistic items (Eggins, 2004, p. 192). Figure 2 below presents transitivity as a system network (in anticipation of a discussion on transitivity in pp. 23–33 below):

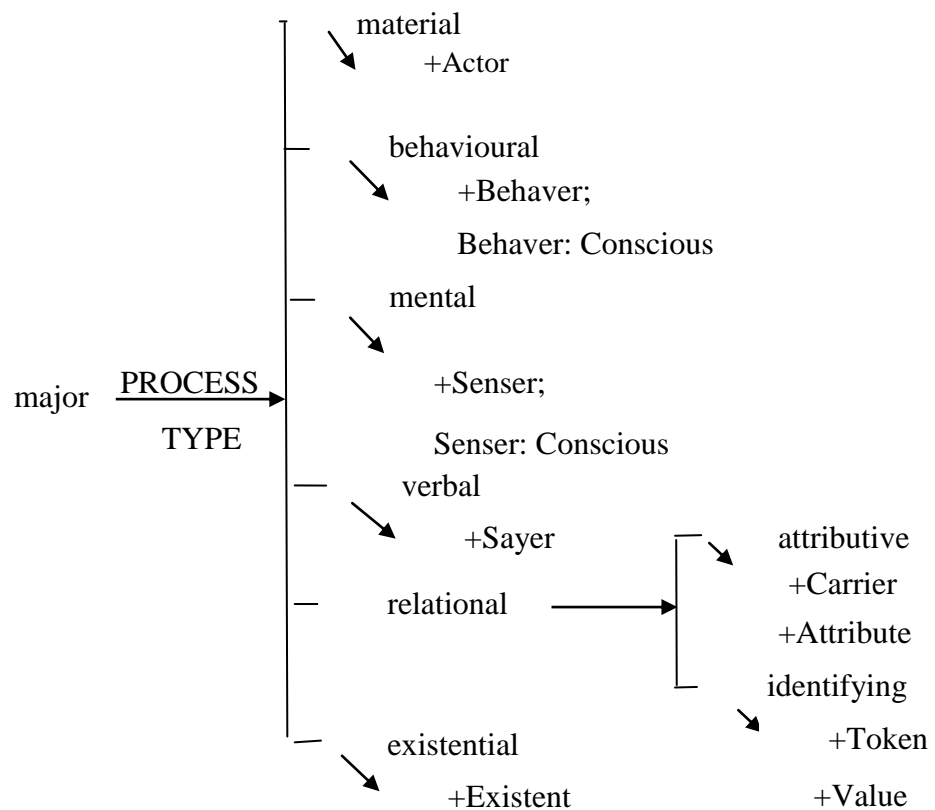


Figure 2: Transitivity Represented as a System Network

(Source: Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 173)

The basic organising concept of system is ‘choice’. Each system in a system network represents a point at which a choice has to be made. The first choice that is made from the system at the extreme left-hand side of the system network is referred to as the least delicate choice (Eggins, 2004). It is the first

choice in logical priority that has to be made. As the network progresses to the right, it increases in delicacy and the final system at the extreme right-hand side of the network is considered to be the most delicate system, in which the most delicate choices are made (ibid). The scale of delicacy refers to the logical priority among choices and it shows that choices lead to other choices. The defining claim of systemic theory is that “a language is a resource for making meaning” and that “meaning resides in systemic patterns of choice” (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 23).

By modelling language as choice this way, systemic theorists give priority to paradigmatic relations in language (Halliday, 1994; Eggins, 2004; Bednarek, 2010; Martin, 2010). In analysing texts, systemicists consider the linguistic choices made by writers and speakers within the context of other potential choices that the user could have made. Eggins (2004) uses the term ‘actual’ to refer to the choices that are realised in any particular text and the term ‘linguistic potential’ to refer to choices that could have been made but were not made. Systemists hold that it is when we relate what has been said to what the speaker could have said that we get a better understanding of the meaning of the actual linguistic choices.

The second theoretical notion of SFL to be used in this study is the concept of the metafunctions of language. Metafunctions refer to the intrinsic functions that language is meant to perform in society. SFL theorists claim that it is these intrinsic functions of language that have, over the years, influenced its structure and organisation. Halliday and his colleagues (e.g. Halliday & Hassan, 1976; Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004) identify three metafunctions that language simultaneously performs in every text. These are

ideational, interpersonal and textual functions. The term ‘metafunction’ is used to describe these functions in order to distinguish them from particular speech acts such as ‘describing’ and ‘informing’, and also to emphasise the fact that they are inherent in the very structure of language.

The ideational function refers to the use of language to represent or encode experience and meaning (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004). The ideational metafunction is sub-classified into two components, namely, the experiential function and the logical function. The experiential component, as the name implies, emphasises the idea that language is a representation of experience. Thus, through this function, a speaker or writer is able to encode in language his/her experience of the phenomena of the real world as well as “his experience of the internal world of his own consciousness: his reactions, cognitions and perceptions, and also his linguistic acts of speaking and understanding” (Halliday, 1971, p. 106). The second component of ideational metafunction, which is the logical sub-function, refers to the logical relations that exist among the structural units of language such as coordination, subordination, modification and apposition (Halliday, 1971).

As language ideationally functions to represent experience, it simultaneously performs interpersonal and textual functions. Language serves an interpersonal function in that it is a tool for establishing social relations, for creating and enacting identities and for creating social worlds. When people are involved in a communicative event, they are not only transmitting and sharing meaning, but they are also negotiating, establishing and maintaining relationships. They are defining their social roles and asserting their personality by managing the discourse in a peculiar way suitable to the

context. All these are done through language, and the ability of language to do this is inherently a characteristic of its organisation.

The textual function of language has to do with its internal organisation of information in a text. As a semiotic system, language dedicates some of its lexicogrammatical resources to establishing links among the tokens of meaning it expresses. These resources include intra-sentence and inter-sentence cohesive devices as well as inter-paragraph connectors. Generally, these resources maintain unity and continuity among the various ideational units in a text.

Having attempted an explanation of the two SFL concepts of system network and metafunctions as the theoretical notions that guide the present study, in the next section, it would be shown how the two concepts are applied to the study.

Application of Systemic Functional Linguistics to the Present Study

In applying SFL to the stylistic analysis of *Anthills*, the present study partly relied on Syal's (1994) application of the three metafunctions of language to the description of a literary text. Drawing on these functions, Syal (1994) identifies three orientations of a literary text, namely, autonomous, social and affective orientations. The autonomous orientation of a literary work is its semiotic value as a text, independent in itself. In other words, a literary text is perceived as a verbal artefact. The social orientation relates to the ideologies in which the text is constructed, and the social and political action that the text is meant to effect within the circumstances in which it is created. The affective orientation of a literary work is the orientation of the

text towards the reader and it encompasses “all the interactional possibilities that are created in the text, that affect responses in individual readers” (Syal, 1994, p. 7/8).

The language of the text, Syal (1994) notes, functions as an index of each of these orientations of the text. Language functions textually to create the text as an artistic product that can be analysed and appreciated independently of its socio-cultural context as well as of other texts. It also functions ideationally to encode and produce preferred meanings. At the affective dimension, language functions interpersonally to engage the reader in the activity of interpretation. It is important to add, at least for the purpose of this study, that at each of the three dimensions of the creative process, the creative writer simultaneously makes systematic choices from a range of available resources that the language offers for stylistic effects.

This study focuses on all the three orientations of the literary text, namely, autonomous, social and affective orientations, and their corresponding functions of language in analysing *Anthills*, albeit in varying degrees of salience. First, the study focuses on the social orientation of the novel by examining what the systematic choices of transitivity patterns reveal about the characters selected for this study and what ideological or thematic implications these revelations have. The exploration of character this way is based on the assumption that the language that is used to construct events and to depict people represents selections that are made out of all the available options in the linguistic system and that these choices favour certain ways of seeing and reading (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004). Thus, in the novel under study, the writer projects certain meanings over and above other meanings.

Second, the study focuses on the autonomous orientation of the text in exploring the interplay between point of view and the transitivity patterns in which characters are inscribed. Here, the study primarily explores the narratological structure of *Anthills* by looking at how systemic choices made in the transitivity system interact with point of view to construct character. By an extension of the discussion on the stylistic significance of the interplay between point of view and transitivity, the study focuses on the affective orientation to argue that the variation in the transitivity patterns and for that matter in the presentation of a character across points of view is partly a result of different attitudes that the various narrators have towards the character.

In sum, the central claim for applying SFL to this study is that language in literature is manipulated for aesthetic effect and also to carry the situated ideologies and meanings that the writer wants to project. The next section discusses some concepts that are central to the study.

Key Concepts

The concepts discussed here are meant to augment the theoretical perspective presented in the previous two sections. These concepts include transitivity, foregrounding, character and characterisation, and point of view.

Transitivity

The first concept to be discussed is transitivity. An exhaustive and a very comprehensive discussion of the concept of transitivity within the space of this sub-section is certainly not possible (For a detailed discussion on transitivity, see Halliday, 1967-68; Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004; Eggins,

2004; Downing & Locke, 2006). What has been attempted here is a highlight of the main elements in the concept in order to give a conceptual background to the present study. It is also important to mention that there are different versions of the transitivity framework of the English language, some of which are as a result of modifications to the concept over time and others are as a result of the different preferences of individual scholars. What has been presented in this section primarily draws on Halliday and Matthiessen (2004), especially in terms of the participant roles associated with the various process types.

Transitivity is a syntactico-semantic concept which refers to the way a writer or speaker represents, at the clausal level of language, his experience of the real world or his own world of consciousness (Halliday, 1971). In other words, transitivity models the grammatical description of the clause on content or the ideational metafunction of language. The transitivity system identifies three components of the grammar of the clause. The first is the process, which is the nucleus of the experiential mode of the clause and is typically realised by the verb phrase. The second is the participant(s) directly involved in the process and is typically realised by noun phrases. The third element is the circumstances, which are attendant to the process, and thus not directly involved in it. The circumstances occupy the adjunct element in the clause structure and are typically realised by prepositional and adverb phrases (Simpson, 2004). Compared to the other two components of the clause, the circumstance element covers a wide range of semantic class, comprising extent, location, manner, cause, contingency, accompaniment, role, matter, and angle, as well as their sub-categories. Arguably, Simpson (2004) observes

that the circumstance element of the clause is less significant in literary stylistic studies.

Three major process-types are associated with the transitivity system of the clause. These are material, mental and relational processes. These major process types have been noted by Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) to be the most frequent in every text. On the borders of the major processes are other three minor process types, each of which shares the features of two of the major processes but in a way that gives it a different character of its own. These minor processes are behavioural, verbal and existential processes. As noted by Simpson (2004), the distinctions between the six process types are more provisional than absolute.

The first major process type is the material process, which is defined as a process of 'doing' and 'happening'. Material processes express physical experiences. Associated with material processes are two key participant roles, namely, the Actor and the Goal. The Actor is the entity that is responsible for the action in the clause (or, to use a more traditional term, the Agent involved in the process) while the Goal is that which is directly affected by the action in the clause. Other participant roles associated with material processes are Initiator, Scope, Recipient, Client and Attribute. The Initiator participant normally co-occurs with an Actor in a situation where the agency of the process in the clause is triggered by an external participant (the Initiator) who is not directly involved in the process as the Actor is. Scope is a Goal-like participant which is actually not affected by the action in the clause. The role of Recipient is occupied by participants who receive an entity, which can either be concrete or abstract, from another participant (the Actor) while the

Client participant is the one to whom a service denoted by the process is done. The Attribute element is a quality assigned to one of the other participants identified above. These roles are illustrated in the clauses below (clauses used for illustration in this section are from Achebe's *Anthills*):

1. Elewa Actor snatched Process: Material the bunch Goal from her Circumstance...
2. Then he glances round the table until his eyes Actor meet Process: Material His Excellency's Scope and fall Process: Material dead Attribute on the mahogany Circumstance.
3. The beer Goal she Actor offered Process: Material him Recipient to make the time pass more pleasantly Circumstance he put away under his dashboard ...
4. He is after all ... a career civil servant who Actor would have served Process: Material a civilian president Client ... as well as he now serves His present Excellency Circumstance.
5. I Initiator flash Process: Material my light Actor where it ought to have been Circumstance and see a few tangled wires.

Mental processes, the second major process type of the transitivity system, is divided into three sub-process types, namely, processes of cognition, perception and emotion. The two participant roles associated with mental processes are Senser, the conscious being that is doing the sensing, and the Phenomenon, which refers to the entity which is felt, thought of or perceived. The following clauses illustrate both the sub-processes and participant roles associated with the mental process.

1. I **Senser** can never remember **Process: Mental: Cognitive** his real name **Phenomenon**.
2. Then I **Senser** heard **Process: Mental: Perceptive** bold footsteps on the terrazzo floor of the balcony **Phenomenon** ...
3. Glancing back to the rear of the bus **Circumstance** Chris **Senser** saw **Process: Mental: Perceptive** Emmanuel who didn't own anything either **Phenomenon** ...
4. I **Senser** love **Process: Emotive** her **Phenomenon** and will go at whatever pace she dictates.

Relational processes are the third key process type in the transitivity system and they establish relationships between two entities. There are two levels of further distinctions among relational processes, thereby making the relational process type a complex interwoven concept. The first level of distinction is the one among three main sub-types, comprising intensive, possessive and circumstantial processes. An intensive relational process establishes a relationship of equivalence, an 'x is y' connection, between two entities while a possessive relational process posits an 'x has y' type of connection between two entities (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004; Simpson, 2004). Circumstantial relational process occurs in a clause structure in which the circumstantial element becomes an obligatory participant. This sub-process type normally results in 'x is at/is in/is on/is with/ y' clause structure (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004; Simpson, 2004). The three sub-processes are exemplified below:

1. ...I **Carrier** have **Process: Relational: Possessive** no idea **Attribute**
2. I **Carrier** was **Process: Relational: Circumstantial** at the dressing-table **Attribute**.

3. She Carrier is Process: Relational: Intensive really Circumstance a fine, fine girl Attribute.

More accurately, some SFL scholars (e.g. Downing & Locke, 2006) use the terms ‘Possessor’ and ‘Possessed’ respectively to refer to the Carrier and Attribute participants in possessive relational processes.

The second level of distinction among the sub-process types of the relational process is between attributive and identifying processes. In attributive processes, there is a key participant, the Carrier, who is being assigned an Attribute. The Attribute participant, therefore, indicates what the Carrier is, what the Carrier is like, where the Carrier is, or what the Carrier owns (Simpson, 2004). In identifying processes, there is a participant, the Identified, who is defined with reference to another, the Identifier, such that the two halves of the clause become co-referential. In both the attributive and identifying processes, there may sometimes be a third participant who, as the case may be, associates the Attribute with the Carrier (i.e. Attributor) or assigns the Identifier to the Identified participant (i.e. Assigner). The participant roles and their characteristic clause types are illustrated in the following clauses:

1. My name Identified is Process: Relational: Identifying Beatrice Identifier, but most of my friends Assigner call Process: Relational: Intensive Identifying me Identified either B or BB Identifier.

2. Ama whom Carrier Beatrice Attributor nicknamed Process: Relational: Intensive
 Attributive Greedymouth Attribute having drunk both from the bottle and
 from Elewa's breast ... was sleeping quietly in her cot.
3. ... he waved to them in what Carrier seemed Process: Relational: Intensive
 Attributive to Chris Attributor like a very friendly goodbye Attribute.

As the examples above demonstrate, the complexity in the relational process type lies in the fact that the attributive and identifying processes intersect with the intensive, possessive and circumstantial processes. Thus, while all the three relational processes above are intensive, clause 1 is in addition an identifying process while clause 2 and 3 are both attributive processes.

Behavioural process is a minor process type and ideationally lies between material and mental processes. Thus, it represents in language those human experiences that integrate consciousness and physical experience of the external world. Behavioural processes encompass physiological actions such as *breathe* or *cough*, and sometimes portray these processes as states of consciousness as in *sigh*, *cry* or *laugh* (Simpson, 2004). In addition, behavioural processes represent processes of consciousness as forms of behaviour, as in the words *stare*, *listen*, *dream* or *worry* (ibid). The key participant involved in behavioural processes is the Behavior, the conscious entity who is behaving. Very often behavioural processes involve a second participant, the Behaviour, which is semantically very similar to the Phenomenon participant in mental processes. Examples are given below:

1. Chris Behaver was smiling Process: Behavioural a mirthless smile Behaviour.
2. Beatrice Behaver watched Process: Behavioural the two Behaviour without further intervention Circumstance.

Another minor process type is verbal process. Verbal process is a process of saying and there are three primary roles associated with it, namely, Sayer, Receiver and Verbiage. The Sayer is the one who gives the message, the Receiver is the one who receives the message and the Verbiage is either the content of the message or the name of what is said. When verbs such as *curse*, *praise*, *blame*, *congratulate* and *describe* realise the process, a fourth participant, Target, is normally involved in the process. The Target participant refers to the one who is cursed, praised, blamed, congratulated or described. The various participant roles are illustrated in the following clauses:

1. I Sayer asked Process: Verbal him Receiver to add more to mine Verbiage.
2. 'Too late.' Verbiage says Process: Verbal Ikem Sayer.
3. Elewa Sayer is Pro- still Circumstance equitably Circumstance cursing -cess her woman's lot and me Target.

The last process-type to be considered is the existential process. As the name suggests, existential processes assert that something exists. These processes typically include the word *there* as a dummy subject, and there is only one participant, the Existent, associated with this process-type. This participant obviously refers to that which exists. The following two clauses exemplify this process:

1. There were Process: Existential two military jeeps Existent by the road side
Circumstance...
2. There was Process: Existential something discernible Exis- in the prancing
about Circumstance which did not suggest sorrow or anger -tent ...

A summary of the process types and their characteristic participant roles are presented in Table 1.

The transitivity patterns described so far reflect the typical way of expressing situations and encoding experience. Actors or Agents do things that affect other participants, Sensers perceive Phenomena, and entities are assigned Attributes. In addition, processes are realized by verbs, entities by nouns and Attributes by adjectives, for instance (Downing & Locke, 2006). However, very often, situations and experiences are expressed in syntactic structures other than those that they are typically expressed with. Such expressions are referred to as grammatical or ideational metaphors and one major way of realising them is through nominalisation. Examples of ideational metaphors are given in the following clauses:

1. Soon Circumstance the two voices Actor were floating Process: Material in
Circumstance to me Circumstance again Circumstance ...
2. Fixing Process: Material his gaze Goal on me Circumstance // he Actor yet
Circumstance managed ... to convey Process: Material by his voice Circumstance
that I was excluded from what he was now saying Goal ...
3. I think His Excellency noticed the faint smile Goal brought Process: Material
to my face Circumstance by that reminder that he was still a soldier Actor.

Table 1: Process Types, their Meanings and Characteristic Participants

Process Type	Category Meaning	Participants, directly involved	Participants, obliquely involved
material: action event	‘doing’ ‘doing’ ‘happening’	Actor, Goal	Recipient, Client; Scope; Initiator; Attribute
behavioural	‘behaving’	Behaver	Behaviour
mental: perception cognition desideration emotion	‘sensing’ ‘seeing’ ‘thinking’ ‘wanting’ ‘feeling’	Senser, Phenomenon	
verbal	‘saying’	Sayer, Target	Receiver; Verbiage
relational: attribution identification	‘being’ ‘attributing’ ‘identifying’	Carrier, Attribute Identified, Identifier; Token, Value	Attributor, Beneficiary Assigner
existential	‘existing’	Existent	

Source: Halliday & Matthiessen (2004, p. 260).

Clause 1 expresses a verbal process as a material process. The subordinate clause in the clause complex in example 2 expresses a behavioural process as a material process while the matrix clause expresses a verbal process as a material process. The embedded clause indicated in the clause complex in example 3 is also a behavioural process which has been expressed as a material process. Thus, the three examples can be rewritten in their basic realisations as follows:

1. Soon Circumstance, I Senser heard Process: Mental the two voices Phenomenon again Circumstance.
2. Gazing Process: Behavioural at me Behaviour, he Behaver/Sayer yet Circumstance managed to say Process: Verbal that I was excluded from what he was now saying Verbiage.
3. I think His Excellency noticed that I Behaver smiled Process: Behavioural faintly Circumstance when he reminded us that he was still a soldier Circumstance.

Again, it is significant to reemphasise the idea of choice in the transitivity system (See pp. 16-17 for the discussion on choice in the system network). As Simpson (2004) notes, “transitivity offers systematic choice, and any particular textual configuration is only one, perhaps strategically motivated, option from a pool of possible textual configurations” (p. 26). Thus, any particular choice of transitivity patterns in language use represents or characterises reality in a way that is discernible. A systematic study of

transitivity choices in a text thus reveals the possible meanings that are engendered by the text.

This assertion does not imply that the transitivity patterns in a text offer an objective meaning or interpretation of the text. For any selection from the transitivity system to have salience, it must be prominent in the text and have relevance to the subject matter of the text. The framework which offers a comprehensive explanation on the salience of linguistic choices in a text this way is the concept of foregrounding, which is discussed below.

Foregrounding

The concept of foregrounding has its roots in the Prague School of linguists and it is particularly associated with Jan Mukařovský (van Peer, 1986; Simpson, 2004; Zhang, 2010). According to Studer (2008), the term was first used in English by Gravin (1964) as a translation of the Prague School's term 'aktualisace'. The concept in its original form means a distortion of the norm of a language in a text in a way that surprises a reader into fresh awareness of "the linguistic medium which is normally taken for granted as an automatized background of communication" (Leech & Short, 1981, as cited in Zhang, 2010, p. 155). Thus, Mukařovský noted that the main manifestation of foregrounding is linguistic deviation (van Peer, 1986; Zhang, 2010).

Deviation is a departure from the norm of a language for stylistic purposes. The linguistic code from which the writer departs is referred to as the background while the deviation is the foreground. Levin (1965) extended the notion of deviation by identifying two types: external and internal deviation. External deviation is the violation of the conventions that are

inherent in a particular language, and internal deviation is when the features of a text depart from the regular linguistic pattern of the text itself. That is, these features stand out against the background of what the text has led readers to expect. Leech (1985) also distinguishes among primary, secondary and tertiary deviations. Primary deviation is the contrast of the language system of a particular genre with the general usage of the time; that is, the distinctive linguistic features that characterise a particular text type. Secondary deviation is a deviation from established conventions of a genre. This kind of deviation marks out the style of a particular writer or a particular historical epoch. Tertiary deviation describes the process of internal linguistic deviation in a particular instance of language use.

In contemporary stylistic practice, foregrounding is seen as not occurring only through deviation but also through repetition or parallelism. Simpson (2004) uses the expressions “foregrounding as ‘deviation from a norm’” and “foregrounding as ‘more of the same’” to capture these two guises in which foregrounding can manifest (p. 50). The present study will follow Simpson (2004) and define foregrounding generally as a stylistic technique by which a linguistic feature of a text acquires salience or prominence by drawing attention to itself. This may be through the violation of a linguistic norm of some sort or through replication or repetition.

Halliday (1971) accurately observes that it is important to distinguish the mere prominence of a linguistic item in a text, in terms of frequency for instance, and foregrounding. Foregrounding, he notes, is “prominence that is motivated” (p. 112). In other words, a linguistic feature that is given prominence will be foregrounded only if it relates to the thematic structure of

the text as a whole or to the writer's total meaning (Halliday, 1971). The present study identifies foregrounded transitivity patterns that are associated with particular characters in Achebe's *Anthills*, and then examines what these patterns reveal about the characters and the ideological meaning of the text. The literary concepts of character and characterisation are discussed in the next sub-section.

Character and Characterisation

In his *Lotus Illustrated Dictionary of Literature*, Richardson (2006) simply defines 'character' as "a person in a literary work" (p. 31). The ambivalence of literary works gives characters a dual nature: first, as imaginative constructions and second, as representations of reality. Characters are created by a literary writer to serve as vehicles through which his/her thematic concerns are transported. They exist only in the fictional worlds of the works in which they are presented and are neither real creatures nor "detachable from the words and events of the story in which they appear" (Paul & Hunte, 1998, p. 105). The appearance of a character, the way s/he behaves and interacts with other characters are the sole responsibility of the creative writer. This explains why critical theorists and analysts can attack a writer for portraying an identified group of people in unpleasant ways, say sexist or racist.

Yet fictional characters are often a reflection of the history behind the story in which they appear and even our own world, here and now (Paul & Hunte, 1998). Asempasah (2010) notes that characters in literary texts are by their very existence mirrors of people in the real world, even though this world

may lie somewhere in history. If we accept that literary works are artistic expressions of human experience, then this observation is not surprising. However, the extent to which a character may be a reflection of a real person varies, depending on the purpose of the creative work in which it is found. For example, there is no doubt that most of the characters in Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* (1994), especially the *Yahoos* and the *houyhnhnms*, are very different from people in the real world.

Characters are often classified based on three criteria, namely, the role the character plays in the text, the degree to which a character is prominent in the text and the dimensions on which the character is developed by the writer. Hero (or heroine) and villain are the two role positions that are traditionally identified. Traditionally, the term 'hero' is associated with classical tragedy and is defined as the main character in a tragic play. The villain, on the other hand, is the main character who opposes the hero; that is, he prevents the hero from achieving his ideals or goals. In modern literary practice, the terms 'protagonist' and 'antagonist' are often used in place of 'hero' and 'villain' respectively.

Characters are also classified based on the extent to which they are prominent in the events and actions of the story. In this regard, we distinguish between major characters and minor characters. Major characters are those that appear more often and over a sustained period of time. Readers know more about major characters and come to associate them with the story since they are normally at the centre stage of the narrative (DiYanni, 2002). Minor characters are defined by Paul and Hunte (1998) as "the figures who fill out

the story” (p. 103). Their “function is partly to illuminate the major characters” (DiYanni, 2002, p. 55).

Another distinction among characters is between flat, static or stock characters, on the one hand, and round or dynamic characters, on the other hand. Flat characters lack complexity in that they do not change in any surprising ways in the course of the story. Round characters, however, grow and change in ways that can convincingly surprise the reader (Paul & Hunte, 1998). Round characters and flat characters are sometimes equated with major and minor characters respectively. For instance, DiYanni (2002:55) observes that “minor characters are often *static* or unchanging: they remain the same from the beginning of the work to the end” while Paul and Hunte (1998) observe that major characters grow and change. DiYanni (2002), however, quickly cautions that care should be taken not to automatically equate major characters with dynamic ones or minor characters with static ones.

It is important to note that the term ‘dynamic character’ is used in this study in two senses. In Chapter Four, it is used in its traditional sense, that is, the physical, sociological and psychological transformation in a character. In Chapter Five, however, it is used to mean a character who is cast in a wide range of process types so that such a character may be involved in activity, talk, behaviours, cognitive processes, and emotive processes among others. On the other hand, a character whose processes are limited in this coverage will be conceived of as a static or a less dynamic character, as the case may be.

Another term which overlaps with static or stock character is stereotype character. Although stereotypes are often static, they represent a rather different or broader concept than static characters. Stereotypes are

“characters based on conscious or unconscious cultural assumptions that sex, age, ethnic or national identification, occupation, marital status, etc are accompanied by certain character traits, actions, values”, etc (Paul & Hunte, 1998, p. 104). The lines between the various classifications of characters are thus not neatly drawn. This is understandable, since these terms are imposed by critics on imaginative personages.

The means by which writers present, reveal and develop character is termed characterisation (Murfin & Ray, 1998; DiYanni, 2002). Literary writers develop characters through a number of ways. The first and most frequent one is through narrative description. Murfin and Ray (1998) refer to this mode of characterisation as direct characterisation, in which the writer explicitly describes and comments on the characters. A direct presentation of characters sometimes involves evaluative judgement of the actions and attitude of the characters (DiYanni, 2004).

The second mode of characterisation, which Murfin and Ray (1998) refer to as indirect characterisation, involves “setting forth characters through representations of their actions, statements, thoughts, and feelings” (p. 44). This process comprises revealing characters through narrative incidents, dialogue and interior monologue, where the writer exposes the consciousness of the character.

Applied linguists working with literary discourse have also demonstrated the potency of linguistic choices as a means of characterisation (e.g. Yankson, 1994; Carter, 1997; Zhang, 2010). For instance, Yankson (1994) has examined how, in *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* (1968), Ayi Kwei Armah characterises ‘the man’ as an ineffectual character through

the nominal structures, and the verbal and adverbial elements in which he is inscribed. Zhang (2010) has also considered Hemingway's use of nominal and verbal structures to present the American's wife as a frustrated character in *Cat in the Rain*. Of more significance to the present study is Montgomery's (1993, cited in Silva, 1998) observation that the system of transitivity is a mode of characterisation. Montgomery (1993) claims that "a major source of textual cues for the constitution of character lies in the transitivity choices into which characters are inscribed" (cited in Silva, 1998, p. 341). Thus, as this study also demonstrates, the discursive patterns of a literary text can significantly contribute to the appreciation of characters.

Point of View

The last concept to discuss is point of view in narrative fiction. Traditionally, it is defined as the perspective or vantage point from which the narrator of prose fiction perceives the events, actions and happenings in the story (Simpson, 2004). Point of view is a very flexible literary technique and creative writers exploit it by combining a number of means to position themselves in relation to the story they tell. This situation appears to pose a problem for a neat classification of different types of point of view. However, three main types are very often identified by literary critics. These are first person point of view, third person omniscient point of view and third person limited point of view.

In first person point of view, the story is told from the point of view of a narrator who is also a character in the story. This narrator often refers to him/herself as *I*, and is often but not always the protagonist. Thus, s/he is often

and variously referred to as the I-narrator, narrator-character (Udumukwu, 1996) and character-narrator (Simpson, 2004). One advantage of this point of view is that the narrator tells the readers directly how s/he feels about situations, actions and other characters, what s/he is thinking, and other covert processes (Simpson, 2004). That is to say, readers are allowed into the consciousness and the innermost aspects of the character to have a fuller understanding of what s/he does, says and his/her behaviour towards other characters. Readers normally sympathise with narrator-characters because they understand and share their feelings and weaknesses. On the other hand, the narrator in the first person point of view is limited in his/her knowledge of the other characters; what and how they feel and what they are thinking (about) (Arp & Johnson, 2006). Also, s/he is only able to tell the reader of things s/he sees, places s/he goes and the people s/he meets.

Quite similar to the first person point of view is the third person limited point of view. In this point of view, the story is told from the perspective of an external narrator who is outside the world of the story and thus refers to characters by using the third person pronoun, such as *he*, *she*, and *they*. However, the focus of the narrator is always of one particular character, and s/he tells the readers mainly of what this character does, where s/he goes, and what s/he hears, sees, thinks and feels (Simpson, 2004; Arp & Johnson, 2006). This situation also implies that readers get to know of the other characters in the story as they come into contact with the focalised character in the narration (Simpson, 2004).

In the third person omniscient point of view, however, the narrator, who is external to the story, has a panoramic view of the story. S/he has equal

knowledge of all the characters and can tell us of how and what they feel and think. The omniscient narrator often knows more than what the characters know about themselves and can decide to enter or restrain from their feelings and thinking processes at will and at any time (Simpson, 2004; Arp & Johnson, 2006). The omniscient point of view is also referred as God's eye point of view.

One key scholar who has contributed tremendously to the study of point of view is the French narratologist Gérard Genette. One of his contributions to narrative point of view is the identification of five functions of the narrator (See Genette, 1980, pp. 255-256). He based these functions on the degree to which the narrator is detached or involved in the story. The first and primary function is the 'narrative function'. Here, the narrator, whether a character in the story or an external voice, is detached from the story by only relating events, actions and happenings as they happen in the story.

The other four functions are metanarrative functions and generally involve the narrator in the story in one way or the other. The narrator performs a 'directing function' when he interrupts the story to comment on the organisation of the narrative. S/he performs a 'communication function' when s/he addresses the potential reader directly "in order to establish or maintain contact with him or her" (Guillemette & Lévesque, 2006, p. 3). In performing a 'testimonial function', the narrator "affirms the truth of his story, the degree of precision in his narration, his certainty regarding the events, his sources of information" as well as when s/he expresses his/her attitude towards the actions or people in the story (ibid, p. 3). The last function, 'ideological

function', is when the narrator interrupts the flow of the story to offer instructive comments or reflect on the didactic import of the story.

Simpson (1993) also conceptualises point of view as "a speaker's or writer's particular style of conceptualising a worldview" (Iwamoto, 2007, p. 178) and associates a writer's point of view with other terms such as 'angle of telling', 'angle of vision', 'perspective' and 'authorial interest' (Simpson, 1993, p. 5). Several scholars have applied Simpson's (1993, 2004) notion of point of view in exploring the ideologies that are encoded in texts such as political speech and newspapers (e.g. Iwamoto, 2007). Simpson (2004) himself and Breem (2005) have also explored how this notion of point of view interacts with transitivity in literary texts.

Although there are some basic similarities between Simpson's (1993, 2004) conceptualisation of point of view and the traditional definition of the term, the focus of the present study is on the traditional categorisation of point of view into first person and third person points of view. It explores the interaction between point of view, transitivity patterning and character presentation. The study finds out whether the processes and participant roles in which characters are cast in the various narratorial voices in *Anthills* reveal differences between the way a character presents himself or herself and how s/he is conceived by other narrators.

In summary, the two preceding major sections have generally discussed the theoretical and conceptual framework of the study. In the next two sections, some previous studies that are relevant to the present study will be discussed. Studies that have employed the transitivity model in analysing

literary texts are considered first, and this is followed by a review of the critical reception of Achebe's *Anthills*.

Some Literary Studies that have Employed the Transitivity Model

Many researchers have employed the transitivity framework in analysing literary texts from several and varying perspectives. Halliday (1971) examines the stylistic significance of transitivity patterns in William Golding's *The Inheritors* from a socio-cognitive perspective. He systematically analyses the transitivity patterns in the novel to reveal that the novel presents two different world views. Golding's novel tells a story of a small band of Neanderthal people, who refer to themselves simply as 'the people'. Their world is invaded by a group of people of a sophisticated culture, whom the Neanderthal people initially refer to as 'the tribe' and later as the 'new people'.

Halliday (1971) identifies two major divisions in the narrative. The first part, which makes up more than nine-tenth of the novel, presents the world of the Neanderthal people, their world view and their view of the tribe. Here, the story is told from the viewpoint of the principal character, Lok, who is one of the people. Lok is hidden in a tree watching the tribe in their activities. The work, ritual and other activities of the tribe are characterised by Lok's understanding and interpretation of them and, as it were, his interaction with them. The ending of the novel, according to Halliday (1971), forms the second part of the narrative. This second part marks a shift in viewpoint from the perspective of the people to that of the tribe. Events here are perceived from the perspective of an advanced culture. Between these two extreme

textual configurations of world views, lies a third one whose syntactic organisation marks a smooth transition from the first part of the narrative to the second part, reflecting the characteristics of both parts.

It is within this narrative structure that Halliday (1971) examines Golding's use of transitivity patterns to characterise the people's world and to mark the shift of the world view presented in the novel, from that of an inferior culture to that of a superior culture. To this end, Halliday (1971) selects three passages from the novel to be representative of the three parts of the novel: Passage A represents the first part of the novel in which Lok is observing the tribe; Passage B represents the transitional part of the narrative; and Passage C represents the last sixteen pages of the novel, which tells the story from the tribe's point of view. Halliday (1971) uses both quantitative (frequency counts) and qualitative techniques (linguistic description) to analyse the transitivity patterns in the three passages and discusses the literary significance of these patterns in relation to the world view of the people, on the one hand, and that of the tribe, on the other hand.

The transitivity patterns in Passage A reveal, among other things, three significant findings. First, the picture presented is one in which the actions and movements of people do not have any effect on the things in the environment. Second, half of the subjects of the clauses in the passage are not people; rather, they are either parts of the body, (e.g. *his nose examined this stuff and did not like it*) or inanimate objects (e.g. *a stick rose upright*). Further, of the human subjects, half are found in clauses which are not clauses of action (e.g. *he smelled along the shaft of the twig*).

Thirdly, there is a strong preference for processes which have only the subject (or Agent) as the nominal element in the clause. But while there are very few complements, there is an abundance of adjuncts and most of these have some spatial reference (e.g. *his hand felt along the base of the rock*). The combination of these transitivity patterns, Halliday (1971) observes, creates an atmosphere of ineffectual activity. The scene is one of constant movement, but movement which is as much inanimate as human and in which only the mover is affected and nothing else changes. The syntactic tension expresses this combination of activity and helplessness.

Passage B is simply the point of transition between Passages A and C. Halliday (1971) further sub-divides Passage B into two parts and observes that the first part is very much like the language of Passage A; yet it gives the analytical reader some clues of the shift which is yet to follow. For instance, there are a few instances in which the actor in a transitive clause is human and, at least, for the first time Lok is seen acting on his environment and the object that is affected is one of the tribe (i.e. *Lok ... picked up Tanakil*). The second part of Passage B is a world of the tribe still inhabited for a brief moment of time by Lok, one of the people. Lok remains powerless; master of nothing but his own body.

By the time we reach Passage C, the transition is complete. Here, for the first time, the majority of the clauses (48 out of 67) have a human subject and of these more than half are clauses of action, most of which are transitive. There is also a significant increase in the number of instances in which a human agent is acting on an external object. The ending of Golding's *The Inheritors*, which is represented by Passage C, is thus parallel with the earlier

part, represented by Passage A. In Passage A, the actions of the tribe are encoded in terms of the world view of the people, and thus the passage is predominated by intransitive clauses. In Passage C, on the other hand, references to the people are encoded in terms of the world view of the tribe and transitive structures predominate; yet the only member of the people who is present is the captured baby whose infant behaviour is described in intransitive terms.

According to Halliday (1971), the difference between the transitivity patterns in the two main parts of the novel is a reflection of the disparity in the cognitive ability of the Neanderthal people and their invaders. He notes that the Neanderthal people perceived the events around them from an ineffectual perspective owing to a cognitive limitation imposed on them by their simple or inferior culture, but the sophisticated culture of the invaders has empowered them to have a superior perceptual control over the world that surrounds them.

Halliday's (1971) study is very significant for being a pioneering study in contemporary literary stylistics. It is the first study that applied the transitivity framework to a literary text and, as noted by Simpson (2004), it has demonstrated the importance of stylistic analysis in exploring both literature and language. Halliday (1971) also emphasises the relevance of augmenting qualitative linguistic description with quantitative techniques, such as frequency counts, in stylistic analysis. Again, he places much value on an exhaustive and systematic analysis of the relevant stylistic features of a text. These methodological procedures employed by Halliday (1971) have become part of the guiding principles in literary stylistic studies, especially among researchers working within the transitivity framework.

Following Halliday (1971), Kennedy (1982) employs the transitivity model to explore characterisation in a climactic episode in Joseph Conrad's novel, *The Secret Agent*. In this passage, Mrs. Verloc has just discovered that her husband, Mr. Verloc, is involved in the murder of Stevie, her brother. Upon this realisation, she stabs her husband to death. Kennedy's (1982) analysis focuses on the manner in which Mr. Verloc's murder is described. He observes that in over four hundred words of narrative description, no mental processes are attributed to Mrs. Verloc. There is virtually no indication of what Mrs. Verloc feels, thinks and perceives. In addition, most of the material processes in which Mrs. Verloc occupies the subject position are Goal-less. Typical examples of these are *She started forward ...; she had passed on towards the sofa ...*. Mrs. Verloc is, therefore, presented as a character whose actions are done seemingly without reflection and without directly affecting the entities that surround her, even her husband, whom she kills.

The transitivity patterns that characterise Mr. Verloc present a different picture. He is the Actor in a few intransitive material clauses such as *He waited ...* and *He was lying on his back* But the majority of processes in which Mr. Verloc participates are mental processes which feature him in the role of Senser, and which normally include a Phenomenon element. Examples are *Mr. Verloc heard the creaky plank in the floor* and *He saw partly on the ceiling and partly on the wall the moving shadow of an arm*. Although Mrs. Verloc is presented as an unconscious and ineffectual being, it is she who kills Mr. Verloc, who is presented as being fully aware of whatever is going on around him.

Kennedy (1982) identifies some key techniques that Conrad employs to develop the narrative in this passage. First, he places inanimate entities in the subject position of material clauses. An example is *The carving knife has vanished*. Second, he uses a lot of agentless passive constructions so that the Actors of the material processes in the clause could be suppressed, as in *The knife was already planted in his breast*.

In his discussion of Kennedy's (1982) study, Simpson (2004) observes that Conrad, in addition, employs a technique he (Simpson) refers to as 'meronymic agency'. This technique refers to situations in which a human body part, rather than a whole person, performs the clausal functions of Actor, Senser, Sayer, etc. Examples in Conrad's novel are *Her right hand skimmed lightly the end of the table* and *a clenched hand holding a carving knife*. According to Simpson (2004), meronymic agency is a common technique identified by both Halliday (1971) and Kennedy (1982) in their respective analyses. He also observes that it is "a recurring feature in the transitivity profile of many types of prose fiction" (Simpson, 2004, p. 77).

Burton (1982) and Iwamoto (2008) employ the transitivity framework in analysing literary texts from the perspective of feminist theory. Burton (1982) analyses a passage from Sylvia Plath's autobiographical novel *The Bell Jar*. In this passage, Plath narrates her experience of an electric-shock treatment of severe depression. Burton's (1982) particular interest lies in Plath's use of "disabling syntactic structures" in writing herself into a concept of a helpless victim (p. 188). The analysis focuses on four participants in the clause structure, namely, the doctor, the nurse, the patient (who is also the narrator) and the electric equipment used in performing the operation.

Her analysis takes three stages. First, she isolates the processes in the clauses and finds out the key participant in each process. Second, she identifies the specific process types of the processes she has isolated and determines which participant is engaged in which type of process. Finally, she finds out who or what is affected by each of the processes. Thus, each further stage in the analysis revealed more delicate choices in the transitivity system.

Burton's (1982) study depends on an old version of the transitivity framework which includes some processes that are slightly different from those of the version adopted in this study. The material process of the version adopted by Burton (1982) is quite elaborate. It draws a distinction between event processes, where the Actor is inanimate, and action processes, where the Actor is animate. Action processes are further subdivided into intention processes, where the process is performed voluntarily, and supervision processes, where the process of doing happens involuntarily. The supervision sub-type of the material process was replaced by the behavioural process in later versions (Simpson, 2004).

Both quantitative and qualitative analyses in Burton's (1982) study reveal significant findings. All the nurse's actions are material-action-intention processes (e.g. *the nurse started swabbing my temples with a smelly grease*), so that the effect is her deliberately carrying out determinate actions in the narrator's environment. Similarly, all the doctor's actions are material-action-intention processes (e.g. *Doctor Gordon was fitting two metal plates on either side of my head*). Electricity is also represented in terms of material-action-intention processes (e.g. *Then something bent down and took hold of me and shook me like the end of the world*). All these three participants are thus in

control of whatever events take place. They are presented and given as being in charge of the construction of the reality that the narrator perceives and expresses.

The picture for that of the narrator is very different. Her attempt at what is a material-action-intention process fails (i.e. *I tried to smile...*) and her related body part action is similarly only an accidental event that is beyond her control (*... my skin had gone stiff ...*). She is successful at only two material-action-intention processes, both of which are, however, self-directed. Further, one of these two (*I shut my eyes*) contributes to removing her from the scene and the other (*I wondered what terrible thing it was that I had done*) is located in the past in mysterious circumstances. She has the only cognitive mental processes in the passage, which is a reflection of the fact that the story is told from her point of view.

Regarding who is affected by the processes in the passage, Burton (1982) observes that the doctor, nurse and electricity affect the narrator considerably and other things around them while the narrator's actions and those of her body parts affect nothing, except in a single instance where she affects her ownself. Burton (1982) concludes that the narrator seems helpless, at a distance, outside herself, watching herself, and the medical staff seem more interested in getting the job done than caring. Burton (1982) criticises Plath for writing herself into such disempowering syntactic structures.

Burton's (1982) study is significant for employing such an elaborate linguistic model as transitivity in examining how the linguistic choices in a literary text can be used to endorse traditional power relations between individuals. Just as Halliday's (1971) work, it has demonstrated how readers'

intuitions about a literary text can be systematically and rigorously explored through stylistic analysis.

Nonetheless, Burton's (1982) analysis, rather than being exploratory, is directed towards supporting her political feminist attitude towards the text. That is to say, she seems to have arrived at an interpretation of the text before the analysis. Such a procedure, as is employed in her study, has been criticised by a number of literary critics, notable among whom is Fish (1981).

Burton (1982) also does not take into consideration the possibility of context of situation and point of view constraining the transitivity patterns attributed to the characters in the passage. The narrator plays a dual role in the passage. She is a helpless patient and, at the same time, the observer and teller of events around her. These two roles, as a narrator-character and a patient, who is supposed not to have much or even any control over her treatment, are most likely to constrain the processes that are associated with the narrator.

Arguably, the transitivity patterns in which the narrator is inscribed meet our expectation of the experience of a patient undergoing such a therapy as she undergoes in a hospital, and thus, as Adika and Denkabe (1997) would claim, satisfy Grice's (1975) maxim of quality. Regarding point of view, Burton (1982) herself even notes that the fact that cognitive mental processes in the passage are associated with only the narrator reflects that the story is told from her viewpoint. But she does not consider point of view in her overall discussion.

Like Burton (1982), Iwamoto (2008) analyses a passage from a short story in a women's magazine, using the transitivity model from the perspective of feminist theory. By employing both quantitative and qualitative

techniques, he shows that Stefan de Vaux, the male character, is involved in material processes mainly as an Initiator or an Agent in a Goal-directed material process (e.g. *letting her go at last*). He is presented as a character who affects and takes control of what is happening. He also acts as Sayer in verbal processes and is, therefore, a vocal character who can influence others. An example is *'Well?' he'd said softly, in his lightly accented voice*.

By contrast, Iwamoto (2008) notes, the processes that Claire, the female character, is involved in are mostly processes that are internalised and passivised and do not affect external events or other participants, at least not externally. Specifically, Claire is mainly associated with Goal or Medium in material processes (e.g. *Claire had been passed from guest to guest*), Senser in mental processes (e.g. *She'd blushed furiously, feeling all three*), Behavior in behavioural processes (e. g. *She had just stood there, staring at him; She'd blushed furiously*), Carrier in relational processes (e.g. *being pale from England*) and Actor in a Goal-less material process (i.e. *to come to recuperate*). Iwamoto (2008) concludes that the transitivity patterns in the text represent participants interacting in a stereotypical portrayal of gender relations.

Iwamoto's (2008) study is a replication of an analysis by Carter (1997). Carter had analysed the same passage by considering how the distribution of verb types in terms of transitive and intransitive among the two characters tend to portray an unequal representation of the female and male genders. Carter (1997) observed that while Stefan de Vaux "takes actions and initiatives," Claire "has things done to her and is cast in a passive and helpless role" (p. 13). He concluded that "the syntactic choices made in the text encode

a conventional gender positioning of men and women, one frequently patterned in romances and stories in similar genres” (p.13).

The problem Iwamoto (2008) has with Carter’s (1997) analysis is that it was restricted to the use of verbs, and whether they are transitive or intransitive. Thus, by using the transitivity framework she aims to give a more detailed account concerning the type of processes by which each of the two main characters is depicted. A comparison of Carter’s (1997) work and Iwamoto’s (2008) work, however, reveals that there is no significant difference between them, particularly in the literary interpretation given to the lexico-grammatical elements. The use of the transitivity framework in Iwamoto’s (2008) study seems rather cosmetic. Nonetheless, Iwamoto’s (2008) study is significant for demonstrating that even though different linguistic models can be used to arrive at the same literary interpretation of a text. This phenomenon tends to confirm the objectivity and replicability of stylistic analysis.

Rodrigues (2008) and Silva (1998) consider the interaction among the linguistic model of transitivity, characterisation in literary discourse and translation. Rodrigues (2008) analyses both the original English version and a Portuguese translation of a gay short story. The objective of Rodrigues’s (2008) study is two-fold. First, he aims at examining the transitivity choices in both the original English text and the translated Portuguese text in a bid to uncover the differences and similarities in how the protagonist is represented in each version of the story. The second objective is to reveal the way the protagonist is represented through the choice of transitivity patterns *vis-à-vis* the other gay characters with whom he is discursively constructed.

Rodrigues (2008) uses three computer data processing tools to analyse his data. These were Wordlist, Concord and Aligner. Given that the text was written in the first person narrative, the codes were tagged after the subject pronoun *I*. The analysis reveals consistency in the frequency distribution of process types in both texts. It also reveals a high percentage of material processes. Table 2 presents a summary of his findings. Inferring from these findings, Rodrigues (2008) notes that the data show an active protagonist who not only acts upon the world, but who is also conscious of it and talks about it.

Rodrigues's (2008) study is very significant for three reasons. Arguably, first, it shows how the lexico-grammatical resources available in a particular language put constraints on the transitivity patterns of the clause.

Table 2: Distribution of Transitivity Patterns across Languages in Rodrigues' Study

Process Type	English Text		Portuguese Text	
	N	%	N	%
Material	50	36.29	39	32.50
Mental	28	20.29	26	21.67
Verbal	28	20.29	26	21.67
Behavioural	21	15.22	22	18.33
Relational	11	7.97	7	5.83

Different languages tend to have different ways of construing experience or of representing reality. This observation is suggested by the variation in the frequency of the process types across English and Portuguese. It can, however, also be argued that the differences are the result of the difference in individual

stylistic preferences between the author of the original English version of the story and the translator. Second, it shows that the transitivity system is a general characteristic of human language. Finally, the study has implications for translation practice. Translators need to give attention to the experiential dimension of texts and try to see which lexico-grammatical resources of the target language can best capture the processes construed in the source language.

However, Rodrigues's (2008) approach is not without limitations. By focusing on clauses beginning with the first person pronoun, *I*, the analysis is subject-position biased. We do not know what others do to the protagonist. We only hear him say and do things most of the time. Rodrigues (2008) also does not give a detailed analysis of the process types to observe more delicate choices. For example, he does not look at the type of material processes in terms of whether they are self-directed or Goal-directed (transitive or intransitive). He says that the high frequency of material processes suggests that the protagonist acts upon his world.

But a careful and delicate analysis would reveal that almost all the material processes are Goal-less. Typical examples include *I had no idea what I had done or said; I choked; I went off; and I closed my eyes*. As Halliday (1971) says of Lok in *The Inheritors*, the picture is that the protagonist acts but nothing is affected by his actions. In the 40-line summary of the concordance analysis given by Rodrigues (2008), there are only two Goal-directed material processes, which are *I laid off that routine* and *I let him have it out*. A critical look at these two Goal-directed material processes even reveals inaction. In the first, the goal is an abstract concept and both *laid off* in the first example

and *let him have it* in the second example denote inaction. Thus, Rodrigues's (2008) conclusion would have been otherwise if he had done a delicate analysis of the transitivity choices.

Silva (1998) studies the first scene of the 1951 cinematographic version of Tennessee Williams' *A Streetcar Named Desire* and the Portuguese subtitling of the first scene of this film. According to Silva (1998), the film is a cinematographic version of a play written by Tennessee Williams, which tells the story of the mental and emotional ruin of Blanche DuBois, the protagonist. In the scene, Blanche has met her sister and they are having a conversation over lunch at a restaurant.

The objective of Silva's (1998) study is to investigate the correlation between transitivity patterns and the construction Blanche DuBois in the English version and the translation version. Silva (1998) first concentrates on an analysis of the choice of processes into which Blanche DuBois is inscribed in the English version of the film in order to compare this version and the subtitled version in Portuguese.

Silva (1998) finds that, in both texts, Blanche is presented as a self-centred and ineffectual character who is unable to extend her actions, feelings, sayings to anyone beyond herself. She also observes that due to the difference between the structures of the two languages some processes underwent modification in the translated text. She concludes that both the source text and the target text, however, selected and realised similar meanings, thus construing similar pictures of the protagonist.

Silva (1998) has demonstrated the relevance of stylistic analysis to spoken literary discourse. However, her study does not take context of

situation into consideration. The text she analyses is dialogue, a replication of conversation in literary discourse. Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) have noted that relational and mental processes are characteristic of conversation. Thus, the communicative event in which Blanche is involved and even the circumstantial context and the content of discussion in the dialogue, which in this case is a recounting of personal experience at lunch, could put constraints on transitivity choices.

Adika and Denkabe (1997) integrate the transitivity framework with Grice's (1975) co-operative principle and the concept of referring terms to analyse the opening scene of Ayi Kwei Armah's *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*. This scene narrates a confrontation between two characters, the bus conductor and the character who is simply referred to as 'the man'. There are four characters involved in this narrative incident. These are the driver of the bus, the bus conductor, the passenger who gave the cedi, and the man.

Adika and Denkabe's (1997) analysis involves three stages. The first stage, which they term 'level one', is a raw analysis of the transitivity patterns in the passage. The second stage, level two, is a pragmatic analysis of the transitivity patterns. They organise the participants in the transitivity patterns provided under level one into what they call definite and indefinite referring terms. Referring terms that are definite are noun phrases with the definite article *the*, possessives, pronouns, names and titles; and those that are indefinite include noun phrases with the indefinite article *a* as well as quantifiers and numerals. Adika and Denkabe (1997) first identify the first instances in which participants in the clausal processes are mentioned in the text. The subsequent analysis focuses on the next mentions in terms of

whether they are explicit or inexplicit. They found that the next mentions, as compared to the first mentions, are predominantly definite and explicit forms. They also observe that the explicitness focuses on the body parts of the characters (e.g. *his mouth, his stuffed throat*), discharges from their bodies (e.g. *his mouth water, the man's spittle*) and their participant roles (e.g. *the watcher, the giver, the sleeper, and the silent one*).

The third level of the analysis is an interpretation of the first two levels in an integrated manner. They observe that characters are designated by reference to expressions which are determined from participant roles and also from the different processes. According to Adika and Denkabe (1997), the peculiarity of Ayi Kwei Armah's novel is that explicitness focuses on the parts of the characters' body. They also observe that the referring sequences in the confrontation between the conductor and the unnamed character, and indeed the whole of chapter one, often violate the cooperative principle with regards to the maxim of quantity and manner. These referring sequences, however, observe the maxim of relevance and quality in that they often consolidate what is true. That is, the reference terms to characters in terms of participant roles consolidate the fact that we do not always know the names of people we meet in a bus.

Of particular significance to their study is the fact that Adika and Denkabe (1997) apply the transitivity framework to an African text. They also demonstrate the applicability of the co-operative principle to literary discourse. Cook (1994) has argued that the co-operative principle is irrelevant in the discussion of literary texts. Cook (1994) states that the wide range of works regarded as literary, which range from the fairly factual to the fantastic,

means that the question of the truthfulness of an utterance, which is the concern of the maxim of quality, is irrelevant or unhelpful. He similarly considers the quantity maxim to be irrelevant. For Cook (1994), since a literary work has no practical or social function, it must be appreciated for being either too long, or for its concision. Contrary to Cook's (1994) pessimism, Adika and Denkabe (1997) have shown that the co-operative principle offers "an explanation of how texts may be processed, some of the attitudes readers bring to the processing of text, and why we arrive at certain interpretations" (Black, 2006, p. 33).

Some Studies on Achebe's *Anthills of the Savannah*

This section continues the review of previous studies that are relevant to this study by discussing the critical reception of Achebe's *Anthills*. Admittedly, given that there is an overwhelming critical literature on the novel, this review presents only a few representative studies. Readers who have not read the novel before might want to read a plot summary presented in Chapter Three, pp. 80-83 of this thesis before reading this section.

The first study to consider is Reddy (1994), who examines the motif of political struggle in *Anthills* as well as the role of the African writer. To Reddy (1994), *Anthills* dramatises power. The thesis of Reddy's (1994) argument is that the very villain in the story is power itself. *Anthills* is a critique of the power apparatus of neo-colonial Africa. The power equations in the novel are played out by three major characters, namely, Chris, Ikem, and Sam. Reddy (1994) draws on Ikem's metaphor of the circus to emphasise the negative effects of power. In ridiculing the power relations in which they (Sam, Chris

and Ikem) are entangled, Ikem observes that following a leader who follows his leader is quite a circus.

According to Reddy (1994), the power game among these political leaders makes them ineffectual and impotent just as the wild animals are tamed into submission in a circus-show. Sam's Cabinet is likened to "people you put away in a wooden locker' where people are equated with things without a voice or a soul of their own" (Reddy, 1994, p. 110). Sam and his power-brokers also sought to condition the masses so as to make them pliable and docile. Reddy (1994) compares this political strategy to that of the colonial masters. While the colonial masters adopted the theory of pacification to subdue the Africans, the African rulers resorted to "domestication of their own subjects" (p. 110). Interestingly, Reddy (1994) sees Sam, the dictator, also as a helpless victim of this power game. This is because, Reddy (1994) notes, "Sam, outside power syndrome, enjoyed an impeccable and a 'virgin' image" (p. 121). It is his contact and association with power that has undone him ultimately. Hence, it is power that "stands out as the real villain, culprit and criminal in the context of the novel" (ibid, p. 121-122).

Reddy (1994) considers the malicious role played by sycophancy and hypocrisy in facilitating power abuse. He places this within the broader spectrum of institutional power. In every hierarchical organisation, those who surround the boss keep singing praises to him rather than letting him have reality. Thus, the boss is always denied access to the truth, "which always gets distorted and biased to suit the immediate and long-range needs of the boot lickers" (ibid, p. 111). As Reddy (1994) observes, in *Anthills*, Professor Okong represents this malicious bunch of boot-lickers. Chris and Ikem can stand

neither hypocrisy nor boot-licking and Ikem tries to prevail on Chris to save Sam from the incessant bootlicking in the Cabinet. Okong sustains and nurses Sam's suspicion of Chris and Ikem, an attitude which significantly contributes to Sam's deterioration into a tyrant.

In addition, Reddy (1994) considers the role of women in this power game. He discusses this issue against the background of the representation of women in Achebe's novels in general. He observes that in Achebe's first three novels, namely, *Things Fall Apart* (1958), *Arrow of God* (1964/74) and *No Longer at Ease* (1960), women are marginalised and "their image as individuals remains dwarfed in a polygamous and patriarchal set up" (ibid, p.113). *A Man of the People* (1966) marks a radical departure from the marginalisation of women, through the positive role played by Eunice, a feminist character. Beatrice in *Anthills* enjoys not only a positive image, but does things which tradition has assigned to man. Reddy (1994), in echoing Ikonne, notes that *Anthills* "embodies ... Achebe's most positive image of the modern woman in his novels so far" (p. 113).

Reddy (1994) links this positive image of the woman to the role Beatrice plays in providing an antidote to the ugly march of power. Achebe uses the myth of the sun to symbolise corruption prone and "monstrous masculine power" (Reddy, 1994, p. 117). Achebe portrays this legend of male-power which is sought to be neutralised through female resistance. Beatrice acts as a catalyst to motivate both Ikem and Chris emboldening them to offer resistance to the naked dance of power.

Reddy (1994) states that the unrestrained naked dance of power is sought to be countered by means of struggle motif in the novel. Achebe does

not prescribe any solution. Neither does he offer any “alternative modes of governance, but only struggle and vigil to checkmate the onslaughts of power on human dignity and liberty” (ibid, p.122). He emphasises the need for incessant struggles, the forms which are embodied in the indigenous myths and legends.

Reddy (1994) notes that in this struggle, the regeneration of history is very vital. The white bearded delegate from Abazon stresses that the story is the escort and a lesson to be learnt from the past experiences. The story, in other words, is the history of a people’s past, their glorious moments and sufferings and the record of their heroic resistance to all forms of oppression and exploitation. Reddy (1994) notes that the principal characters in the novel are detached from their culture, their people and their history. Towards the end of the novel, Ikem, Beatrice and Chris discover this fact and begin to look into their culture and the people for new ways to build their nation.

In echoing his thesis, Reddy (1994) concludes that the lead role played by Beatrice, the path shown by Ikem and the heroic death invited by Chris should go a long way to appease an embittered history of a people. The motif of struggle is the hall-mark of the novel with story as the escort and guide. The narrator of the story in this process can become a powerful force in shaping the way a people think about their social and political order and the nature, desirability and direction of change.

Erritouni (2006) examines *Anthills* as a novel which exposes the ills of the African postcolonial nation state in an effort to propose credible alternatives to them. Like Reddy (1994), he notes that these alternatives are best described as horizons because they do not take the form of systematic

solutions or detailed social and political programmes. Erritouni (2006) observes that *Anthills* embodies a groping of possibilities that are largely fragmentary, undecided, and often amorphous. He observes that Achebe's approach to the question of the nation-state is characterised by deep contradictions.

Erritouni's (2006) thesis is that these contradictions should not be viewed as resulting from Achebe's inability to come to terms with the implications of his uncoordinated views, as Brown (1991) has observed, but rather as a reflection of the inherent tensions that mark the postcolonial nation-state. In so doing, "Achebe represents the contemporary political situation and its irreducible complexity, refusing to resolve contradictions that necessarily obtain from such a painstaking representation" (Erritouni, 2006, p.50). Reddy (1994), commenting on these contradictions, has observed that "Achebe seems to strike a middle-path based on the Igbo concept of duality in things, one thing balancing and correcting the other" (p. 108). Reddy (1994) also says that Achebe "focuses on the significance and inevitability of contradictions governing and influencing events, and people" (p. 108).

To Erritouni (2006), *Anthills* presents three alternatives. The first alternative is the leadership of enlightened intellectuals. Achebe assigns enlightened intellectuals an essential role in imagining alternatives to the nation-state. He holds that an enlightened leadership of intellectuals, represented in *Anthills* by Chris and Ikem, could be instrumental in leading Nigerians and Africans beyond the impasses of their nation-states. The second alternative is the elevation of women's status, as represented by Beatrice. Achebe dramatises a woman in a position of leadership. Erritouni (2006)

observes that this position of the woman has been disregarded by nationalism, but postcolonial leaders have started to consider it seriously.

The third alternative given by Achebe, according to Erritouni (2006), is a horizontal polity based on the group that gathers at the end of the novel in Beatrice's apartment. Erritouni (2006) says that Achebe proposes the emulation of indigenous forms of government, which valorise plural decision-making and horizontal relations. This observation by Erritouni (2006) shows how he and Reddy (1994) differ in their perception of the role cultural values are meant to play in the nation-state. While Erritouni (2006) views it as an emulation of horizontal power relations in the traditional politics of the Igbo people, Reddy (1994) sees it as a regeneration of history. Looking at it critically, one could see that both views are presented in *Anthills*. The difference is caused by the textual references on which each writer bases his argument. Erritouni (2006) draws on the "multi-ethnic, multi-linguistic, and religiously diverse group" which gathers at Beatrice's apartment at the end of the novel (Erritouni, 2006, p. 51). Reddy (1994), on the other hand, bases his observation on oral tradition embodied in the white bearded delegate from Abazon and re-echoed by Ikem.

From another perspective, Reddy (1994) and Erritouni (2006) converge on this issue of horizontal polity. Reddy (1994), in echoing Ikem, criticises the hierarchical power equations between the officials: "Following a leader who follows his leader would be quite a circus" (*Anthills*, p. 54). Reddy (1994) observes that this power game renders the officials ineffectual and impotent to their tasks. Thus, as Erritouni (2006) observes, Reddy (1994)

would agree that the horizontal polity is a better option in building the nation state.

One significant difference between Reddy (1994) and Erritouni (2006) lies in their conception of the villain in the novel. Erritouni (2006) blames the failure of the nation state to fulfil the aspirations of the masses on the hierarchical gap that the government officials establish between themselves and the people. He sees Sam as a symbol of the “vicious elitism of the post-colonial nation-state and that his main goal is not to ameliorate the deplorable conditions of the people but rather to profit from the power that control of the state affords” (p. 55). Thus, to Erritouni (2006) the national leaders, more particularly Sam, are villains. While Podis and Saaka (1991) agree to this fact that the government officials are mainly the villains, Reddy (1994) is sympathetic of them. He argues that the real villain in the novel is power and that even Sam is an innocent victim of its grip. Kortenaar (1993) also shares this view of power corrupting the innocent Sam.

Udumukwu (1996) studies four characters, two each from the novels of Achebe and Iyayi. These characters include Achebe’s Odili in *A Man of the People*, Ikem in *Anthills*, and Iyayi’s Idemudia in *Violence* and Osime Iyere in *Heroes*. His analysis is premised on the thesis that “what a character does is the product of an underlying belief that exists before the action” (Udumukwu, 1996, p. 34). In other words, she examined the interplay between ideology and action from a sociological perspective. He demonstrates how the individuality and political choices of these characters are circumscribed within their social matrix. For the purpose of this study, my discussion of Udumukwu’s (1996) study will focus on his analysis of Ikem.

Udumukwu (1996) observes that the source of Ikem's political activism is 'populism', a term he defines as "a belief in the welfare of the ordinary people, and also a faith in their good qualities" (p. 40). To Udumukwu (1996), Ikem arrives at this political orientation through a deep and reflective re-examination of what has become of the ideals of independence. An instance of the manifestation of this realisation is Ikem's contribution to the abolition of capital punishment. The public execution of convicted criminals is a public celebration which serves to entertain the ordinary people and deter potential criminals. Ikem challenges his countrymen to understand that what they apprehend as the truth is a wrong foundation.

Udumukwu (1996) links Ikem's political orientation with Edmund Husserl's "'rationalistic' solution to the problem of meaning" (p. 41). This philosophy challenges the individual to disentangle him/herself from the shackles of the dominant ideologies of his/her society so that s/he could arrive at an objective consciousness. Thus, Ikem's personal ideology is borne from his individual reason that frees his mind from the stunned and fixated grips of common sense. He is able to see beyond the false assurance with which his political milieu is circumscribed.

Udumukwu (1996) notes that Ikem is used by Achebe as a tool in advancing his own political orientation. Through Ikem, Achebe observes that the real problem of the Nigerian political administration is its failure to establish vital links with the poor and the deprived of the country. This is a call to foster unity and convergence in a multi-ethnic society. Apart from Udumukwu (1996), many other critics (e.g. Greenwald, 2002; Kortenaar, 1993; Diamond, 1989) have observed that Ikem is the mouthpiece of Achebe

and that he is Achebe's conception of the ideal intellectual and citizen in African politics.

Udumukwu (1996) proceeds to consider how Ikem's political ideology is translated into action. He identifies three incidents in which Ikem translates his orientation into action. The first is his role as an editor. He convinces the government to abolish the public execution of criminals, and he refuses to encourage the people of Abazon to vote for Sam to be president for life. The second is his encounter with the delegation from Abazon, and the third is the lecture he delivers at the University of Bassa. The significance of the lecture is that Ikem insists on the imperative of hard work and struggle in order to change the world.

Udumukwu (1996) notes that unlike Odili, Ikem's political activism lies in his objective but vehement critique of his setting. For instance, his criticism is not based on any personal motivation for some political advantage as it is in the case of Odili, but on the welfare of the ordinary people, who are too complacent to recognise the limitations imposed by their milieu. Another distinction Udumukwu (1996) makes between Odili and Ikem is that Ikem stretches his action beyond recognition of the problem with the system. He stood up to strongly criticise and condemn the system while Odili gets himself entangled with the corruption in the system.

Thus, according to Udumukwu (1996), criticism and bold condemnation become the inviolable missiles of Ikem's political action. He notes that Ikem's demise emanates, first, from the fact that his political activity is rather individualistic: he acts 'for', instead of 'with', the people (p. 43). Second, his activities are too constrained by the limitations of the socio-

political system in which he acts. Udumukwu (1996) concludes that the characters analysed acquire their identities in the light of the writers' ideological convictions.

In discussing *Anthills* from a socio-political perspective, Diamond (1989) bases his exploration on the thesis that the novel is an agent of political change and the novelist a political philosopher and teacher. He perceives *Anthills* as Achebe's political philosophy of Nigerian politics. First, Diamond (1989) notes that *Anthills* is a portrait of the devastating effect and ugliness of African military dictatorship. With regards to this theme, he says *Anthills* takes off from where *A Man of the People* stops. Just as *A Man of the People* criticises the corruption and frivolities of the civilian government, so does *Anthills* criticise the venality, irresponsibility and oppression of military rule.

Diamond (1989) observes that many of the things *Anthills* talks about have antecedents in Nigerian politics. He notes two popular occurrences: the vicious police riot against the protesting students of the University of Bassa, which has a striking resemblance to events at Ahmadu Bello University in May, 1986 and the murder of *Newswatch* editor Dele Giwa in October, 1986 just like the murder of Ikem. What is fascinating about *Anthills* is that the novel had almost been finished before these real life incidents occurred. Diamond (1989) adds that *Anthills* is not merely a portrayal of military dictatorship but a valid caution of the increasingly repressive nature of the expanding state security network in Nigeria.

He further states that the novel attacks the corruption of the Nigerian political system, both in the past civilian government of Kangan and the present military government. The Presidential Retreat, Diamond (1989) notes,

is a metaphor of this corruption and extravagance of Nigerian political leaders. The Retreat symbolises the aloofness and arrogance of the ruling class who have detached themselves from the people and the reality in which they live. Achebe spares no group of people in his criticism: the intellectuals who manipulate tribalism to their own advantage and worship power, rather than standing up against tyranny and misrule; the petty aristocracies of university students and organised workers; and the ordinary people who are complacent to act.

Diamond (1989) asserts that through Ikem, Achebe articulates his political philosophy of Nigeria. That is, Achebe calls for a reform as “both a noble and pragmatic strategy of change” (p. 441). Central to this reform are the need for responsibility and patience. People should begin to take responsibility of the things around them. According to Diamond (1989), the patience Achebe calls for is not borne of resignation and inaction, “but of experience and calculated strategy” (p. 443). Reddy (1994), likewise, notes Achebe’s emphasis on the imperative of struggle. However, Diamond (1989), in particular, observes that Achebe calls on those who see the wrong in society to speak against it and to stand up against those who will silence criticism. Those who are articulate and well-positioned, Diamond (1989) further notes, have a special obligation to do so for two reasons: first, because in the struggle against opposition, words and ideas are important and second, because of the power of example.

At the end, Diamond (1989) notes the place of women, represented by Elewa and Beatrice, in this struggle: they are the surviving anthills who would tell the story about the previous year’s bush fires to the new generation of

grass. Arguably, the role Diamond (1989) assigns women is rather passive. He does not consider the central role Beatrice played in inciting Ikem and, especially, Chris into action, as noted by Reddy (1994), for instance.

The Relationship between Previous Studies and the Present Study

In summary, many researchers have employed the transitivity framework in examining literary discourse. Halliday (1971) is the pioneering study in this direction and he has demonstrated that the transitivity patterns in Golding's *The Inheritors* show two different socio-cognitive worlds in the novel. Burton (1982) and Iwamoto (2008) have shown how the transitivity patterns in narrative discourse may produce or reproduce traditional power-relations between people. Kennedy (1982), Rodrigues (2008) and Silva (1998) have all shown that the transitivity framework is a viable tool in exploring characterisation. Adika and Denkabe (1997) examined the pragmatic effects of lexico-grammatical resources used to realise participant roles in the transitivity patterns of a narrative discourse, thereby explaining how texts may be processed and why readers arrive at certain interpretations of Ayi Kwei Armah's *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*.

The present study is generally meant to contribute to previous studies on transitivity in literature. Unlike many previous studies, however, the primary focus of this study is a full-length novel. By focusing on key characters in *Anthills*, the study demonstrates that the transitivity model can reveal the thematic structure of a novel and a creative writer's vision of the society s/he presents or reconstructs. The present study is also, to the best of my knowledge, one of the few studies to apply transitivity to an African

literary text. In this light, it contributes to the body of knowledge on the linguistic techniques employed by African creative writers; at least as far as the stylistic choices of transitivity patterns are concerned. Again, as a contribution to previous studies, the present study investigates whether transitivity choices may be influenced by point of view, a pragmatic variable. This dimension of the study will add up to our knowledge on the interplay between narrative technique and language.

Further, Achebe's novel has received considerable attention among critics. Yet discussion on characterisation is not given a centre stage and the few studies that discuss characters at some length mainly focus on the major characters, particularly Ikem and Beatrice. While these thematic studies are relevant in their own right and are very effective in interpreting the meaning of the text, their focus is not on the development of the individual characters as well as the linguistic technique that the writer uniquely employs to render certain meanings possible. The present study is thus a contribution to previous studies on *Anthills* by focusing on character and by considering the writer's manipulation of transitivity, a key discursive resource, to develop character and encode his thematic concerns or ideologies in the text. The critical study of *Anthills* in this study, to use Acquah's (2010) words, "therefore becomes ultimately a study of the writer's linguistic format" (p. 85).

Summary of Chapter

This chapter has reviewed extant literature related to the present study. Generally, the review comprised theoretical and conceptual frameworks employed in the study as well as previous studies on the research topic.

Specifically, the study draws on two key notions of SFL as its theoretical framework. These notions are system network, which is built on the idea of stylistic choices, and the three metafunctions of language: ideational, interpersonal and textual functions. The concepts of transitivity, foregrounding, character and characterisation, and point of view together form a conceptual framework that augments the theoretical perspective of the study. Finally, some previous studies on transitivity and literature on Achebe's *Anthills* have also been discussed and related to the present study.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH CONTEXT AND METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The previous chapter reviewed literature relating to the concerns of the present study. Specifically, it discussed the theoretical perspective and conceptual framework of the study as well as previous studies on the research topic. The present chapter describes both the textual and extra-textual contexts of the novel selected for the study and then the approach and procedures employed in analysing the text. Specifically, the chapter first describes the socio-historical context against which the novel is produced and proceeds to give a plot summary of it. The motivation for selecting the novel for the study is then provided, and this is followed by a discussion of the research design and method of analysis. The chapter concludes with a description of the procedure used in analysing the text.

The Socio-Historical Context of *Anthills of the Savannah*

Anthills is written against the background of the political environment of post-independence Nigeria. Although it is placed within the period of the successive coup d'états, it addresses many socio-political issues of currency.

Nigeria was granted full independence by the British in October, 1960 as a federation of three regions, namely, Northern, Western and Eastern Regions (Wikipedia, 2011). The independence constitution provided for a parliamentary form of government, and former nationalist leader Nnamdi

Azikiwe became Governor-General of the federation. In October, 1963, Nigeria became a federal republic and promulgated a new constitution, with Nnamdi Azikiwe becoming the first president of the republic while Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa became the first prime minister (Wikipedia, 2011).

On January 15, 1966, a small group of army officers overthrew the government and assassinated the federal prime minister, Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, and the premiers of the Northern and Western Regions, namely, Sir Ahmadu Bello and Chief Samuel Ladoke Akintola respectively (Dawodu, 1999). Other prominent leaders who lost their lives included Finance Minister Chief Festus Okotie-Eboh, Brigadier S.A. Ademulegun, Major S.A. Adegoke, Lieutenant Colonel J.Y. Pam, Brigadier Zakari Maimalari and Colonel Kur Mohammed (Dawodu, 1999). The federal military government that assumed power was unable to quiet ethnic tensions or produce a constitution that was acceptable to all sections of the country. Its efforts to abolish the federal structure greatly raised tensions and finally led to another coup in July, 1966. The coup-related massacre of thousands of Igbos in the north prompted many of them to return to the southeast, where increasingly strong Igbo secessionist sentiments emerged.

Eventually, in May 1967, Lieutenant Colonel Emeka Ojukwu, a military governor of the Eastern Region who emerged as the leader of increasing Igbo secessionist sentiments, declared the independence of the region and named it the Republic of Biafra. The ensuing civil war was bitter and gory, ending in the defeat of Biafra in 1970 (Jorje, 1972).

Following the civil war, reconciliation was rapid and effective, and the country turned to the task of economic development. Foreign exchange

earnings and government revenues increased spectacularly with the oil price rises of 1973-74 (Pogson, 2009; Wikipedia, 2011). On July 29, 1975, General Murtala Muhammed and a group of fellow officers overthrew General Yakubu Gowon's military government, accusing him of delaying the promised return to civilian rule and becoming corrupt and ineffective. General Muhammed replaced thousands of civil servants and announced a timetable for the resumption of civilian rule by October 1, 1979.

General Muhammed was assassinated on February 13, 1976, in an abortive coup. His chief of staff, Lieutenant General Olusegun Obasanjo, became head of state. Obasanjo adhered meticulously to the schedule for return to civilian rule, moving to modernize and streamline the armed forces and seeking to use oil revenues to diversify and develop the country's economy (Pogson, 2009; Wikipedia, 2011). A constituent assembly was elected in 1977 to draft a new constitution, which was published on September 21, 1978. In 1979, five political parties contested in a series of elections in which Alhaji Shehu Shagari of the National Party of Nigeria (NPN) was elected President. On October 1, 1979, Shagari and the NPN assumed power.

On December 31, 1983, the military overthrew the Second Republic and Major General Muhammadu Buhari became president. He charged the civilian government with economic mismanagement, widespread corruption, election fraud, and a general lack of concern for the problems of Nigerians (Dawodu, 1999). He also pledged to restore prosperity to Nigeria and to return the government to civilian rule. He, however, proved unable to deal with Nigeria's severe economic problems, and subsequently in August 27, 1985, his

government was peacefully overthrown by his Army Chief of Staff, Major General Ibrahim Babangida.

Babangida cited the misuse of power, violations of human rights by key officers of the regime, and the government's failure to deal with the country's deepening economic crisis as justifications for the takeover. President Babangida demonstrated his intent to encourage public participation in government decision making by opening a national debate on proposed economic reform and recovery measures (Pogoson, 2009; Wikipedia, 2011). The public response convinced Babangida of intense opposition to an economic recovery package dependent on an International Monetary Fund (IMF) loan. The political atmosphere continued to remain uncertain and this succession of military coups and corrupt governments surely had to continue till the 1990s. Writing against this background in 1983, Achebe observed that

The trouble with Nigeria is simply and squarely a failure of leadership ... The Nigerian problem is the unwillingness or inability of its leaders to rise to the responsibility, to the challenge of personal example which are the hallmarks of true leadership (Achebe, 1983, p. 1).

Achebe (1983) also laments the lack of initiative on the part of enlightened citizens to rise up against the degeneration of society.

It is this deterioration of the socio-political order that *Anthills* addresses. The novel attacks “the obsession with security, the fear of protest and opposition, of popular mobilization and free and spontaneous expression”

that characterised the military regimes (Diamond, 1989, p. 436/7). The circumstances surrounding the assassination of General Muhammed and the subsequent assumption of power by his chief of staff, Lieutenant General Olusegun Obasanjo, apparently matches, in *Anthills*, the assassination of General Sam and the assumption of power by his Chief of Staff, Major-General Ahmed Lango.

Anthills does not only reflect, but also anticipates historical events in post-independence Nigeria. As mentioned earlier (See Chapter Two, p. 67), Diamond (1989) cites two events that happened after the novel has most probably been completed but which had a close resemblance of incidents in the novel. One is the striking resemblance of the vicious police riot against the protesting students of the University of Bassa (in *Anthills*) to the massacre in the Ahmadu Bello University in May, 1986. The other is the resemblance between the murder of Ikem and the real-life murder of *Newswatch* editor, Dele Giwa, in October, 1986. Diamond (1989) observes that “the similarity between the two men in temperament and political stature, and the considerable suspicion and circumstantial evidence linking Nigeria’s security apparatus to Giwa’s murder, leaves one with an eery feeling of the way life, and death, imitate art” (p. 437).

The Narrative Structure and a Plot Summary of *Anthills of the Savannah*

Anthills is a story of three friends; namely, Sam, Chris and Ikem, whose relationship is being tried in the interlocking power relations in the politics of the fictional nation of Kangan. The novel is made up of eighteen (18) chapters. The story is told from multiple points of view, comprising first

person and third person omniscient narrative techniques. In Chapter One, the story is told from the perspective of Christopher Oriko. In Chapters Two and Three, it unfolds from the perspective of the omniscient narrator. Ikem Osodi relates the events in Chapter Four while Chris takes over the narrator's role again in Chapter Five, with Beatrice coming in as narrator in Chapters Six and Seven. Chapters Eight to Eighteen are told from the perspective of the omniscient narrator. The narratives given by Chris, Ikem and Beatrice serve as witnesses that accrue from their individual experiences and the part that they play in the politics of Kangan. In some situations, there is no temporal link between the events presented in a chapter and the one that precedes it, thereby increasing the complexity of the novel.

The narrative opens with Sam, the military ruler, at a meeting with his Cabinet discussing the issue of his visit to Abazon. Sam is mad at his Cabinet and especially Chris, the Commissioner for Information, who is persistently insisting on the president's visit to Abazon. No sooner has the meeting ended and the president ruthlessly and unceremoniously dismisses his Cabinet, than a delegation arrives from Abazon to plead for water supply in their community. The arrival of this delegation is the point of attack in the narrative, and becomes the configural event around which the narrative is built.

Sam instructs Professor Reginald Okong, Commissioner for Home Affairs, to receive the delegation on his behalf, a strategy he adopts to avoid negotiation with the delegation. He also instructs Chris to arrange for a photograph to be taken of the delegation. Professor Okong tries to convince Sam that Chris and Ikem, the Editor of the *National Gazette*, are not loyal members of his government. This interaction between Okong and Sam lays the

foundation for the hatred and suspicion Sam has for Chris and Ikem. Chris calls Ikem to instruct him to send a photographer to cover “a goodwill delegation from Abazon” (p. 26) upon which they have a supposedly usual but vitriolic argument over editorial policies and principles. Ikem, out of curiosity, departs to the presidential palace to meet the delegation himself and apparently find out what they have come to do exactly.

In the next episode, we meet Ikem and Elewa, his girlfriend, at his residence quarrelling. It is midnight and Ikem is insisting that Elewa does not sleep in his house. After this episode, Ikem informs us of the longstanding argument between him and Chris over his (Ikem’s) crusading editorials. Ikem also describes the awful public execution of convicted criminals and tells us how, through his crusading editorials, he has been able to persuade the president to abolish it. He presents Sam as a man with goodwill who is being turned into a ruthless dictator by the sycophancy of some of his Cabinet ministers, such as Professor Okong. He notes that it is his as well as Chris’ obligation to save Sam from this situation.

Later, Chris, Ikem, Beatrice, Elewa, Mad Medico and Dick meet in Mad Medico’s residence, where they drink and converse on several issues, including their previous pleasant relationship with Sam before they all got themselves entangled in power politics. Sam invites Beatrice to a party at the Presidential Retreat at Abichi, 40 miles away from Bassa, the capital. At Abichi, Beatrice meets “the new power-brokers around His Excellency” (p.76). When Beatrice remarks on Sam belittling himself for Miss Cranford, his American guest, Sam gets annoyed and sends her back home in the middle

of the night. This party marks the turning point in the novel. When Chris visits Beatrice the next day, she tells him that there is trouble coming for them:

And I see trouble building up for us. It will get to Ikem first. No joking. Chris. He will be the precursor to make straight the way. But after him it will be you. We are all in it, Ikem, you, me and even Him (Sam). The thing is no longer a joke (p. 114/5).

She cautions that Chris and Ikem settle their differences and jointly save the situation, but Chris is reluctant to take the initiative.

From here, events rush to climax. Ikem interacts with the Abazonian delegation at Harmony Hotel. He is later accused of engineering the Abazonian visit and, together with Chris, sabotaging Sam's ambition to be president for life. Following his suspension as editor, Ikem delivers a captivating political speech at the University of Bassa. His message is cunningly misinterpreted and he is later arrested and murdered, thus bringing events to climax.

But the metamorphosis Chris undergoes, his disappearance and the subsequent search mounted for him by the security forces still drive events to an anti-climax. Finally, on his escape journey to Abazon, Chris receives news that the government has been overthrown and Sam has been assassinated. Before he returns to Bassa, however, he is shot dead by a drunk soldier as he attempts to rescue a student nurse whom the soldier wants to rape. The novel

ends with a gathering of a multi-divergent group at Beatrice's residence on account of the naming ceremony of Ikem and Elewa's daughter.

Motivation for the Selection of Text

What motivated the choice of Achebe for the study is his commitment as a writer to presenting the African experience in his novels as well as to the use of the English language in doing so. He has written on all the major phases and themes of the collective experience of the African, ranging from pre-colonial through colonialism to the post-colonial period. Also, Achebe has not only been committed to the use of English, but has bent it to suit his African experience while making sure that it still maintains roots with its ancestral home (Achebe, 1965).

Anthills has been selected because its concerns have implications for contemporary Africa, and it has a complex narrative structure which is of interest to the present study. That is, it addresses Africa's problems of leadership and the need of both the elite and the ordinary people to struggle boldly in opposition of the mismanagement of post-colonial Africa. The narrative is also given from multiple viewpoints, and since one concern of the study is to examine the relationship between point of view and the transitivity patterns in which a character is inscribed, this complex narratological structure best serves the purpose.

Research Design

The qualitative research design is employed for the present study. The focus of qualitative research, according to Merriam (as cited in Creswell,

1994, p. 145), is on meaning. This means that qualitative researchers investigate “how people make sense of their lives, experiences, and their structures of the world” (Creswell, 1994, p. 145). Qualitative research is also descriptive in that the interest of the researcher is in making meaning of a phenomenon and understanding a process by analysing words or pictures. Another characteristic of qualitative research is that it is inductive. That is, the researcher poses tentative research questions at the beginning of the study which are later modified or changed with new insights from the data collection and analysis process.

Analysing or discussing qualitative data involves what Yin (as cited in Creswell, 1994, p.157) calls “explanation building”, in which the researcher looks for casual links and explores plausible or rival explanations and attempts to build an explanation about patterns. Given this interpretative nature of qualitative research, the biases, values and judgement of the researcher become explicitly stated in the research report (Creswell, 1994).

The main reason for choosing the qualitative design is that the present study, as is demonstrated by the research questions (See Chapter One, p. 7), is exploratory in nature. As noted by Creswell (1994), qualitative research, with its flexible procedure, is the appropriate design for exploring and describing phenomena that are inconspicuous to the researcher. The specific type of qualitative research method employed for the study is content analysis.

Hsieh and Shannon (2005) define qualitative content analysis as “a research method for the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns” (p. 1278). Qualitative research using content analysis pays

attention to the features of language as communication with particular focus on the content or contextual meaning of the text. Kaid (1989) outlines seven steps that are involved in doing content analysis, namely, formulating research questions to be answered; selecting the sample to be analysed; defining the categories to be applied; outlining the coding process; implementing the coding process; determining trustworthiness or credibility; and analysing the results of the coding process.

It can be observed that central to doing content analysis is coding, which refers to the process of putting tags, lines, names or labels against the pieces of data. The point of assigning such codes is to attach meaning to these pieces of data. Thus, doing content analysis in qualitative research means that examining language intensely for the purpose of classifying large amounts of text into sufficient number of categories that represent similar meanings (Weber, 1990).

According to Hsieh and Shannon (2005), three approaches to content analysis can be distinguished based on the nature of the initial coding that is done on the data. These are conventional, directed, and summative content analysis. In conventional content analysis, the analyst does not pre-determine categories to be applied to the data, but rather s/he allows these categories to emerge from the data, a process which makes this kind of analysis similar to grounded theory. With the directed content analysis, the analyst uses existing theory or prior research to develop an initial coding scheme prior to beginning the analysis of data (Kyngas & Vanhanen, 1999). As the analysis progresses, additional codes are developed, and the initial coding scheme is revised and refined. In summative content analysis, the analyst begins with identifying and

quantifying particular words or content. The patterns that emerge are then interpreted in relation to the contextual meaning of the specific words or content.

The present study relies on both directed and summative approaches to content analysis. The analysis of the novel was done by first identifying and isolating sentences and clauses in which the characters selected for the study are mentioned. These clauses and sentences were then parsed into various syntactic-semantic units, using the six main process types in the transitivity system. As the analysis progressed, more delicate semantic information were identified and added to the coding scheme. These details included information on grammatical metaphor and sub-process types in the transitivity system. Recurrent patterns were then counted and their percentage distribution calculated. This statistical information was particularly used in examining the interaction between point of view and transitivity choices associated with characters.

Content analysis most appropriately addresses the concerns of this study. As observed by Sarantakos (2004) and Fraenkel and Wallen (2000), a person's or group's conscious or unconscious beliefs, attitudes, values and ideas often are revealed in their communications through a rigorous content analysis. The present study assumes that a literary text is "ideologically constituted to make certain kinds of statements or transport meanings of particular social, cultural and political value" (Syal, 1994, p. 6). In other words, the meaning that a text projects will always have an ideological orientation, which depends on the social, cultural and historical framework within which the text is produced. By employing content analysis, the study

aims to reveal the ideological and thematic orientation of Achebe's *Anthills*, and also to examine the conception and attitude of different narrators towards characters.

Although it may be difficult to ensure validity in content analysis (Krippendorf, 2004) as the term is applied in quantitative research, credibility or trustworthiness can be established through activities such as peer debriefing, prolonged engagement with text, and persistent observation (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). How these activities were employed in the present study will be described in subsequent sections below.

Method of Analysis

The study is placed within the methodological framework of stylistics. Simpson (2004) defines stylistics as “a method of textual interpretation in which primacy of place is assigned to *language*” (p. 2). Indeed, broadly defined, stylistics is the linguistic study of style in any given text. But within the discipline of literary studies, it is defined as the study of the language of literature (Makokha, Barasa & Daramola, 2010). Modern literary stylistics draws much of its analytical approach from the analytical methods and descriptive intentions of linguistics, which it combines with the interpretive goals of modern literary criticism. The focus of literary stylistics is, precisely, to examine the “thematic and aesthetic values generated by linguistic forms” (Zhang, 2010, p.155). The analysis progresses from the identification and description of linguistic forms to the literary interpretation given to these forms. By reading the text repeatedly, the analyst singles out the stylistically significant features and analyses them by employing the techniques of

linguistic description. This description is then followed by a discussion of the literary significance of these features, by relating them to the content of the text and its social and cultural (or extra-textual) context. Thus, in stylistic analysis, description and interpretation are inextricably linked (Zhang, 2010).

Although, stylistic analysis acknowledges the role of the intuition of the analyst in the interpretation of linguistic forms, it grounds the intuition on evidence (Crystal & Davy, 1969; Simpson, 2004; Zhang, 2010). The emphasis stylisticians place on evidence makes stylistics a scientific methodology. Simpson (2004) identifies three, but not unrelated, principles of stylistic analysis. He observed that it should be rigorous, retrievable and replicable. Taken together, these principles mean that the analysis should be based on an explicit framework, be systematic and its methods transparent enough to allow verification by other stylisticians. Such analytical work offers literary critics a relatively precise method for describing the organisation and features of a text. In this analytical framework, the analyst essentially goes beyond what the text means to explain how and why it means what it does; that is, how language functions to orient readers towards particular/possible meanings of the text (Halliday, 1994, Short, 1996). Short (1996) explains that the linguistic features of a text do not constitute an objective meaning of the text per se, but the pattern they form prompt readers towards reasonable meanings that the text engenders.

The stylistic analysis of literary texts has come under several criticisms. Typical of these are the longstanding Fowler-Bateson controversy (See Fowler, 1971; Simpson, 2004), Fish's (1981) attack on stylistics and Lecercle's (1993) doomsday prophesy on stylistics. The arguments against

stylistics can be summarised into two main caveats. The first criticism concerns the scientific basis of stylistics. Critics argue that “there is no way to link the empirically defined features of the text with the rest of the critical analysis except through the subjective, interpretive framework of the critic” (Catano, n.d., p. 5). In fact, they note, even the linguistic features described in the analysis are themselves subject to the interpretive choices of the analyst (ibid). The second argument is that if the task of stylistics is merely to explain how and why readers arrive at certain interpretations of texts, then it is not necessary since it does not reveal meaning beyond what a thematic analysis of the text could reveal.

The former argument was triggered by the undue emphasis some enthusiastic stylisticians gave to the scientific method in stylistics in its early development (See Catano, n.d). In fact, as noted by Makokha, Barasa and Daramola (2010), most contemporary stylisticians agree that stylistic analysis need not be strictly scientific. Drawing insights from interpretive linguistic disciplines such as Discourse Analysis and Sociolinguistics, many contemporary stylisticians favour an interpretation which relates the discursive elements of a literary text to its extra-textual context, and “the more complete and context-sensitive the description of language, ... the fuller the stylistic analysis that accrues” (Simpson, 2004, p. 3). Having made this observation, I still took this criticism into consideration. By employing an exploratory approach to stylistics in this study, I hope to minimise my subjectivity.

To the second criticism, it could be argued, as has been done earlier, that stylistics is not only interested in the meaning of literary texts, but it is as much interested in the language used to project that meaning. Stylisticians are

normally interested in the functions language performs, and particularly what the linguistic format of literary writings can contribute to our understanding of the nature and functions of language. Simpson (2004) contends that there will be no need to do a stylistic analysis if the analyst is not interested in language.

The centrality of language in stylistic analysis has motivated many scholars to examine literary discourse from several linguistic perspectives, namely, conversation analysis (e.g. Abbas, Suleiman & Abdul-Manan, 2010), pragmatics (e.g. Black, 2006), semantics (e.g. Acquah, 2010), functional linguistics (e.g. Halliday, 1971; Burton, 1982; Simpson & Montgomery, 1995), lexico-grammar (e.g. Yankah, 1995; Carter, 1997; Zhang, 2010), among others. Although the linguistic approaches to literature are varied, they all share two main objectives. They demonstrate the contributions linguistics can make to the study of literature as well as what the study of literary discourse reveal about language in use. In addition to these, a functional and pragmatic view of literature, as the one adopted in the present study, is also significant in the sense that it seems more appropriate for retrieving the interplay of contexts in literary texts, namely, the textual and social or ideological contexts.

Procedure of Analysis

The study drew on Simpson's (2004) notion of transitivity profile in analysing the transitivity patterns attributed to characters in the narrative. A transitivity profile refers to "a regular pattern of transitivity choices" attributed to a character (Simpson, 2004, p.199). Specifically, the clauses or processes in which the characters are inscribed were identified and underlined. These

clauses were then typed into Microsoft excel for a systematic transitivity analysis. The analyses were read over repeatedly to identify and correct inaccuracies in the transitivity analysis. In many instances, it was not readily clear whether some of the processes identified belonged to one process type or the other. The choice was often between behavioural and material processes, on the one hand, and behavioural and mental processes, on the other hand. It was also sometimes not apparent whether a particular process was mental or relational intensive. In such instances, I went back to passages in the novel to use the textual context in which these clauses occur in classifying them. The opinions of experts were also sought.

Samples of the analysis were also given to two postgraduate students in Applied Linguistics for verification. The coding scheme and the transitivity model were explained to them prior to the review they did. The results of one of the reviewers showed 90% agreement with the analysis, and that of the other showed 96% agreement. A sample analysis of transitivity patterns is provided in Appendix A.

The analysis focused on identifying the transitivity profile of each of the characters selected in order to answer research question one. In this drive, after identifying the process types, sub-process types, participant roles and circumstances of the clauses in which each of the characters is cast, the analysis were read over repeatedly to identify which patterns were foregrounded for stylistic purposes. Halliday's (1971) observation that "a feature that is brought into prominence will be 'foregrounded' only if it relates to the meaning of the text as a whole" was used as a guide in this process.

For research question two (i.e. How do point of view and transitivity patterns interact to construct character?), the transitivity patterns associated with each of the narrator-characters (Chris, Beatrice and Ikem) in their individual narrative accounts and that of the omniscient narrator were identified separately and compared. For example, the transitivity patterns in which Chris is inscribed in his own narrative, those associated with him in Ikem's narrative, those associated with him in Beatrice narrative, and those associated with him in the omniscient narrative were analysed on separate work sheets of Microsoft excel and then compared. Descriptive statistics, including frequency counts and percentage distributions, were employed to support the qualitative discussion on the interplay between transitivity and point of view. The statistical distribution of process types and participant roles associated with the characters is presented in Appendix B and Appendices C - E respectively. It is also important to note that the interpretation given to the transitivity profile of characters was subjected to expert judgement, and in some instances, the interpretation had to modified or changed.

Summary of Chapter

This chapter has described the textual and socio-historical contexts of *Anthills* and explained the motivation for choosing it for the study. The chapter has also described qualitative content analysis and stylistic analysis as the research design and analytical framework of the study respectively. Finally, it has been indicated that descriptive statistics such as frequency counts and percentage distributions are used to augment the qualitative discussion on the interplay between transitivity and point of view.

CHAPTER FOUR

TRANSITIVITY AND CHARACTER

Introduction

The previous chapters have provided conceptual and methodological contexts for the study. The present chapter presents one aspect of the analysis and discussion of the text. Specifically, the chapter focuses on research question one, and thus discusses what the transitivity patterns in which the individual characters are inscribed reveal about them. The chapter considers each of the six characters selected for this study and notes the implications of their presentation and development to the thematic and/or ideological concerns of the novel. It then ends with a reflective summary of the issues raised in the discussion. The discussion on the characters must be considered as a whole since the characterisation of one character complements and completes that of another character.

Sam

Sam is the president of the military government of Kangan. During his secondary school days at Lord Lugard College, Sam had always dreamt of being a medical doctor. Owing to his fascination with the English people and their customs, however, he was later persuaded by John Williams, his headmaster, to go to Sandhurst to be trained as an army officer, modelled on English military traditions. After the young military officers of Kangan had overthrown the civilian government, Sam was invited by the coup makers “to

become His Excellency the Head of State” (p.12). Just two years after the coup, Sam turns into an unyielding dictator.

Sam’s transitivity profile reveals two stylistically significant features. These are ideational or grammatical metaphor and the circumstantial elements attendant to the material and verbal processes in which he is assigned agency. The clauses below are the grammatical metaphors associated with Sam, eight of which are from the opening scene in Chapter One and the other three (clauses 7, 10, and 11) from Chapters Two and Eleven (where it seems necessary, clause boundaries are marked by two slashes, //):

1. For a full minute or so **Circumstance** the fury of his eyes **Identified** lay
Process: Relational: Circumstantial on me **Identifier**.
2. But he was not appeased. Rather **he** **Attributor** was making **Process:**
Relational the silence itself **Carrier** grow **Process: Relational** rapidly
Circumstance into its own kind of contest, like the eyewink duel of
children **Attribute**.
3. Then he (the Honourable Commissioner for Education) glances
round the table // until **his eyes** **Actor** meet **Process: Material** **His**
Excellency’s **Scope** and fall **Process: Material** dead **Attribute** on the
mahogany **Circumstance**.
4. I think His Excellency noticed // the faint smile **Attribute** brought
Process: Relational to my face **Carrier** by that reminder that he was still a
soldier...**Attributor** // I could see him hesitate ever so briefly between
taking me up on that smile and ignoring it.

5. Fixing Process: Material his gaze Goal on me Circumstance // he yet managed at the same time to convey by his voice that I was excluded from what he was now saying...
6. Actually, it is His Excellency's well chosen words that Actor signalled Process: Material the brave interruption Goal, // for despite the vigour in his voice Circumstance the words themselves Carrier had sounded Process: Relational the All Clear Attribute // and told Process: Verbal us Receiver it was all right now to commence our protestations Verbiage.
7. He Actor ... merely Circumstance fixed process: Material a pair of immobile but somewhat indulgent eyes Goal on his Attorney-General Circumstance patiently waiting for his mirth to run its course Circumstance.
8. he Actor withdrew Process: Material his voice Goal still further into his throat Circumstance // and, for good measure Circumstance, threw Process: Material his head Goal back Circumstance on his huge, black, leather chair ... Circumstance
9. 'I am no lawyer,' says His Excellency, // his slightly raised tone Actor breaking up Process: Material a hand to hand tussle among the voices Goal 'only a simple soldier....' Verbiage
10. A sudden violent frown on His Excellency's face Actor silenced Process: Material the Professor's re-awakened garrulity Goal.
11. he felt again that glow of quiet jubilation that had become a frequent companion // especially when as now Circumstance he Actor was disposing Pro- with consummate ease Circumstance of - cess: Material

some of those troublesome people he had thought so formidable in his apprentice days in power Goal.

One interesting thing to note about the clauses above is the use of the technique of meronymic agency (a situation in which a part of the body of a character or some other aspect of the character is assigned agency in the clause). Simpson (2004), in his review of Halliday's (1971) and Kennedy's (1982) studies, observes that meronymic agency is a dominant stylistic technique in prose fiction. In the extracts above, Sam's body part, his face, or manner of utterance is assigned agency in the majority (6 out of 11) of the metaphorical processes. Clauses 1, 3, 4, 6, 9, and 10 fall under this category. For instance, in clause 1, we have the clause ... *the fury of his eyes lay on me* instead of *he stared at me with fury*. In clause 4, we also have the material process ... *the faint smile brought to my face by that reminder that he was still a soldier...* instead of *I smiled faintly when His Excellency reminded us that he was still a soldier*, which would have been a behavioural process. One grammatical technique employed in realising these metaphorical expressions is nominalisation of the process in the clause thereby converting it into a participant element. Examples are *a faint smile*, *a sudden violent frown*; *that reminder that he was still a soldier*, and *his slightly raised tone*. Another technique is to thematise Sam's body part or his sayings (e.g. *the fury of his eyes lay on me*; ... *His Excellency's well chosen words that signalled the interruption*). These metaphorical expressions imbue Sam's utterances and his physiology, which basically denote inactivity, with potency and authority.

In the clause *the fury of his eyes lay on me*, Chris becomes the locative element that carries the burden of the weight of fury. Sam's body part acquires a potent energy that weighs Chris down. In clause 3, ... *his eyes meet His Excellency's and fall dead on the mahogany ...*, agency is assigned to the eyes of the Commissioner for Education. However, the Scope of the movement of the Commissioner's eyes, which is *His Excellency's* (eyes), is what is more powerful and thus terminates the action of the Commissioner's eyes.

In clause 4 (i.e. *the faint smile brought to my face by that reminder that he was still a soldier*), the agency of the behavioural process of smiling is taken from Chris and assigned to Sam's utterance, an Actor in a material process, so that Chris, via his face, becomes the locative element in the clause. That is to say, it is Sam's reminder that initiates or moves the smile. In clause 6, it is *His Excellency's well chosen words* that is assigned agency and for that matter initiates the interruption from the Cabinet ministers. In the clause complex ... *the words themselves had sounded the All Clear and told us it was all right now to commence our protestations*, it is Sam's utterance rather than the man himself that invites the protestations.

Clauses 9 and 10 encode Sam's interaction with Professor Okong and the Attorney-General respectively in Chapter Two. In clause 9, the Actor, *his slightly raised tone*, is a nominalization of Sam's verbal behaviour in which he is placed in the background as a Possessor. The Goal participant, *a hand to hand tussle among the voices*, is also a nominalisation of the behaviour of his Cabinet ministers. Of interest is the fact that his behaviour has a potent effect on the behaviour of his Cabinet members severally. Similarly, in clause 10, the Actor, *a sudden violent frown on His Excellency's face*, is a nominalisation of

Sam's behaviour and it transforms Professor Okong's composure (i.e. *the Professor's re-awakened garrulity*).

It is also interesting to consider processes in which Sam, the whole man himself, is assigned agency in the clause. These processes are clauses 5, 7, 8, and 11. Two of these, namely, *He ... merely fixed a pair of immobile but somewhat indulgent eyes on his Attorney-General ...* and *Fixing his gaze on me...* are ideationally behavioural processes. The former could have been expressed as *with a pair of immobile but somewhat indulgent eyes, he merely stared at his Attorney-General*. The latter could also have been expressed as *Gazing at me...* While these basic forms would make these processes in which Sam is engaged latent psychological processes, the original metaphorical expressions construct him as an active participant in material processes. The nominalised process, *his gaze*, and part of his body, *a pair of immobile but somewhat indulgent eyes*, have been projected outside of himself as Goal participants which are affected by his actions. The actual sufferers of the verbal action are the circumstantial locative elements, *on me*, (i.e. Chris) and *on his Attorney-General*. These metaphors present Sam's behavioural processes as more effectual than their non-metaphorical counterparts would have done.

In addition to the above metaphors, there are two ideationally verbal processes (clauses 8 and 11) in which Sam is assigned agency: *... he withdrew his voice still further into his throat ...* and *he was disposing with consummate ease of some of those troublesome people he had thought so formidable in his apprentice days in power*. In these instances instead of functioning as a Sayer,

Sam is metaphorically constructed to act on entities, an Actor in transitive material processes.

In clause 11, the Goal, *some of those troublesome people he had thought so formidable in his apprentice days in power*, refers to members of his Cabinet, in general, and to the Attorney-General, in particular, who is the immediate referent. Here, a little information on the situational context of the interaction between Sam and his Attorney may help clarify the discussion. Sam has invited the Attorney to his office to ask him his opinion on a so-called intelligence he has received from various sources that Chris is perhaps not as loyal to him as he might be. The clause under discussion describes Sam's indulgence in the efforts the Attorney makes in order not to miss the details of Sam's initial address to him. Thus, the process *disposing* metaphorically presents Sam's speech act of addressing the Attorney as a Goal-directed material process in which Sam casts the Attorney away like he does his used clothing. In addition, in the other ideational verbal process (i.e. *he was making the silence itself grow rapidly into its own kind of contest*) Sam is an external force that transforms the present state of inertia in the room into a state of activity.

Overall, the grammatical metaphor described so far constructs Sam as a very effectual character whose utterances and behaviours have a proactive effect on his Cabinet. The picture is that Sam is not acting, but surprisingly he affects the members of his Cabinet potently and influences their behaviour. His mere presence, his latent psychological processes as well as the physiological contortions of his body, and what he says are a powerful force to grapple with. Thus, unlike in Halliday's (1971) and Kennedy's (1982) studies,

in which meronymic agency shows ineffectiveness (or powerlessness) and absolves Mrs. Verloc from the responsibility of her actions respectively, meronymic agency in the present study constructs Sam as an effective and powerful character.

The second stylistically significant feature to discuss in relation to Sam's character is the circumstances attendant to the material and verbal processes in which he is cast. Tables 3 and 4 below illustrate these circumstances. As is shown in Table 3, the material processes in which Sam is cast are mostly self-directed in that he himself is affected in the process. In Table 4, apart from the verb *demand*s, which denotes authority, the other clauses have the neutral verb *say*.

However, the circumstances associated with these material processes generally present Sam as a powerful and authoritative personality. Most of these circumstances have the semantic feature + *force*. The adverbs *sharply*, *abruptly*, *vigorously*, *agitatedly*, *spiritedly*, *frantically* and *defiantly* denote force and at the same time connote anger. The expressions *like a caged tiger*, *his hands held tensely behind him*, *right fist gripped in the left palm*; *his slightly raised tone breaking up a hand to hand tussle among the voices*; and *spurred to battle by my faint resurgent opposition* all present Sam as a fearful character (underlining is for emphasis).

Other related expressions appear to be somewhat different from the circumstances described so far. These are ... *threw his head back on his huge, black, chair*; *heaves himself slowly up by leverage of his hands on the heavy arms of his chair*; *leans back calmly on his swivel chair*; *his tone mollified and rather superior*; *speak with unusual softness*. The words *calmly*, *slowly*,

Table 3: Circumstances Associated with Sam’s Material Processes

Participant: Actor	Process: Material	Participant: Goal	Circumstance
He	swings	his head	sharply to his right ...
He	gets up		abruptly
His Excellency	leans back		calmly on his swivel chair
He	heaves	himself	slowly up by leverage of his hands on the heavy arms of his chair.
His Excellency	was pacing		agitatedly like a caged tiger in the confined space between his desk and the far wall, his hands held tensely behind him, right fist gripped in the left palm.
His Excellency	continued writing		... for a full minute more before looking up.
He	... continued to pace		for what seemed like a full minute more before he spoke ...

mollified and *softness*, in the textual context in which they occur, connote grandeur and thoughtfulness. The presence of other expressions like *his huge, black, chair; the heavy arms of his chair; his swivel chair; rather superior; unusual;* and *as if deliberately to put his hearer at a disadvantage* complements the meaning of these words so that together they characterise Sam as a powerful character or rather a character with authority and a prominent personality.

Table 4: Circumstances Associated with Sam’s Verbal Processes

Participant: Sayer	Process: Verbal	Circumstance
... he	says	his tone mollified and rather superior.
... he	says	spiritedly, spurred to battle by my faint resurgent opposition.
... he	says	defiantly
... His Excellency	says	his slightly raised tone breaking up a hand to hand tussle among the voices, ‘only a simple soldier....’
... he	demands	frantically
... he	spoke	abruptly as though to an intruder he wanted to be rid of quickly.
... he	had chosen to speak	with unusual softness as if deliberately to put his hearer at a disadvantage ...

The frequent occurrence of the possessive pronoun *his* as a modifier in many of these expressions is also significant because the modification establishes a relation of possession between Sam and the Attribute ‘huge’ or ‘heavy’. That is, *his huge, black chair* means *he has a huge, black, chair; the heavy arms of his chair* means *he has a chair which has heavy arms*. This capacity to possess or be attributed big objects again characterises Sam as having power and authority. Finally, the expression *for (what seemed like) a full minute more before looking up/before he spoke* presents Sam as demonstrating utmost authority. That is, he decides when to interact with any of his ministers.

Overall, the circumstantial elements attendant to the processes Sam is associated with present him as powerful, fearful and authoritative. Together, they form a paradigm of linguistic choices that represents Achebe's construction of a dictator in a post-independent African nation such as Nigeria. That is, Achebe uses Sam to symbolise the display of power that characterised the military regimes of post-independence Nigeria. This observation corroborates many critical studies on *Anthills* (e.g. Diamond, 1989; Podis & Saaka, 1991; Reddy, 1994; Erritouni, 2006; Nwagbara, 2011).

It is interesting to also note that the identification of metaphors of transitivity and circumstantial elements as key linguistic means of charactering Sam is significant because their importance in character presentation has not been emphasised in the extant literature. Simpson (2004) even observes that circumstances have not been recognised as significant in stylistic studies.

Christopher Oriko

The next character to discuss in this chapter is Christopher Oriko. The discussion of his character is mainly illustrated by some key passages selected across the novel. These include some passages from Chapter One, Chapter Fifteen and Chapter Sixteen. Generally, as far as his involvement in the politics or public life of Kangan is concerned, Chris develops from a state of powerlessness and inertia at the opening of the narrative into a very effectual character towards the end of the novel, that is, in Chapter Sixteen.

Chris and Sam have been friends since they were both in secondary school at Lord Lugard College. By the time Sam was invited by the coup-makers to become president of the military regime, Chris was the editor for the

National Gazette. Sam asked him not only to join his government but also “to suggest half-a-dozen names for his Cabinet” (p.12). Chris was appointed Commissioner for Information. Barely two years after Chris has assumed office, Sam has become a tyrant and notoriously autocratic.

Having been trapped by his initial commitment and his present duty to serve Sam the dictator, Chris together with his colleague Cabinet ministers has gradually been reduced to a helpless victim of the monstrous power displayed by Sam. Chris is fully conscious of the fact that Sam’s choices and actions are inappropriate and he is equally dissatisfied with the boot licking sycophancy of his colleague commissioners, especially Professor Okong. His attempts to correct the situation, however, have been met with disdain in the face of strong suppression. As is evident in the following extracts from the opening of the novel, he is now left with powerlessness and despair (only clauses in which Chris is involved in a process are parsed).

1. For a full minute or so the fury of his eyes lay on me. Briefly our eyes had been locked in combat. Then I Actor had lowered Process: Material mine Goal to the shiny table-top Circumstance in ceremonial capitulation Circumstance. Long silence. But he was not appeased. Rather he was making the silence itself grow rapidly into its own kind of contest, like the eyewink duel of children. I Actor conceded Process: Material victory Scope there Circumstance as well. Without raising my eyes Circumstance, I Sayer said: Process: Verbal ‘I am very sorry, Your Excellency.’ Verbiage

2. But His Excellency speaks instead. And not even to him the latest offender but still to me. And he is almost friendly and conciliatory, the amazing man.
3. ‘Do you realize what you are asking me to do, Chris?’ he said. I Sayer say Process: Verbal nothing Verbiage, make Process: Material no motion Scope, not even of the head Circumstance. At these moments Circumstance my head Carrier assumes Process: Relational the gravity of granite Attribute and though my thinking Carrier might remain Process: Relational perfectly clear and logical Attribute // it Carrier seems Process: Relational to emanate from afar taking in these happenings through a telescope Attribute.
4. ‘You are telling me to insult the intelligence of these people,’ he says, his tone mollified and superior. I Actor shake Process: Material my head Goal then Circumstance, slowly Circumstance.

In this opening scene, Sam is in a cabinet meeting with his ministers and Chief Secretary. Chris insists that it is important for Sam to visit Abazon, a drought-stricken province that Sam has refused water supply merely because its inhabitants voted against him in the referendum that sought to make him President-for-Life. Sam is annoyed by Chris’ persistent plea that he visits this enemy province of his apparently to observe the seriousness of the drought situation.

The processes in which Chris occurs as participant in the episode, as the extracts above illustrate, generally characterise him as an ineffectual character. In two of the five material processes in which he is Actor, he acts on his body part: *I lowered mine (my eyes); I shake my head then slowly*. These

processes portray Chris' efforts at articulating the truth as feeble and crippled by fear. The material process *without raising my eyes* shows his unwillingness to proceed with any direct engagement with Sam, the symbol of corrupt power. The material processes *I ... make no motion, not even of the head;* and *I conceded victory there as well* likewise denote inertia on the part of Chris.

In addition, the Verbiage participant of the two verbal processes: *I said 'I am very sorry, Your Excellency'* and *I say nothing* indicates Chris's despair at the situation. He now shows "pure, unadulterated disinterest" in any further engagement (p. 4). The relational processes *My head assumes the state of granite; it (my thinking) seems to emanate from afar taking in these happenings through a telescope* shows that Chris has been incapacitated by Sam's suppressive power.

Thus, at this initial stage of the novel, Chris is generally constructed as a helpless weak character who is not up to the task of transforming the corrupt political system in which he is engulfed to make it meaningful to the ordinary people. He has no will power of his own. He only "hang(s) around to observe it all" and to execute orders from the powers that be (p. 2). Having been frustrated thus, Chris is adamant to calls from Ikem to take proactive measures to transform Sam and his government, "letting him glimpse a little light now and again through chinks in his solid wall of court jesters" (p. 46).

The incident that triggers Chris to action is when Sam instructs him to suspend Ikem as the editor of the *Gazette* for no technical reason. He defiantly refuses to carry out the instruction and intends to remove "his private papers and odds and ends to his residence until he could vacate there as well" (p. 145). However, his final disentanglement from his role as a mere tool in the

hands of Sam comes as a result of Ikem's murder by the state security forces. As he is standing there ineffectual in the ruins of Ikem's flat, Chris's "mind, locked out as it were on a barren corridor of inactivity, fluttered, panic-stricken, from one closed door to the next" (p. 167). Apparently, he is shocked by the terrible things the government is capable of doing. Chris goes into hiding and with the help of Beatrice, his girlfriend, and a few friends and sympathisers he is able to broadcast the true story surrounding Ikem's death in an international radio station.

However, Chris's transformation is not complete. After he has broadcast Ikem's death, his activities have merely been limited to moving from one hideout to another to protect himself from the state security. He finally leaves Braimoh's house, his last hideout, disguised in preparation for his escape journey to Abazon. The extracts below highlight the processes in which he is engaged at a joint police-military operation barrier at the Three Cowrie Bridge:

1. Chris Carrier was Process: Relational out of the car Attribute like a shot Circumstance // and so was the man who had spoken. They were on the kerb side of the road, fortunately.
2. As they Actor walked Process: Material smartly Circumstance away from their car towards the bridge circumstance // the soldier who seemed to have noticed Braimoh's suspicious move was coming briskly towards them. Chris Behavior was watching Process: Behavioural him Behaviour through the corner of his eye Circumstance until they drew level Circumstance. The soldier stopped.

3. ‘Hey, stop there!’ he shouted. Chris and his companion Actor halted
 Process: Material on the sidewalk Circumstance // and turned Process: Material to
him Scope, // standing Process: Behavioural on the road Circumstance.
4. Chris’s companion walked down the kerb between two cars and
 opened his dirty shopping bag for the soldier to inspect.
 ‘You there, come down here. Wetin be your name?’
 ‘Sebastian’ Verbiage, replied Process: Verbal Chris Sayer, using the name of his
steward from instant inspiration Circumstance.
 ‘Sebastian who?’
5. He Senser didn’t know Process: Mental. But luckily Circumstance he Senser
realized Process: Mental quickly enough Circumstance that it didn’t much
matter Phenomenon.
 ‘Sebastian Ojo.’
 ‘What work you de do?’
 ‘He de sell motor parts.’
 ‘Na you I ask? Or na you be him mouth?’
 ‘I de sell motor parts.’ Verbiage said Process: Verbal Chris Sayer.
 ‘How you de sell motor part and then come de march for leg?’
 ‘Him car knock engine.’
 ‘Shurup! Big mouth. I no ask you!’
6. But he had already diverted the scorching fire away from Chris and
 given him a little respite // just when he Actor was beginning to wilt
 Process: Material and quiver Process: Material a bit Circumstance at the knees
 Circumstance. His right hand, heavy and idle beside him, Actor stirred Process:
 Material into life Attribute and went Process: Material to his trouser pocket

Circumstance // where Circumstance it Sensor found Process: Mental one of the kolanuts Phenomenon and brought Process: Material it Goal out Circumstance. The soldier's eye caught it and lit up. Chris Actor split Process: Material the nut Goal and gave Process: Material the bigger half Goal to him Recipient and put Process: Material the other Goal into his own mouth Circumstance.

Most of the processes in the extracts above denote movement. The circumstantial relational process *Chris was out of the car like a shot* is a metaphorical expression of a material process which could be expressed as *Chris alighted from the car swiftly*. The original relational clause does not only intensify the urgency and swiftness of Chris' coming out of the car, but also displaces the agency of the process. The implication is that Chris is acting instinctively to the danger of the circumstances in which he finds himself. His action is not directed by the volition of a human agent. The material processes *As they walked smartly* and *They halted* denote the urgency of Chris' actions and those of his companion. The same urgency is found with the mental process *He realised quickly enough*. This sense of urgency in Chris' movement and mental activity shows that he is engulfed by fear, and that his behaviour has been reduced to an automatic response to verbal stimuli.

In addition, Chris is constructed as an ineffectual character. The self-directed material processes *He was beginning to wilt and quiver at the knees* indicates the diminishing effect Chris' interaction with the soldier has on him. Chris is very uncomfortable with the situation. Also worthy of note is the meronymic agency in extract 6: *His right hand, heavy and idle beside him, stirred into life and went to his trouser pocket where it found one of the*

kolanuts and brought it out. Here, agency is assigned to Chris' hand, thereby robbing him of any consciousness of his actions at this stage. He became conscious of what is happening with him only when the soldier's attention has been drawn to the kola in his hand. From the discussion on Chris character, it can be observed that, unlike in Sam's case, meronymic agency indicates weakness in his character. In this regard, the construction of Chris is similar presentation of the actions of Lok and his tribe's men, as has been shown by Halliday's (1971) analysis of Golding's *The Inheritors*.

It is also interesting to look at the verbal processes in which Chris is involved. He only responds to questions and queries. Very often he hesitates in giving his response to a query and his companion intervenes twice to rescue him. Chris is obsessed with fear. Thus, though the textual development of the story in *Anthills* has led us to believe that Chris has metamorphosed from a passive participant of the corrupt government into a rebelling reformer, the transitivity patterns in which he is inscribed shows that this transformation is not inherent in him. Besides, the driving force behind his rebellion at this stage is his love for Ikem as well as the quest for his personal safety.

Chris's actual transformation is a consequence of the knowledge that he gradually develops of the plight of the ordinary Kangan citizen. This enlightenment that Chris undergoes falls under two phases, which are presented below in order to situate the discussion on the change in the processes in which he is engaged in the final stage of his development. The first phase is characterised by self-quest, in which he explores the conditions of the life of the ordinary citizen. He critically surveys the oddness of the locally-manufactured bus, *Luxurious*, on which he is soon to embark to

Abazon. As he finally embarks on *Luxurious* on the Great North Road, he observes “the march-past of dwellings in descending hierarchies (which) continued until modest militias of round thatched huts began to pass slowly across Chris’s reviewing stand” (p. 206/7). He also notes the dire need for water in the Northern Province.

These observations bring Chris to the second phase of his transformation, ‘self-reflection’. Thus, “the ensuing knowledge seeped through every pore in his skin into the core of his being continuing the transformation, already in process, of the man he was” (p. 204). He wonders “what would happen now ... if the wheels of fortune should return him to the very haunts of his previous life, to the same cocktail circuits ...?” (p. 204). He resolves that “he would pray for courage to tell each pair of lips and set of teeth before moving on to the next ...” his new found knowledge (p. 205).

With this knowledge and resolution comes the final stage of Chris transformation, ‘self-reformation’, which is demonstrated by the following extracts from Chapter Sixteen. In the extract, only clauses in which Chris is engaged in a process are parsed:

1. Chris Actor plunged Process: Material into the crowd Circumstance [looking Process: Material for someone who might have some coherent information Goal] Circumstance. Ultimately Circumstance he Sensor sighted Process: Mental the police sergeant Phenomenon and pulled Process: Material him Goal aside Circumstance rather brusquely Circumstance in his breathless eagerness Circumstance (accompaniment). The fellow was pleased to oblige, a bottle in his right and a Mark IV rifle in his left.

2. Chris Actor plunged Process: Material into another section of the crowd Circumstance.
which was fast degenerating into a drunken mayhem Circumstance.
3. ‘Go and have a drink,’ Verbiage one of them Sayer said Process: Verbiage to
him Receiver ... ‘I have had a drink. Several drinks,’ Verbiage said Process:
Verbiage Chris Sayer, sounding superior without perhaps intending to
Circumstance.
4. The girl’s desperate shriek rose high over the dense sprawling noises
of the road party. The police sergeant was dragging her in the direction
of a small cluster of round huts...
5. He was pulling her by the wrist, his gun slung from his shoulder. A
few of the passengers, mostly other women, were pleading and
protesting timorously. But most of the men found it very funny indeed.
6. She threw herself down in desperation. But the sergeant would not let
up. He dragged her along on the seat of her once neat blue dress
through clumps of scorched tares and dangers of broken glass.
7. Chris Actor bounded Process: Material forward Circumstance // and held Process:
Material the man’s hand Goal // and ordered Process: Verbal him Receiver to
release the girl at once Verbiage. As if it was not enough Circumstance he
Sayer said Process: Verbal, ‘I will make a report about this to the Inspector-
General of Police.’ Verbiage
8. The other said nothing more. He unslung his gun, cocked it, narrowed
his eyes while confused voices went up all around ... Chris Behaver stood
Process: Behavioural his ground Behaviour // looking Process: Behavioural straight
Circumstance into the man’s face Behaviour, daring him to shoot Circumstance.

And he Actor did Process: Material point-blank Circumstance into the chest
presented to him Goal.

9. Chris Actor shook Process: Material his head Goal // and then Circumstance
seemed Process: Relational to gather all his strength to expel the agony on
his twisted face and set a twilight smile on it Attribute. Through the smile
Circumstance he Sayer murmured Process: Verbal words that sounded like *The*
Last Grin ... Verbiage // A violent cough Actor throttled Process: material the
rest Goal. He Actor shivered Process: Material with his whole body Circumstance
// and lay Process: Behavioural still Attribute.

Like in the Three Cowrie Bridge episode, Chris is cast in material processes that denote movement and urgency. In addition, however, these processes denote force: *Chris plunged into the crowd; Chris plunged into another section of the crowd; Chris bounded forward*. Again, the scope of the material processes associated with Chris in these extracts has been broadened to include transitive ones, in which Chris's actions actually affect others in the environment. In two instances, his actions affect no less a person than the police sergeant: *He sighted the police sergeant and pulled him aside; he held the man's hand*. Of significance also is the circumstantial element *rather brusquely in his breathless eagerness* that shows the force associated with his pulling the sergeant. Even the clauses that report his death are characterised by a series of material processes most of which are transitive and embedded in each other: *Chris shook his head and then seemed to gather all his strength to expel the agony on his twisted face and set a twilight smile on it; He shivered with his whole body* (processes are underlined for emphasis). Put together, the

material processes in these extracts, thus, construct Chris as a very active character.

Further, in the behavioural processes, *he stood his ground and looking straight into the man's face*, his behaviour is extended to an external participant. In the verbal processes, Chris is not only responding to questions, but also initiates speech exchange: *he ordered him to release the girl; he said 'I will make a report of this to the Inspector General of Police.* The verb *ordered* denotes a command and the Verbiage in the latter illustration is a rebuke to the sergeant. In the single instance in which Chris responds to a question, the circumstantial element displays him as a confident and powerful participant in the interaction: *sounding superior without perhaps intending to.*

The overall picture presented by the transitivity patterns in the extracts analysed above is that Chris is a very effectual character. He is not the same Chris we met in the opening scene in Chapter One or the Chris we met at Three Cowrie Bridge in Chapter Fifteen. He has metamorphosed into a fearless character who stands against all odds to rescue a helpless girl from sexual abuse by a police officer. The psychological situations attendant to Chris's transformation, namely, self-quest, self-reflection, and self-reformation as well as their progression corroborate what Ji and Shen (2004) observe of the mental transformation in James's character in Sheila Watson's *The Double Hook*. In fact, the labelling of these psychological situations in relation to Chris's character is borrowed from Ji and Shen (2004).

The transformation in Chris' character has an ideological implication for the socio-political world-view of Achebe. Chris singularly symbolises the kind of transformation that Achebe proposes for the citizens of a power

corrupted African country such as Nigeria, more particularly those who are enlightened by virtue of their education. The situational context of the episode analysed is itself a symbolic representation of Kangan as a nation, apparently a fictional representation of Nigeria. The girl whom Chris rescues, Adama, stands for the vulnerable ordinary citizens of Kangan while the police sergeant is an image of the monstrous masculine power displayed by the military government; an effigy of Sam. The ordinary citizens, thus, have become helpless victims who are oppressed for the self-gratification of the powers that be.

The passengers referred to in extract 5 symbolise the cynical populace of Kangan and their apathy is a reflection of the disinterestedness of the ordinary Kangan citizens in how the state is managed. It is in the midst of these apathetic citizens that we find the meaning of Chris's actions. That is to say, Chris becomes a foil to the other passengers and for that matter the people of Kangan. He is the enlightened citizen who would set the example for others to follow; he symbolises Ayi Kwei Armah's 'the beautiful ones yet to be born'. The fact that he dies shows that Achebe means that the kind of change/reform that will come is not without fatal sacrifices; it must be borne by struggle. Arguably, Chris fights power, which Reddy (1994) notes to be the villain in the novel. Analogous to the story told by the white bearded leader of the Abazonian delegation in which the tortoise seeks to struggle before his imminent death, Chris discovers that struggle is the definitive force that can rescue the people of Kangan.

In summary, the analysis of transitivity patterns associated with Chris in three key passages reveals that Chris develops from ineffectiveness and

despair to activeness, and then from fear and perplexity to bravery and struggle, and that this transformation in Chris's character both dramatises the resigned attitude of African elites towards the corrupt political systems of their countries and calls for a change in this attitude. This thematic focus has not been related to Chris's characterisation in previous criticism on the novel. Reddy (1994) sees his death together with that of Ikem as functioning to appease an embittered history while Brown (1991) sees it as suggesting Achebe's proposal of an 'enlightened dictatorship' to counter the corruption of power in African politics. Although Erritouni (2006), in echoing Stratton (1994), acknowledges that it is Chris who translates Ikem's alternative politics into action, he does not demonstrate how Chris does this.

Beatrice Oko

Beatrice is the major female character in the novel. She is Chris' girlfriend and Senior Administrative Secretary at the Ministry of Finance. She holds a First Class degree in English from Queen Mary's College in London. Beatrice has a very close relationship with many of the government officials of Kangan. She has been a close friend of Ikem since she was at Queen Mary's College. By her association with Chris and Ikem, she has become friends with Sam. Extracts selected from Chapters Six, Seven, Eight and Thirteen are first presented below and discussed in relation to the character of Beatrice.

1. As soon as I had appeared at the door Circumstance His Excellency Actor had rushed Process: material out Circumstance [to meet Process: Material me Scope] Circumstance, // planted Process: Material a kiss Goal on my forehead Circumstance,

- // and led Process: Material me Scope by the hand Circumstance into the room
Circumstance.
2. He Actor had placed Process: Material me Goal on his right Circumstance // and
the American girl on his left // so that we Identified face Process: Relational
each other across a thin end of the oval Identifier.
3. So I Actor threw Process: Material myself Goal between this enemy and him
Circumstance. I Actor literally Circumstance threw process: Material myself Goal at
him Scope like a loyal batman covering his endangered commander with
his own body and receiving the mortal bullet in his place circumstance. I
Actor did Process: Material it Goal shamelessly Circumstance. I Behavior cheapened
Process: Behavioural myself Behaviour. God! I Actor did Process: Material it Goal to
your glory Circumstance like the dancer in a Hindu temple Circumstance. Like
Esther, oh yes like Esther for my long-suffering people.
4. Fully aroused Circumstance (accompaniment) he Actor clung Process: Material
desperately Circumstance to me Scope. And I Actor took Process: Material him Goal
then Circumstance boldly Circumstance by the hand Circumstance // and led Process:
Material him Goal to the balcony railings Circumstance to the breathtaking
view of the dark lake from the pinnacle of the hill Circumstance. And there
Circumstance told Process: Verbal him Receiver my story of Desdemona Verbiage.
Something Phenomenon possessed Process: Mental me Senser as I told it
Circumstance.
5. He got up. I Behavior got up Process: Behavioural too Circumstance // and walked
up Process: material to him Scope. Impulsively Circumstance he Actor circled
Process: Material me Goal in his embrace Circumstance (accompaniment). I Behavior
looked up Process: Behavioural at him Behaviour // and he Actor began to kiss

- Process: Material me Goal. Everything inside me Actor was dissolving Process:
- Material; my knees Actor were giving way Process: Material under me
- Circumstance; I Behavior was trembling Process: Behavioural violently Circumstance //
- and I Carrier seemed to be Process: Relational struggling for air Attribute. ‘I
- think you better go.’ Verbiage I Actor managed to say Process: Verbal. He Actor
- released Process: Material me Goal slowly Circumstance // and I Behavior sank
- Process: Behavioural into a chair Behaviour.
6. Then Circumstance Chris Senser noticed Process: Mental the slightest heaving of
- her chest and shoulders Phenomenon // and went Process: Material //and sat
- down Process: Behavioural on the sofa beside her Behaviour // and placed process:
- material his left arm Goal across her shoulder Circumstance // and with the
- right hand Circumstance (means) raised Process: Material her chin Goal gently
- Circumstance // and saw Process: Mental she Behavior was crying Process: Behavioural.
- She Actor did not resist Process: Material then Circumstance [as he Actor pulled
- Process: Material her Goal to him Circumstance // and reverently Circumstance tasted
- Process: Material the salt of her tears Goal] Circumstance.
7. I Actor affect Process: Material great solemnity scope, pull Process: Material her Goal
- back Circumstance // and kiss Process: Material her Goal mildly Circumstance. She
- Behavior offered up Process: Behavioural her lips again Behaviour: we Behavior were
- (both) trembling Process: Behavioural.

The extracts above are selected to be representative of the material processes in which Beatrice is mainly inscribed in *Anthills*. Three issues are revealed by these material processes. First, Beatrice is Goal participant in processes relating to romance, particularly kissing. In all, seven instances of

this situation are recorded in the novel, three of which are shown in the extracts above (i.e. *His Excellency had rushed out to meet me, planted a kiss on my forehead; he began to kiss me; I ... pull her back and kiss her mildly*). It is important to note that Beatrice's response to Chris's kissing in extract 7 is presented in a process in which the action is directed to herself (i.e. *She offered up her lips again*). Again, in extract 5, her initiation of a sexual affair is presented indirectly in a behavioural process (i.e. *I look up to him*), thereby shifting real responsibility of the affair to Ikem (*and he began to kiss me*). These situations imply that Beatrice tends to show some modesty in her amorous relationship with men. As far as this situation is concerned, it appears that Achebe reproduces the ideology of the African traditional society that the woman is supposed to show modesty in her romantic relationship with men.

Similar to the point discussed above, Beatrice is quite often constructed in disempowering structures. This phenomenon is evident in extracts 1, 2, and 5 (*led me by the hand; He had placed me on his right; He released me slowly and I sank into a chair*). Two things are common among these processes. The first is that grammatically Beatrice is the Goal participant in all of them. These disempowering structures tend to portray Beatrice as powerless in her interaction with her male counterparts.

In contrast to the two related features of the material processes associated with Beatrice considered above, she occurs in transitive or Goal directed processes in which her actions significantly affect people and things around her. This aspect of her character is demonstrated in extracts 3 and 4 (i.e. *And I took him then boldly by the hand and led him to the balcony railings to the breathtaking view of the dark lake from the pinnacle of the hill; I*

literally threw myself at him). What is interesting about these processes is that they are the only instances in the novel in which Sam, the dictator, is directly affected by someone's actions. Again, the fact that Beatrice plays an active role in an amorous dance with Sam may appear surprising, given that she often plays a passive role in sexual interactions with men. The implication is that Beatrice is manipulating her sexual power to restrain the naked dance of monstrous masculine power (Reddy, 1994). There is textual evidence for this observation: "I did it shamelessly. I cheapened myself. God! I did it to your glory like the dancer in a Hindu temple. Like Esther, oh yes like Esther for my long-suffering people" (p. 81). Thus, Achebe epitomises this male-power in Sam which is sought to be neutralised through female resistance (Reddy, 1994).

Another characteristic of the transitivity patterns associated with Beatrice is the frequent occurrence of meronymic agency in the processes in which she is cast:

1. Why my mind Actor should have gone Process: Material to an accident
Circumstance // I have no idea
2. but the thing that Actor came Process: Material into my mind Circumstance right
away Circumstance was: Oh God there's been an accident involving Chris
3. ...my thoughts Actor kept leap-frogging Process: Material over themselves
Scope ...
4. ... but the feeling Carrier was so strong that it blocked other lines of
thought Attribute.

5. The strange feelings I had been nursing Actor... now Circumstance
threatened to explode Process: Material in violent wraths of anger
Circumstance...
6. My heart Actor fluttered Process: Material violently Circumstance in panic fear
Circumstance.
7. Her heart Actor thumping Process: Material // and the telephone in her
unsteady hand bobbed up and down against her ear.
8. ... my tears Actor flowed Process: Material in torrents Circumstance.
9. Two lines of tears Actor coursed Process: Material down her face Circumstance...

It can be observed that the processes above consist of ideationally mental and behavioural processes that are metaphorically presented as material (and, in the case of clause 4, relational) processes. By this technique, the agency of strong emotions that Beatrice goes through is shifted from her so that these emotional processes are described as situations that are happening in spite of herself. Thus, though Beatrice tends to be sentimental and emotional, the grammar of the clauses in which she occurs does not allow us to see her exhibiting strong sentiments and feelings. This grammatical technique appears to show that Beatrice is able to muster her emotions. This argument stands out clearly if we compare the grammatical realisations of the expression of sentiments by Beatrice to those of Elewa (See p. 128 below).

In sum, although many critical studies (e.g. Alden, 1991; Reddy, 1994; Greenwald, 2002; Erritouni, 2006) have identified that Beatrice plays out the status and prominent role of the educated African woman in the public life of her society, the present study shows that Beatrice is sometimes constructed as

a powerful participant and sometimes the weaker participant in interactions, depending on whom she is interacting with and the situation in which the interaction takes place.

Ikem Osodi

The next character to be considered is Ikem Osodi. Ikem has been a class mate of both Sam and Chris at Lord Lugard's College. When he completed his secondary education, he went abroad for further studies. Ikem had completed his university education two or three years earlier when Beatrice went to Queen Mary's College, but he was still in London "doing odd jobs for publishers, reading his poetry at the African Centre ... and writing for Third World journals" (p. 90/1). Ikem was finally persuaded by his friends at home (Kangan) "to return and join them in nation-building", apparently immediately after the overthrow of the civilian government (p.91). When he arrived, Chris, who was then Commissioner for Information, appointed him editor for the *National Gazette*, the national newspaper of Kangan.

Ikem has been very critical of the policies and decrees of Sam's administration as well as the socio-economic set up of the fictional state of Kangan. Through his editorials, he embarks on a crusade, for instance, against the public execution of convicted criminals and the calls for the deportation of Mad Medico, the expatriate hospital administrator. Chris is obsessed with Ikem's militant approach to reforming Sam and his dictatorial regime.

One interesting observation that could be made from Ikem's transitivity profile is the repetition of key expressions relating to his job as an

editor. Examples of these expressions are highlighted in the following extracts:

1. But she will call me first thing in the morning; perhaps during *my nine o'clock editorial conference*.
2. But next morning in the middle of *my editorial conference my stenographer* came in from the outer office and asked me to take a call.
3. *I couldn't write tomorrow's editorials* with Elewa's hands cradling my damp crotch.
4. Chris keeps lecturing me on the futility of *my crusading editorials*.
5. I think that one of these days I shall set him down in front of a blackboard and chalk up for him the many bull's-eye of *my crusading editorials*
6. Perhaps I should learn to deal with him along his own lines and jog his short memory with the many successes *my militant editorials* have had.
7. The next day *I wrote my first crusading editorial* calling on the president to promulgate forthwith a decree abrogating the law that permitted that outrageous and revolting performance.
8. *I wrote the editorial* with so much passion that I found myself ending it with a hymn to be sung to the tune 'Lord Thy Word Abideth.'
9. *I have shown* what light I can *with a number of controversial editorials*.
10. When *I launched my editorial crusade* on his behalf I had no reason to belittle his gross abuse of good taste.

11. ... Ikem had had to conduct *his daily Editorial Conference* two hours late.

One interesting observation in the clauses above is the frequent occurrence of phrasal possessive relational processes, with the dominant structure being *my/his + (adjective) + editorial + (conference/crusade)*. Examples are *my editorial conference; my militant editorials; my crusading editorials; my editorial crusade*. In these instances, the possessive determiner, *my*, is the Possessor/Carrier participant while the adjective + noun combination becomes the Possessed/Attribute participant in the process. Thus, Ikem ultimately does not only assume ownership of the editorials, but also takes on the attribute of the editorials; he is a militant and a crusader.

In addition, when a process in the clauses presented above happens to be a material process, the Goal participant of Ikem's action is often related to the *Gazette*. Examples are *I launched my editorial crusade; I couldn't write tomorrow's editorials; the story I had to place beside Mad Medico's folly; I took over the National Gazette*. In one instance (i.e. *I have shown what light I can with a number of controversial editorials*) the editorial is the instrument with which he illuminates for Sam the ways of nation-building.

The stylistic significance of these relational and material processes is that Ikem's militancy and efforts at reformation of the corrupt socio-political system of Kangan are circumscribed around his editorials and his talent at incitive writing. As Chris says of him, Ikem has "no solid contact with the ordinary people of Kangan" (p. 39). Perhaps, this aspect of his character is

what Udumukwu (1996) refers to when he observes that Ikem's demise is due to the fact that he acts 'for' instead of 'with' the people (p. 43).

The second stylistically significant feature to be discussed in relation to Ikem's character is the verbal processes in which he is inscribed. These verbal clauses are presented below for discussion (salient processes and circumstances are italicised for emphasis):

1. 'Your compliment to my stamina notwithstanding,' I said *totally and deliberately over her head*, 'the reason is really quite simple.
2. 'Following a leader who follows his leader would be quite a circus,' said Ikem *with unabated grimness*
3. 'NTBB, replies Ikem. "Not To Be Broadcast," he adds *dispelling the puzzlement in a few faces*.
4. 'Bloody reformist,' said Ikem, *infuriated and impressed* for though he may be a great writer yet when it comes to speaking off the cuff he is no match for Chris.
5. 'BB!' he *screamed in mock outrage, his large eyes beaming with wicked pleasure*
6. 'How can you say that BB?' he would *cry, almost in despair*.
7. 'It wasn't raining in my place,' he *shouted sheepishly* as he came in.
8. 'More or less,' replies Ikem *before I can say anything*

Except for clauses 3 and 6, the circumstances that are attendant to the verbal processes above generally connote some sense of force. In clauses 5 and 6, this sense of force is rather part of the meaning of the verbs realising

the process, *screamed* and *cry*. In clause 3, the circumstantial element is itself a material process in which Ikem's utterance positively affects the composure of his confused listeners. These circumstantial elements (or processes in the case of clause 5 and 6) characterise Ikem as a forceful personality, particularly in his verbal interaction with others. Ikem displays power and some superiority over his interactants, especially Elewa and Chris. This aspect of Ikem's character has not been clearly captured in previous studies. The exception is that Innes (1990) attacks Ikem's for deliberately taking advantage of Elewa's illiteracy to speak in a manner that she does not understand.

Elewa

Elewa is Ikem's girlfriend and an illiterate sales girl in an Indian shop in Bassa, the capital of Kangan. Through Ikem, she comes to be associated with prominent personalities in Kangan, namely, Chris, Beatrice and Mad Medico. The discussion on Elewa's character will be demonstrated by extracts of key episodes in which she appears across the narrative. These extracts are made of the clauses in which she functions as a participant in the episodes. The extracts below are from the opening episode in Chapter Five, in which Elewa, Ikem, Beatrice, Chris, Mad Medico and Dick are having a chat over drinks at Medico's residence.

1. I can see that Ikem's new girl, Elewa, Carrier is Process: Relational: Intensive at first Circumstance horrified Attribute and then Circumstance fascinated Attribute. She Senser is seeing Process: Mental: Perceptive Mad Medico Phenomenon at close quarters Circumstance for the first time Circumstance // though she has

- obviously heard much about him Circumstance. Everyone has. Perhaps she Senser is seeing Process: Mental: Perceptive any white man Phenomenon at close quarters Circumstance for the first time Circumstance, for that matter.
2. Elewa's fascination Actor grows Process: Material [as she Behavior explores Process: Behavioural with wide amazed eyes Circumstance Mad Medico's strange home Behaviour] Circumstance. I Senser find Process: Mental her freshness quite appealing Phenomenon. Now Circumstance she Actor nudges Process: Material Beatrice Goal and points Process: Material at the legend inscribed in the central wall of the bar above the array of bottles in a semi-literate hand scope // and Beatrice obligingly chuckles with her although she has seen it at least a dozen times. Mad Medico Senser notices Process: Mental the young lady's fascination Phenomenon // and explains that he owes the inspiration for that poem to his steward, Sunday.
3. The group gradually splits into two: Ikem and the editor at one end of the bar with Elewa Identified sticking Process: Relational: Circumstantial to them Identifier, [understanding Process: Mental little Phenomenon] Circumstance; // and Mad Medico joining Beatrice and me.
4. ... You know I found him a girl once ...' (says Mad Medico). 'Who?' Verbiage asks Process: Verbal Elewa Sayer shifting sideways on her bar-stool to join our group and bringing Ikem and his poetry friend in tow – the last ostensibly unwilling Circumstance.
- 'His Very Excellency, your ladyship,' Verbiage says Process: Verbal Mad Medico Sayer bowing Circumstance.
5. ... The least I could do was fix him with a warm friendly girl to cheer him up ... (says Mad Medico).

'But woman done suffer for dis world-o.' Verbiage says Process: Verbal
Elewa Sayer.

A modern Desdemona, I see. Did she cheer him up? Verbiage asks Process:
Verbal Beatrice Sayer totally ignoring Elewa's more basic solidarity call
Circumstance.

6. The poetry editor has been trying for some time to recapture his lost little audience Goal disrupted Process: Material by Elewa's defection at the prospects of low talk Actor.

Generally, most of the processes in which Elewa is engaged in the extracts above reveal that she is limited in knowledge, although this observation may not be consistent with her overall characterisation. The first time we meet her in the episode (i.e. in extract 1 above), she is described in relational terms as being horror-stricken, a state which later transforms into fascination. These emotional processes that Elewa goes through are aroused by the mere fact that she is seeing Mad Medico and for that matter a white man at close quarters for the first time.

As extract 2 demonstrates, Elewa's fascination continues to be driven by her volitional perceptive process. This perceptive behavioural process Elewa engages in serves as an anchor from which the narrator describes the oddness of Mad Medico's residence to the reader. A more specific description is even done subsequently through the actions of Elewa (i.e. *Now she nudges Beatrice and points at the legend inscribed in the central wall of the bar above the array of bottles in a semi-literate hand*). This situation is interesting because the episode is narrated from the first person point of view and as is

characteristic of this narrative technique, we expect that situations and events are described from the viewpoint of the narrator. By implication, the transfer of viewpoint to Elewa is an indicator of her character. That is, Elewa is a stranger to the things that surrounds her in Mad Medico's house and thus must be curious about them. The narrator, Chris, who is knowledgeable, has taken these trivial things for granted. The mental process in extract 3 (i.e. *understanding little*) also indicates that Elewa's cognition is constrained by her association with highly educated personalities, that is, Ikem and Dick, both of whom are editors.

It is also important to consider the reaction to Elewa's sayings in extracts 4 and 5. In extract 4, Mad Medico's reaction to her question appears to be a ridicule as can be inferred from Mad Medico's mock deferential attitude towards her (i.e. *'His Very Excellency, your ladyship,' says Mad Medico bowing*). In extract 5, Beatrice treats her (Elewa's) comment as unimportant. Thus, Elewa tends to be considered an intruder in the general flow of the conversation in the episode. This situation demonstrates the social inequality that has been created by the emergence of the educated class among the ordinary citizens in post-independent Africa.

The following extracts taken from Chapter Eleven, in addition, provide other aspects of Elewa's character:

1. The passenger Identified turned out to be process: Relational Elewa Identifier. She Actor paid Process: Material and collected Process: Material her change Goal in a state of flutter clearly discernible from where Chris stood Circumstance // and rushed Process: Material into the house Circumstance breathless and deeply

- agitated Circumstance. Ignoring welcoming greetings from everybody
- Circumstance (accompaniment) she Actor flung Process: Material herself Goal at Ikem
- Scope-
2. ‘Wetin I de hear, Ikem? Na true say dem done sack you? Ikem nodded his head // as he Actor pressed Process: Material her Goal to himself Scope- She Carrier burst Process: Relational into tears and violent crying Attribute // and in that brief instant Circumstance exploded Process: Material the atmosphere in the room Goal. All three were embarrassed by this intrusive emotion, but more especially the men, and each put in a clumsy word or two // to console Process: Material the girl Goal // and restore the original calm.
3. ‘Oh come on, Elewa. I am only suspended not sacked ... Who told you anyway?’ That did it. She Behavior stopped Process: Behavioural crying Behaviour almost as dramatically as she had begun Circumstance. But her voice Carrier, when she spoke Circumstance, was Process: Relational broken and heavy with grief Attribute.
4. It was Elewa's keen ears which Senser picked up Process: Mental the radio news signal from some distant set turned too high Phenomenon... and her voice which Sayer screamed Process: Verbal 'News!' Verbiage

As is demonstrated by the processes in the extracts above, Elewa is highly sentimental or emotional in character. The episode from which the extracts are isolated presents Ikem’s visit to Chris’ flat following the former’s suspension as editor of the *Gazette*. He finds Beatrice there and the three of them are discussing Ikem’s suspension and other related issues. In extract 1, which describes Elewa’s arrival at the flat, the circumstances attendant to the

material processes she is engaged in (*in a state of flutter clearly discernible from where Chris stood; breathless and deeply agitated; ignoring welcoming greetings from everybody*) show that she is impatient.

In addition, the metaphorical realisation of the behavioural process of crying in extract 2 (i.e. *she burst into tears and violent crying; exploded the atmosphere in the room*) and the verbal process in extract 4 (i.e. *her voice which screamed 'News!'*) show that Elewa is not in the capacity to control her sentiments. As indicated earlier, this aspect of Elewa's character becomes clearer when the clauses realising her behavioural process of crying are systematically compared with those realising Beatrice's, as is demonstrated in Table 5 below:

Table 5: Differences in the Presentation of Crying between Elewa and Beatrice

Elewa	Beatrice
She burst into tears and violent crying and in that brief instant exploded the atmosphere in the room.	...and my tears flowed in torrents.
She stopped crying almost as dramatically as she had begun.	Strange, but tears loomed suddenly in Beatrice's eyes as she spoke to the bird ...
One piercing cry that continued to reverberate in Beatrice's brain like a rifle-shot in salute to a fallen comrade and Elewa sat down, still and silent.	
Elewa exploded into loud crying now.	Two lines of tears coursed down under her eyes but she did not bother to wipe them ...

<p>Elewa's chest, richly proportioned, heaved spasmodically like a child's in the aftermath of crying.</p>	<p>Then Chris went and sat down on the sofa beside her and placed his left arm across her shoulder and with his right hand raised her chin gently and saw she was crying.</p>
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It must be noted that the two columns in the table are not meant to indicate one-to-one corresponding representations of Elewa's and Beatrice's behavioural process of crying. Nonetheless, while Elewa's manner of crying is characterised by an unrestrained outpour of emotion, Beatrice's is presented modestly as a non-volitional situation happening in spite of herself. The only instance that appears to be an exception of this phenomenon in relation to Beatrice is the clause ... *and my tears flowed in torrents*, in which the word *torrents* suggests uncontrollable crying. But even here, the agency of the process is assigned to the tears rather than Beatrice so that she seems not be responsible for the behaviour. It is the consistency in presenting Beatrice and Elewa's manner of crying differently this way that distinguishes the two characters.

The extracts below both reinforce the observation that Elewa is sentimental in character and also reveal new aspects of her character:

1. 'Elewa!' she said switching on the ceiling light at the same time. 'You no fit carry on like this-o'. Beatrice had decided to look after Process: Material her Client for a few days Circumstance // and had ... set up Process: Material a bed Goal for her Client. She Sayer had talked Process: Verbal to her Receiver at length Circumstance this evening Circumstance, given Process: Material

- her Recipient five milligrams of Valium Goal and left Material her Scope sleeping Attribute before retiring herself Circumstance.
2. And now Circumstance here Identifier she Identified was Process: Relational sitting Process: Behavioural on the bed Circumstance her face a mirror of devastation Circumstance.
 3. Her distracted look Phenomenon actually Circumstance scared Process: Mental Beatrice Senser.
 4. Elewa Carrier exploded Relational into loud crying now Attribute. Beatrice went and sat beside her // and brought Process: Material her head Goal against her breast Circumstance with one hand Circumstance // and began to tap Process: Material her shoulder Goal rhythmically Circumstance with the other Circumstance. [When she Actor had quietened Material her Goal down Circumstance] Circumstance she Actor slowly Circumstance disengaged Process: Material her embrace Goal and laid Process: Material her Goal gently Circumstance on the pillow Circumstance.
 5. After a while she slowly turned on her side // and raised Process: Material Elewa's head Goal and ensconced Process: Material it Goal tenderly Circumstance in the crook of her arm Circumstance // and began to tap Process: Material a steady rhythm Scope again Circumstance on her shoulder Goal.

In the extract above, Elewa is mainly inscribed in material processes. Unlike, the two previous episodes already discussed, however, here she occurs very often in object position of the clauses (12 out of 14). She is mainly Client, Recipient and Goal in material processes and the Receiver of advice in

verbal processes. These processes generally construct her as vulnerable and a weakling who needs to be cared for and cajoled by Beatrice.

It is important to note that, unlike some previous studies (e.g. Reddy, 2004; Erritouni, 2006), the present study has gone beyond the mere mentioning of Elewa as representing the ordinary people in post-colonial Nigeria to reveal how she is linguistically constructed to realise this kind of representation. It has been shown that although she physically mingles with the elite, the processes in which she is engaged, in many situations, detach her from them, thereby realising the failure of the elite to establish vital links with the ordinary citizens.

Agatha

All we know about the social life of Agatha is that she is Beatrice's maidservant and that she is a staunch charismatic Christian who worships at Yahwe Evangelical Sabbath Mission Inc. (YESMI). The episodic events in which Agatha appears in *Anthills* are limited to Beatrice's residence. One interesting finding on the transitivity patterns in which she is cast is that the locative circumstances in the processes she engages in are mainly restricted to the kitchen. These circumstances together with the processes they are associated with are italicised in the clauses below:

1. I sprang up not to answer it but to bar the way to my maid, Agatha, who had *dashed out of the kitchen* like a rabbit smoked out of its hole and was making for the front door.

2. When I got to the living-room a couple of minutes later Agatha was just *disappearing through the kitchen door*.
3. Agatha who seemed to have *heard it from the kitchen* and *moved up to the door* was *leaning on the doorway*, silently.
4. ... Beatrice turned to where Agatha sat with her face *buried in her hands on the kitchen-table* and placed her hand on her heaving shoulder.
5. Agatha seething with resentment *was seated on the kitchen chair, her head on the table*, pretending to be asleep.
6. 'What's eating your maid?' he asked as soon as she *returned to the kitchen*.
7. ... Elewa was at the table dipping dry bread in a mug of Ovaltine while Agatha watched her *leaning on the doorway between the kitchen and the dining annexe*.

The processes in which Agatha is engaged in the above clauses comprise material processes (e.g. *dashed out of the kitchen; disappearing through the kitchen door; moved up to the door*); a mental perceptive process (i.e. *heard it from the kitchen*) and behavioural processes denoting body posture (e.g. *leaning on the doorway between the kitchen and the dining annexe; was seated on the kitchen chair*). The common characteristic of these processes is that their spatial realisation is in or around the kitchen, thus, circumscribing Agatha's actions, behaviours and perception around the kitchen, to a large extent. The circumstances which are attendant to these processes together form a semantic paradigm that represents Achebe's unique

vision of the location of a maidservant in the world he presents and/or reproduces in *Anthills*. Also, this aspect of Agatha's characterisation again shows the usefulness of circumstantial elements in character presentation.

Another key finding is that in the transitive or Goal-directed material processes in which Agatha is engaged, the Goal participant is often a food item. Examples of these processes are italicised in the following clauses:

1. Agatha had not bothered *to make any dessert* no doubt expecting to have the pleasure of hearing her mistress's complaint.
2. As Agatha *brought in a tray of drinks* and burst into one of the songs of her sect - something with which she had never graced this house ...
3. ... she set the law of the Sabbath aside and *put away the meat*, already a little high, and *the wilting vegetables*.

Similar to what has been observed for the locative circumstances already discussed, these material processes stand for Achebe's world view of what the work of a maidservant is: she prepares and serves food.

It is also revealing to consider the verbal processes in which Agatha is cast:

1. When she had had whoever it was as long to herself as she thought necessary Circumstance she Actor came Process: Material to the door of the bedroom Circumstance to inform Process: Verbal me Receiver that one soja-man from President house de for door Verbiage...

2. I was vaguely aware // of Agatha's voice Sayer saying Process: Verbal good evening Verbiage at the door Circumstance at some point Circumstance // but took no special interest in it.
3. But I Sayer made Process: Verbal it Ver- clear Attribute to her Receiver from the start Circumstance that I wasn't ready yet to wash and wipe the feet of my paid help -biage.
4. She Sayer simply Circumstance says Process: Verbal yesmah and nosemah Verbiage to everything you tell her Circumstance // and goes right ahead doing whatever she was doing before.
5. 'Go back to the kitchen!' verbiage I Sayer thundered Process: Verbal at her Receiver...
6. Yes, she had finished lunch Verbiage she Sayer answered Process: Verbal [while her narrowed, righteous eyes Sayer added Process: Verbal something like: while you were busy in your sinfulness verbiage] Circumstance.

As clauses 1, 2, 4, and 6 indicate, the verbal processes in which Agatha is Sayer are those of responding, informing and greeting. In contrast, the processes in which she is Receiver and Beatrice is Sayer (as clauses 3 and 6 indicate) are those of commanding and/or rebuking. Further, in clause 1, the agency of the process is assigned to Agatha's voice rather than herself and it is also important to note that Beatrice hardly takes note of Agatha's greeting as is indicated by the adjective phrase *vaguely aware*. These two features of this process show that Agatha's greeting is insignificant to Beatrice, the Receiver.

Again, in the embedded clause in clause 6 (i.e. ... *while her narrowed, righteous eyes added something like: while you were busy in your sinfulness*),

whose Verbiage participant appears to be a reprimand, agency is assigned to Agatha's eyes. Apparently, the situation presented here is the omniscient narrator's interpretation of Agatha's facial expression. Generally, the discursive features of the verbal processes in which Agatha is inscribed construct her as a powerless character who is at a disadvantage before a powerful mistress, Beatrice, and must submit to her. Her resistance to Beatrice's domination over her thus tends to be feeble and inarticulate.

On the whole, Agatha is a stereotype of those African women who by virtue of their low social status and level of education are confined to their domestic services, taking no part in the public life of their society. In the novel, the only way of which Agatha participates in public life is through her participation in the charismatic worship of YESMI. It might be noted that this association with a charismatic Christian group tends to be a characteristic of the stereotype class of women which Agatha represents.

Summary of Chapter

This chapter has illustrated the transitivity patterns that Achebe employs in presenting six characters. It has demonstrated that five of these characters, namely, Sam, Beatrice, Ikem, Elewa and Agatha are stereotypes of particular groups of people in the post-colonial society that Achebe creates. Against the social background, Chris, the only dynamic character, foregrounds Achebe's call for the enlightened citizen to rise up to the challenge of struggle against the corruption and oppression in post-independence Africa. The chapter has also revealed that by making Beatrice enter into interlocking power relations with male characters, Achebe presents an ambiguous picture

of gender relations and the role of the female in post-independence Africa. Among the female characters, however, Beatrice stands out as the most powerful. This multivalent representation of gender and power relations apparently indexes the social complexity of post-independence Africa.

CHAPTER FIVE

TRANSITIVITY, POINT OF VIEW AND CHARACTER

Introduction

This chapter continues with the analysis and discussion of the text, which was started in chapter four. The chapter answers research question two and, therefore, discusses the interplay between the transitivity patterns in which characters are inscribed and point of view. In this respect, the discussion focuses on the three narrator-characters, namely, Chris, Ikem and Beatrice. The chapter considers how each of these characters is constructed across the different points of view and ends with a summary of the issues raised. The frequency and percentage distribution of the process types in which the characters are cast across points of view is presented in Appendix B while Appendices C – E present a summary of the participant roles associated with the characters across the various points of view.

Christopher Oriko

The discussion will begin with how Chris is characterised in the first person point of view narrative in which he is the I-narrator. The statistical distribution of participant roles that are associated with him is presented in Appendix C. The transitivity construction of Chris in his own narrative presents an ambivalent picture of his characterisation. The statistical distribution of processes and participant roles associated with him generally presents him as an active character, but a qualitative analysis of the processes

in most parts shows that his actions and behaviour are centred around himself and Beatrice. Chris is presented as a character who is conscious of the situations and circumstances in which he finds himself. He occurs in five of the six process types, namely, material (29%), mental (26%), relational (20%), behavioural (3%) and verbal (22%) processes. Chris occurs as Actor in 34 (72.3%) material processes; Senser in all 41 mental processes in which he is engaged; Carrier in 26 (81.3%) of the 32 relational processes in which he is inscribed; Sayer in 32 (91.4%) verbal processes; and Behaver in all five behavioural processes in which he is cast. Considering the wide range of process types and participant roles in which Chris is cast, it can be observed that he is a dynamic character. He is involved in activity, talk, conscious behaviour, and is assigned identity.

In the material processes in which he is Actor, half (17) are transitive and thus extend to a Goal participant while the other half are either intransitive (14) or denote movement (3). Also, six (15%) of the mental processes in which he occurs are perceptive processes (e.g. *I could see him hesitate ever so briefly between taking me up on that smile and ignoring it*); four (10%) are processes of emotion (e.g. *I don't like to take credit for this kind of thing*), and 31 (76%) are cognitive processes (e.g. *I thought he had finally overreached himself changing his tune so abruptly*). The implication is that Chris is very much aware of and mentally alert to his environment. He acts, he feels, he sees and hears, and finally reflects on situations.

This general observation is, however, not consistent with his overall characterisation. In the opening scene of the novel, (as has been noted in Chapter Four of this thesis), Chris's Goal-directed actions mainly affect

himself (e.g. *I had lowered mine [i.e. my eyes] to the shiny table-top in ceremonial capitulation; I shake my head then, slowly*). The other processes (7 out of 15) in which his actions are extended to an external participant occur in instances where he tells readers his contribution to Sam's government and generally his involvement in the public affairs of the Kangan society. That is, these processes do not refer to the actions he is involved in with his interaction with Sam and his colleague ministers in the flow of events in narrative time. A typical example is ... *I proceeded to build him up as a leading African political scientist*. In this clause, the process *build* describes the opportunity Chris offers Professor Okong to publish in the *National Gazette* when he (Chris) was editor, a situation which he believed would project the image of his paper.

The Verbiage participants of verbal processes that cast him in his interaction with Sam demonstrate the asymmetrical power relationship between him and Sam (e.g. *I said again: "I am very sorry, Your Excellency"; I said nothing*). The exceptions are: *'Flout you mean,' I said; I said to my colleagues: 'That is a man after my heart. ...'*. The latter of these last two clauses is an utterance made after Sam has retired to his office and the Verbiage participant is a complement to Professor Okong for maintaining his composure when he has been invited by Sam to his office at a moment when Sam is in rage. Chris wishes he possessed this quality of Professor Okong.

Thus, the opening chapter presents two aspects of Chris's character. First, he presents himself as a powerless minister in Sam's government, and secondly, as someone who has, until the opening of the novel, been actively involved in the public affairs of Kangan and whose actions have positively

affected others and contributed to Sam's government. This latter situation makes Chris partly responsible for the unpleasant turn of events in the government, as he concedes.

On the other hand, in Chris's interaction with Beatrice (in Chapter Five of the novel), he presents himself as a very effective character. Forty-one point two percent (7) of the transitive processes in which he is Actor has Beatrice as Goal. These processes relate to their love affair and typical examples are *I affect great solemnity, pull her back and kissed her mildly; I drew her to me on the sofa and kissed her*. The majority of the verbal processes (20 out of 35) in which Chris is portrayed occur in Chapter Five, the chapter in which he elaborately narrates his interaction with Beatrice. Thus, Chris is portrayed as a more interactive character in his relations with Beatrice than in other situations. This observation is supported by the fact that in the opening scene of Chapter Five, where Chris, Beatrice, Ikem and others are conversing at Mad Medico's residence, Chris presents himself in several verbal processes as disadvantaged by Ikem's and Mad Medico's garrulity (e.g. '*More or less*', *replies Ikem before I can say anything; I am going to explain again but Mad Medico has a better explanation and drowns me out*), even though Beatrice later observes that Chris is very fluent and would never give up his stance in an argument.

It is also significant to distinguish between two kinds of verbal and cognitive processes in which Chris occurs as an I-narrator. These are narrative and metanarrative processes. Narrative processes are used by the narrator to tell us of processes and situations that he experiences as part of the unfolding of the story and they are grammatically marked by the use of the past tense of

the verb (not in all situations though). Metanarrative processes, on the other hand, encompass Genette's (1980) directing, communication, testimonial and ideological functions of the narrator (For a discussion of these functions, see Chapter Two, pp. 40-41) and serve as a discourse strategy that the narrator employs to interact with the potential reader or manage the flow of the narrative. These metanarrative processes are constantly marked by the use of the present tense. As far as this discussion is concerned, our focus will be on the metanarrative processes. Eight (26%) of the cognitive processes in which Chris is cast are metanarrative processes (e.g. *I still think the inscriptions were inexcusable and in deplorable taste; I suppose it is for them that I am still at this silly observation post making farcical entries in the crazy log-book of this our ship of state*) while three verbal processes are realised as metanarrative processes (e.g. *But I must say Okong was a perfect contributor in meeting deadlines and that kind of thing*). These metanarrative processes cast Chris as a reflective character.

He uses the cognitive metanarrative processes to show his reflection on the socio-political situation and circumstances in which he finds himself. The verbs *think* (9), *know* (1), *suppose* (1), *find* (2), *see* (1), *wonder* (2) and *believe* (1) realise this process. The use of these verbs thus generally reflects what Genette's (1980) calls the testimonial function of the narrator. Chris relates what he thinks and feels about his colleagues, as well as Sam, and their behaviour. He also reflects on his own role and activities in the corrupt political system in which he finds himself. This situation supports the observation that Chris, as a character and a minister, is conscious and sensitive to his environment and is fully aware of the consequences of the actions and

inactions of others and himself. However, as far as the political situation is concerned, Chris lacks the will power to change it, as is demonstrated by the material and verbal processes discussed earlier.

Regarding the metanarrative verbal processes, Chris employs them to concede to his weaknesses and the good qualities of people whose behaviour he generally detests. (e.g. *Complete honesty demands that I mention one last factor in my continued stay, a fact that I'm somewhat ashamed ...; Then His Excellency who, I should admit, is extremely good at such times says: 'He doesn't need a word from you ...'*). In contradistinction to the cognitive metanarrative processes, these processes are used to perform what Genette's (1980) terms the communication function of the narrator. The use of these processes heightens the credibility of Chris's narrative. By frequently casting himself in these processes, he tends to convince readers that he is an honest and an objective witness to the socio-political situation he describes.

In summary, by often casting himself in processes of consciousness and ineffective material processes, Chris shows that the reason behind his inability to reform his deteriorating society is far from lack of knowledge, but rather his lack of will-power and courage to stand up to the task. Thus, the reform (or revolution) that he yearns to effect is deferred at this stage of his characterisation, which also corresponds to the opening episodes of the story presented in *Anthills*.

The next aspect of Chris's characterisation to be considered is how he is constructed in the first person point of view narratives in which Ikem and Beatrice are the respective narrators. As is shown in Appendix B, in the two narratives put together, Chris occurs in all six process types: material (35.9%),

mental (5.1%), relational (33.3%), behavioural (5.1%), verbal (19.2%) and existential (1.3%) processes. However, he is constructed differently by each narrator.

As Appendix C illustrates, in Ikem's narrative Chris occurs as Actor in 13 (86.7%) material processes, Senser in 1 (33.3%) mental process, Carrier in 11, (100%) relational processes, Behaver in 4 (100%) behavioural processes, and Sayer in 5 (100%) verbal processes. The general picture this distribution of participant roles gives is that Chris almost always occurs as the Agent of the process in the clause. Ikem thus relates what Chris does, believes, what he is like, how he behaves and what he says. He also tells us what he thinks and feels about him. The effect of casting Chris in varying processes is that he emerges in the narrative as a dynamic character.

Interestingly, Chris does not occur as Goal in Ikem's narrative (see Appendix C). Although one could observe from the distribution of participant roles that Chris is an active character, a more delicate analysis in addition to a closer consideration of the textual context gives them a different 'situated meaning' (Gee, 1999, p.42). As is demonstrated by further analysis in the following paragraphs, by often placing Chris in agentive position, Ikem detaches other characters from Chris in order to foreground Chris's own actions, sayings, behaviour, among others, and project these as ineffective.

In the 13 material processes in which Chris is cast, more than half (7) are intransitive. The remaining six comprise transitive processes (4) and those that denote simple movement (2), such as ... *Chris never went to the show* and *Chris came away and began dutifully to relay the news to everyone including myself.*

Examples of the transitive material processes in which Chris occurs are given below:

1. Chris Actor has tortured Process: Material himself Goal for nothing Circumstance.
2. He is not looking at me // but at the sheaf of typed papers Goal he Actor
was bouncing up and down process: Material on the table Circumstance
between his palms Circumstance [to line Process- them Goal up -Material]
 Circumstance.

In clause 1 above, the process *has tortured* metaphorically refers to the efforts Chris has made to spread the news that Sam has changed his mind about Abazon and has scheduled to visit that province. The Goal participant is Chris himself. In example 2, his actions actually affect the sheaf of papers.

The verbal processes in which he is cast are his appreciation of Ikem's own character and the Verbiage participant or sometimes the verb realising the process itself constantly connotes Chris's confrontational attitude towards Ikem for his militant approach to solving the political problems of Kangan. Examples are given below:

1. Chris Sayer said Process: verbal I was a romantic Verbiage ...
2. Chris who Sayer had (just) rebuked Process: Verbal me Target for not
knowing that public executions were such a popular sport
 Circumstance ...
3. 'I called your office three or four times.' Verbiage he Sayer says Process:
 Verbal as soon as I enter Circumstance.

4. Chris Sayer says Process: Verbal I am sentimental Verbiage ...

By often casting Chris in these processes, Ikem constructs him as a controversial character. In the only mental process in which Chris occurs in Ikem's narrative, the Phenomenon is vulgar (e.g. *Poor Chris. By now he probably believes the crap too*). Generally, Ikem conceives the processes and situations in which Chris is involved as lacking significance.

In Beatrice's narrative, Chris is Actor in six (out of 13) processes, five of which are intransitive and in the remaining transitive processes, the Goal participant is an abstract noun. He occurs in only one emotive process as Phenomenon (i.e. ... *although I decidedly liked him*). He also occurs as Carrier (10), Attributor (3), Identifier (1), and Sayer (6). As the statistical distribution of the processes demonstrates, Chris is not given much textual space in the narrative and the processes in which he is cast are dedicated to describing his talk as well as classifying and identifying Chris with particular attributes that attract Beatrice, including those she does not approve of. In Beatrice's narrative, therefore, Chris is cast as a static or rather a less dynamic character, compared to the other three narratives. He is mainly trapped in a web of attributes located in Beatrice's consciousness.

In the omniscient point of view, Chris occurs in 92 (43.6%) material processes, 31 (14.7%) mental processes, 22 (10.4%) relational processes, 19 (9%) behavioural processes and 47 (22.3%) verbal processes. The most frequent participant roles he is associated with in these processes are Actor (84; 91.3%), Senser (30; 96.8%), Carrier (20; 90.9%), Behaver (16; 84.2%) and Sayer (42; 89.4%) respectively. Thus, like in Chris's own narrative and in

Ikem's narrative, Chris is cast here as a very dynamic character involved in a wide range of processes, situations and participant roles.

With processes in which he is Actor, 38 are intransitive, 33 are transitive and 13 others denote movement. Regarding the distribution of the sub-types of the mental process, cognitive process (15; 48.4%) is the most frequent (e.g. *He is certainly sticking to his words to do things constitutionally, thought Chris when he heard this latest bulletin*). In the remaining clauses, he occurs in 10 (32.3%) perceptive processes (e.g. *Ultimately he sighted the police sergeant and pulled him aside rather brusquely in his breathless eagerness*) five (16.1%) emotive processes (e.g. *she struck him by her stately stylized movement like Maiden Spirit Mask ...*) and one (3.2%) desiderative process (e.g. *Containing his irritation as much as possible he had wanted to know exactly what Ikem had said at the lecture*). Chris's mental processes are relatively fairly distributed with each sub-process, with the exception of desiderative processes, occurring with a relative high frequency. This is in contrast with the mental processes associated with him as an I-narrator, where many of the processes (76%) are cognitive processes. This difference may be accounted for by the observation that the cognitive processes associated with the I-narrator perform two functions, namely, narrative and metanarrative functions. It may also be observed that the dynamic nature of the mental processes in which Chris is cast in the omniscient point of view shows that he is, more than previously, alert to the conditions of the ordinary people of his society. This observation is supported by the fact that the third person narrative corresponds with two key stages of transformation in Chris character, 'self-quest' and 'self-reflection', as has been

noted in Chapter Four (p. 110). Chris is now mentally oriented towards the change he should effect in his attitude and society.

It is also worth noting that the transitivity patterns in which Chris is cast vary across episodes. As has been discussed in Chapter Four (pp.103-114) there is a considerable variation in the processes and the agency of clauses in which Chris is inscribed at the joint police-military operation barrier at the Three Cowrie Bridge episode and the military barrier on The Great North Road. At Three Cowrie Bridge, the processes in which Chris is cast denote urgent movement and mental activity; processes that characterise him as a frightened character who is automatically responding to verbal and environmental stimuli (e.g. *Chris was out of the car like a shot; Chris and his companion halted;... he realised quickly...*). The Verbiage participants in verbal processes in which Chris is Sayer are merely responses to queries by the Sergeant (*'Sebastian' replied Chris, using the name of his steward from instant inspiration*). At the barrier on his way to Abazon, however, the material and verbal processes in which Chris is presented shows that he is an active and a powerful character:

1. He Actor plunged Process: Material into the crowd Circumstance.
2. ... he Actor [sighted the police sergeant] and pulled Process: Material him Goal aside Circumstance rather brusquely Circumstance.
3. Chris Actor bounded Process: Material forward Circumstance // and held Process: material the man's hand Goal // and ordered Process: Verbal him Receiver to release the girl at once Verbiage.

As has already been mentioned, the variation in the processes in which Chris is cast in these two episodes has a thematic value; it is Achebe's configuration of the reformation he demands in the attitude of enlightened African citizen towards bad governance and social misdemeanour.

Finally, the discussion above reveals that Chris is cast differently across the four narratives and also across different episodes and situations within the same narrative or point of view. For instance, in Ikem's narrative, the omniscient point of view and his own narrative, he is generally constructed as a more dynamic character than in Beatrice's narrative, with regards to the range of process types and participant roles in which he is presented. Again, it is only where he is the I-narrator that he is engaged in both narrative and metanarrative processes. In Ikem's narrative, the processes in which he is engaged are generally evaluated negatively, and in his own narrative, he is presented as the weaker participant in his interactions with Sam, for instance, and an effective character with Beatrice. Thus, it can be concluded that although point of view influences some of the transitivity patterns in which Chris as a character is inscribed; in many instances, other considerations such as the attitude of the narrator towards him, the situations in which he is presented, and the thematic concern of the author become the salient determinants of the transitivity patterns associated with him.

Ikem Osodi

The next character to be discussed is Ikem Osodi. The statistical distribution of participant roles associated with Ikem across points of view is presented in Appendix D. In his own narrative, he is projected as a dynamic

character and a reflective character. Ikem occurs in five process types: material (66; 34%), mental (56; 28%), relational (42; 21%), behavioural (14, 7%) and verbal (20; 10%) processes. Most frequently, he plays the agency role in the clause. He is Actor in 58 (88%) material processes, 29 of which are intransitive and 18 are transitive. The other 12 denote movement. He also occurs as Senser in 55 (98.2%) of the 56 mental processes, Carrier in 35 (83.3%) and Attributor in 6 (14.3%) relational processes, Sayer in 15 (75%) verbal processes and Behaver in 12 (85.7%) behavioural processes. These processes generally cast Ikem as a dynamic character. That is, he is actively involved in activity, talk, perception and cognition, and conscious behaviour. He is also assigned identity in the situations and circumstances in which he is cast.

However, the mental processes in which Ikem is cast are quite restricted. Cognitive processes are the most recurrent sub-process type (40; 71.4%) (e.g. *When we parted I thought we were through*). The other mental processes in which he occurs are perceptive (11; 20%); processes (e.g. *I start hearing it in my dream and then pass into a state of half-waking ...*); emotive (4; 7.1%) processes (e.g. *I am extremely fond of the girl, more than anybody I can remember in years*); and a desiderative (1; 1.8%) process (i.e. *But how I wish, for the sake of all the years I have known and loved him, that the day never came when he should be that kind of right*). The distribution of these mental processes reveals that Ikem is very frequently associated with cognitive processes. This finding appears to reflect the fact that he is the narrator and employs some of the cognitive processes in performing metanarrative functions. Nonetheless, the stylistic significance of often casting Ikem in

cognitive processes is to project him as ‘a character of ideas’, an icon of the African intellectual.

Seven (17.1%) of the cognitive mental processes in which Ikem occurs are metanarrative processes in the testimonial mode. Verbs that realise these processes are not very different from those that are associated with Chris, and they are *think* (3), *suppose* (2), *believe* (1), *wonder* (2), and *recall* (1). Examples of metanarrative clauses are below:

1. I Senser think Process: Mental that much of the change which has come over Sam started after his first OAU meeting Phenomenon.
2. I Senser believe process: Mental I was about to tell the fellow that there was no need for him to have said that Phenomenon . . .
3. I Senser don't Pro- now Circumstance recall -cess: Mental which he had to take out and how everything was already much too late Phenomenon.

Unlike Chris's cognitive metanarrative processes that are used to show his reaction to and reflection on the socio-political environment in which he is cast, in Ikem's case these processes mainly realise the effort he makes in recalling events and situations that he narrates. They perform an epistemic function in which he distances himself from the events he presents.

Not many verbal processes (2) realise the metanarrative function (e.g. *I still ask myself how anyone could laugh at the proclamation of such terrible curse or fail to be menaced by the prospect of its fulfilment; I must say the whole charade is so unlike Chris that it must be done without his knowledge*).

In the former clause, Ikem shows his reflection on the gory public execution of

convicts and in the latter he emphasises his disgust for Chris's character. Be that as it may, the metanarrative processes projects Ikem as a reflective character.

Further, 18 (27.8%) of the Goal participants in processes in which Ikem is Actor are things that relate to his work as an editor (e.g. *The next day I wrote my first crusading editorial ...*). This phenomenon is influenced by the situational context in which Ikem is cast as a character. Much of his narrative relates to us his contribution to the Kangan society through his militant editorials. Ikem projects himself as a tool of change which must be brought about through the power of the written and spoken word.

In Chris's narrative, more than half (12; 54.5%) of the processes in which Ikem is cast are verbal processes, in all of which Ikem is the Sayer. In the remaining 10 processes, he occurs in five material processes, four relational processes and one behavioural process. Concerning participant roles he is engaged in, Ikem is Actor in three of the material processes and Scope in the other two. In the relational and behavioural processes, he is Carrier and Behaver in all processes respectively. Generally, therefore, Ikem is cast as a less dynamic character in Chris's narrative. Being often involved more often in talk than activity, Ikem is projected by Chris as a talker and not an Actor.

In Beatrice's narrative, out of 93 processes in which Ikem is inscribed, 47 (51%) are material processes, six (6%) are mental, 17 (18%) are relational, three (3%) are behavioural and 20 (22%) are verbal processes. In material, behavioural and verbal processes, he is frequently assigned agency and is thus mostly associated with the role of Actor (41; 87.2%), Behaver (2 out of 3), and Sayer (12; 60%) respectively. However, in mental processes, he occurs as

Phenomenon in more than half of the processes (4 out of 6). In the material processes in which Ikem is Actor, 15 are intransitive, 19 are transitive and 7 denote movement. Although Ikem is most often involved in talk and activity in the narrative, generally it could be observed that Beatrice gives him a more dynamic ideational or experiential space than Chris does. Beatrice is more disposed to project Ikem as the philosopher and pacesetter in the struggle against corruption in their society.

Ikem is even more dynamic in the omniscient point of view, compared to Beatrice narrative. Here, he occurs in 73 (47.7%) material processes, 27 (17.7%) mental processes, 12 (7.8%) relational processes, eight (5.2%) behavioural processes, and 33 (21.6%) verbal processes. Again, he is most frequently assigned agency. He is Actor in 56 (76.7%) material processes (e.g. *Ikem went for reasons of his own, in search of personal enlightenment*); Senser in 26 (96.3%) mental processes (e.g. ... *he looked and saw through his rear-view mirror a man in great anger ...*); Carrier in 10 (83.3%) relational processes (e.g. *By nature he is never on the same side as his audience*); Sayer in 22 (66.7%) verbal processes (e.g. *As Ikem told his story he thought he saw something like relief spreading through the man's face*) and Behavior in 7 (87.5%) processes (e.g. *As he looked around in surprise a police constable stepped out of the shadows and asked ...*).

It is worth considering the distribution of the sub-processes of the material and mental processes in which Ikem is Actor and Senser respectively. Fourteen of these material processes are transitive, 29 are intransitive and 13 are processes denoting movement. Regarding the mental processes, cognitive processes (e.g. *So he decided it was not worth the trouble of a gearshift*) are

the most frequent (16; 61.5%). He also occurs in seven (27%) perceptive processes (e.g. *Ikem spotted his man at once but decided that even engaging his eye would be a mark of friendship*); two (8%) emotive processes (e.g. *Ikem was notorious as a late riser and positively hated to be disturbed early in the morning*); and one (3.8%) desiderative process.

Overall, it can be observed that the omniscient narrator; like in the I-narration to a larger extent, and in Beatrice's narrative, to a lesser extent; presents Ikem as a dynamic and prominent character who is in control of situations and processes in which he is cast. Also, given that most of the material processes in which he occurs are non-directed (42 out of 56), Ikem is typical of the African intellectual, mainly involved in talk and philosophising without action. It should also be emphasised that, just like Chris, where Ikem is the I-narrator, he is engaged in metanarrative processes which are normally realised by mental and verbal processes. Again, it has been observed that the preponderance of material processes and verbal processes associated with him in Beatrice's and Chris's narratives respectively is as a result of the relative perceptions of the two narrators about the role Ikem plays in the politics of Kangan.

Beatrice Oko

Beatrice is the last character to consider in this chapter. Beatrice is generally constructed as a dynamic character and more self-reflective than Chris and Ikem across all the three narratives in which she is cast. The distribution of participant roles associated with her across points of view is given in Appendix E. The number of clauses associated with her suggests that

she is given much textual space in the narration than the other characters. She accounts for 901 processes in the data set for this study, which is about 50% more than the processes associated with Ikem and Chris in the data set. Thus, she is involved in more narrative events than Chris and Ikem, a situation which probably reflects the prominence Achebe consciously gives to projecting the new role and status of the woman in the post-colonial African society. In her own narrative, Beatrice is cast in 403 processes, comprising 160 (39.7%) material processes, 89 (22.1%) mental processes, 75 (18.6%) relational processes, 20 (5.0%) behavioural processes, 58 (14.4%) verbal processes and one (0.2%) existential process.

Regarding the participant roles she is associated with, Beatrice occurs as Actor in 125 (85%) material processes (e.g. *So I rushed to the telephone*); Senser in 88 (99%) mental processes (e.g. *I remember the incident well because we were doing the map of West Africa in our geography class at the time*); Carrier in 63 (84%) relational processes (e.g. *The first time it happened I was a student in England*); Sayer in 47 (81%) verbal processes (e.g. *And there I told him my story of Desdemona*) and Behaver in 19 (100%) behavioural processes (e.g. *I stood there staring at the dark lake ...*). She also occurs as Goal (e.g. *A car would be sent to pick me up from my flat at six-thirty*) with considerable frequency (22; 14% of material processes). Thus, in the majority of the situations in which Beatrice is involved, she is the Agent of the processes, thereby projecting her as an active character. Coupled with the fact that she occurs in a wide range of process types, this observation shows Beatrice as a dynamic and active character.

One notable observation is that Beatrice is constantly distinguished from other characters by her prominent engagement in mental processes, both in terms of frequency distribution and the kinds of processes in which she is engaged, a situation which projects her as a reflective and an emotive/sentimental character. This observation will be examined closely in relation to the distribution of the sub-processes of the mental processes in which she is inscribed as well as her association with meronymic agency and ideational metaphor.

With regards to the mental sub-processes, Beatrice occurs in 18 (20.2%) perceptive processes (e.g. ... *and soon [I] could hear Agatha in lively conversation with a male voice*), 16 (18%) emotive processes (e.g. ... *his bafflement gave way to a wide happy grin which pleased me very much ...*); 48 (54%) cognitive processes (e.g. ... *I got to know that his whip was famous not only in our house and in the schoolhouse next door but throughout the diocese*) and six (7%) desiderative processes (e.g. ... *which of course suited me very well*). Although all these processes occur with Ikem and Chris as well, in Beatrice's case, they occur with relatively higher frequency. That is to say, the mental processes in which Beatrice is cast are more diversified than the other two characters.

Also related to the mental processes in which Beatrice casts herself is the relatively frequent occurrence of meronymic agency, which refers to a situation where a part of the body of a character is assigned agency in the clause (Simpson, 2004). Six of these instances are associated with Beatrice, and some examples are given below:

1. My heart Actor fluttered Process: Material violently Circumstance in panic fear
Circumstance•
2. Why my mind Actor should have gone Process: Material to an accident
Circumstance I have no idea ...
3. ...my thoughts Actor kept leap-frogging Process: Material over themselves
Circumstance ...

It is significant to note that the aspects of the body that are thematised and assigned agency in clauses 1 and 2 are the domain of emotive mental processes and cognitive mental processes respectively. In clause 3, the agency role of the process is assigned to the product of the mental process of thinking. By frequently casting herself in these processes, Beatrice reveals her innermost feelings and also distances herself from these emotions by projecting them to fragmentary aspects of her body, thereby indicating that these processes are necessarily and involuntarily occasioned by the situations in which she finds herself.

Ideational metaphor is also prominent in the material and relational processes in which Beatrice is cast. Thirty-six (22.5%) of the 160 material processes in which she occurs are ideational metaphors relating to processes other than material. Out of the 36 metaphors, 28 (78%) are ideationally mental processes, four (11.1%) are ideationally behavioural processes, two (6%) are relational processes and other two (6%) are verbal processes. Eight (10.7%) of the relational processes in which Beatrice is cast are metaphorical, six (75%) of which are ideationally mental processes. Examples of ideational metaphor associated with Beatrice are given below:

1. ... but the thing that Actor came Process: Material into my mind Circumstance
right away Circumstance //was: Oh God there's been an accident involving
Chris ...
2. Soon Circumstance the two voices Actor were floating in Process: Material to me
Circumstance again Circumstance as I put on the finishing touches Circumstance.
3. ... but the feeling Carrier was Process: Relational so strong that it blocked
other lines of thought Attribute.

Apart from thematising the domains of particular processes as has been demonstrated by the meronymic agency discussed above, another grammatical strategy in expressing metaphors that are ideationally mental processes is to assign agency to the phenomenon sensed and realise the domain or the human agent as a locative circumstantial element. As was noted when discussing meronymic agency, the former strategy distances Beatrice from the process, expressing them as happening in spite of herself. Generally, however, the prominence and diversification in the mental processes associated with Beatrice, as has been exemplified with the mental sub-process, meronymic agency and ideational metaphor, tend to portray her as a more reflective character than Chris and Ikem. She is so sensitive to her environment that she pays detailed attention not only to people, actions, and the socio-political circumstances of Kangan, but she also looks into both the past and the future to divine dangers in stock for her society. It is not surprising that she is the one who warns Chris of the impending danger they will soon find themselves in

and the need to act. Both Chris and the omniscient narrator refer to her as the prophetess of the unknown god.

Also associated with her are metanarrative processes. Nineteen (40%) of the cognitive processes in which she is inscribed are metanarrative processes (e.g. *I think he feels awkward about them ...*). Unlike in the case of Ikem and Chris, processes of perception (5 instances) as well as one behavioural process are realised as metanarrative processes (i.e. *I can see, looking back at my earliest memories, a little girl completely wrapped up in her own little world*). As the examples demonstrate, Beatrice uses cognitive processes to show her reflection and conception of events and people in the 'now' of narrative time. However, she uses perceptive and behavioural processes to realise her reflection of the past. Beatrice transports herself into the past of Kangan to let us see her bullying father, her vulnerable mother and in general a male dominant society where formal education is at its beginnings. Through Beatrice, we come to see the transformation in the Kangan society: urbanisation, the prominence of education and the educated people, and the prestigious role and status women enjoy. Beatrice is consciously projected as the embodiment of the past and the present as well as the leader of the remnant anthills who will tell the new grass of the savannah about the bush fires of the previous year.

The verbal metanarrative processes associated with Beatrice perform the communication function of the narrator:

1. That's all I can say

2. And if I say that Chris did all the chasing I am not boasting or anything.
3. But I must mention that in addition to Beatrice they had given me another name at my baptism, Nwanyibuife...
4. ... though I must say in recognition of the awesomeness of the very thought that I never actually saw it happen.
5. All I'm trying to say really is that as far as I can remember I have always been on my own and never asked to be noticed by anybody.

As has been observed about Chris and Ikem, these processes are a narrative strategy that is employed generally to achieve verisimilitude. By constantly casting herself in these processes, Beatrice also shows her attitude towards the events she relates.

The discussion will now proceed to consider the transitivity profile of Beatrice in the first person narrative in which she is not the narrator. Owing to the fact that she is not mentioned in Ikem's narrative (see Appendix E), the discussion here will be limited to how Beatrice is presented in Chris's narrative. Generally, five process types are associated with her in the narrative, comprising material (29; 38%), mental (8; 11%), relational (10; 13%), behavioural (5; 7%), and verbal (23; 31%) processes. Thus, in this narrative, Beatrice is also cast as a dynamic character. Nonetheless, she is projected more as an actor and a talker. In material processes, Beatrice occurs as Actor in 17 (out of 29; 59%) processes (e.g. *She offered up her lips again; we were both trembling*).

However, it is important to note the significant decrease in the processes in which Beatrice is Actor in Chris's narrative as compared to both the omniscient point of view and where she is I-narrator. The processes in which she is Actor in Chris's narrative are 26% and 22.9% less than those in her own narrative and the omniscient point of view respectively. This decrease is consistent with an increase in the relative frequency of processes in which she is Goal in Chris's narrative. In her own narrative she is Goal in 13.8% (22) of the material processes while in Chris's narrative she is Goal in 31% (9) of the material processes. Typical examples of processes in which Beatrice is Goal in Chris's narrative are given below:

1. I Actor drew Process: Material her Goal to me Circumstance on the sofa Circumstance and kissed Process: Material her Goal – a little too roughly perhaps Circumstance.
2. I Actor kissed Process: Material her Goal again Circumstance and said instead: 'You are a great girl.'
3. I Actor (affect great solemnity), pull Process: Material her Goal back Circumstance and kissed Process: Material her Goal mildly Circumstance.
4. I Actor tried to kiss Process: Material her Goal but she covered my mouth with the palm of her hand.
5. The day I Actor first Circumstance made love Process: Material to her Goal...

It could be observed from the above examples that the majority of material processes in which Beatrice is Goal relate to the romantic activities Chris and Beatrice are engaged in. Rather than casting her in an ineffective position, these processes show Chris's admiration of and affection for Beatrice.

However, it could be argued that by constantly making Beatrice the affected participant in these situations, Chris tend to idolise her and for that matter portrays her to be a weak participant in their romantic interactions.

Interestingly, in mental processes, Beatrice occurs more as Senser (6; 75%) (e.g. ... *Beatrice obligingly chuckles with her although she has seen it at least a dozen times; She finds my voice soothing, perhaps*) than as Phenomenon (2; 25%) (e.g. ... *when I thought of her what came most readily to my mind was not roses or music but good and tastefully produced book ...; I love her and will go at whatever pace she dictates*). This observation is a deviation from Ikem and Chris, who most frequently occur as Phenomenon in first person point of view narratives in which they are non-narrator-characters, a situation which is understandable, given that the I-narrator often distances him/herself from the mental processes of other characters. While this finding emphasises the fact that Beatrice is projected as a more reflective character than the other two characters, it also seems to be as a result of the fact that Chris is very observant of Beatrice and tries to detail every aspect of her behaviour, including those that are inert.

This latter observation is further emphasised by the relational, verbal and behavioural processes in which Beatrice is cast. In the relational processes and verbal processes, the only participant role Beatrice performs is Carrier (e.g. *Beatrice is a perfect embodiment of my ideal woman, beautiful without being glamorous. Peaceful but very strong. Very, very strong*); and Sayer (e.g. *'What did he tell you?' From Beatrice; 'To me?' asks Beatrice, wide-eyed*) respectively. She is associated with Behaver in all five (100%) behavioural processes she is cast (e.g. *She shot up from my chest where she was lying and*

gave my face a quick scrutiny). In short, Chris meticulously describes Beatrice's movement, behaviour, attributes and actions, trying to pry into her inner most thinking and feeling. This linguistic construction of Beatrice is meant to emphasise or realise the romantic relationship between her and Chris.

Finally, we will examine the transitivity profile of Beatrice in the third person point of view. Like in the first person narration where she is the I-narrator, she is cast in all six process types: material (210; 49.6%); mental (65; 15.4%); relational (40; 9.5%); behavioural (40; 9.5%); verbal (67; 15.8%); and existential (1; 0.2%) processes.

As is often the case, Beatrice is assigned agency in most of the processes in which she is engaged. She occurs as Actor in 170 (81.9%) material processes (e.g. *She ate a grapefruit and drank a second cup of coffee while she flipped through the barren pages of the Sunday newspapers*); Senser in 61 (93.4%) mental processes (e.g. *she heard far away the crowing of a cock*); Carrier in 28 (70%) relational processes (e.g. *she was still at the railing of her balcony when Agatha came in to begin her chores*); Sayer in 60 (out of 67; 89.5%) processes (e.g. *'No breakfast for me Agatha,' she called out cheerily to her*); Behaver in 36 (90%) processes (e.g. *she immediately sat up in her bed*). This statistical distribution presents Beatrice as a dynamic character. She is often involved in talk and activity, and engages in thinking, perception and conscious behaviour. She is also assigned identity in relational processes.

Again, she is Goal in only 13 (6.2%) processes, which are very often similar to the processes in which she mostly occurs as Goal in Chris's narrative:

1. Then Chris went and sat down on the sofa beside her and placed his left arm across her shoulder and with his right hand Circumstance raised Process: Material her chin Goal gently Circumstance and saw she was crying.
2. She did not resist then as he Actor pulled Process: Material her Goal to him Circumstance and reverently Circumstance tasted Process: Mental the salt of her tears Goal.
3. He Actor kissed Process: Material her lips and her nipples Goal and closed his eyes again.
4. He Actor (smiled mischievously and) kissed Process: Material her Goal.

Again, Beatrice occurs in 66 transitive processes as Actor, in 6 (9.1%) of which her actions affect parts of her body. A typical example of such processes is: *She had now folded her arms across her breast and bent her head forward on her chest as if in silent prayer.*

Concerning the mental sub-process, Beatrice occurs in 35 (58.3%) cognitive processes (e.g. *These birds, she thought, did not just arrive here this morning*), 17 (28.3%) perceptive processes (e.g. *She heard far away the crowing of a cock*), and 4 (7%) instances each for emotive (e.g. *As she looked at herself in her bedroom mirror and liked what she saw*) and desiderative processes (e.g. *... she was expecting someone and did not wish to be disturbed when he came up*). It can be observed that the percentage distribution of the emotive processes in which Beatrice is cast in the narrative has reduced, significantly. That is, she is more reflective than emotive.

The characterisation of Beatrice generally reveals that Achebe manipulates the linguistic resources the I-narrative and omniscient narrative

techniques offer to construct her as a more reflective and dynamic character than Chris and Ikem. In Chris's narrative, the writer also deviates from the normal distribution of participant roles associated with non-narrator characters, particularly in relation to mental processes, to foreground Beatrice as a reflective character. This deviation is enabled by the disposition of the narrator (Chris) towards Beatrice, and the situations in which she is presented. Thus, these two variables mediate between point of view and the transitivity patterns in which Beatrice is cast.

Summary of Chapter

This study was undertaken with the assumption that the point of view in which a character is cast (i.e. whether the character is the narrator in the first person; a non-narrator character in the first person; or in the third person) will have an influence on the transitivity patterns in which s/he is inscribed. This assumption was based on the fact that the extent to which a narrator is involved in a narration is determined by the kind of narrative modality in which the narrative is framed and will consequently affect the situations and processes in which a character is cast. The study shows that I-narrators are cast in both narrative and metanarrative processes, and that the latter are very often realised by cognitive and verbal processes. On the other hand, non-narrator characters in the first person point of view are less associated with mental processes and less frequently occur as Senser in these processes. This situation tends to project I-narrators as more reflective than non-narrator characters.

Further, it has been demonstrated that other factors such as the attitude of a narrator, the situations and circumstances in which a character is cast, and

the thematic concern of the novel also complement or rather mediate between point of view and transitivity choices that are associated with a character. The study also shows that the three characters are most frequently assigned agency in processes, irrespective of point of view.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

Introduction

This final chapter of the thesis summarises the major aspects of the study and draws conclusions and implications from the research findings. Specifically, the chapter begins with a summary of the aims, methods and approaches adopted in the study and then proceeds to highlight key findings of the study. This is followed by the conclusions and implications drawn from the study. The chapter ends with recommendations for further research.

Summary of Aims and Methods

The general aim of the study was to explore the stylistic significance of the transitivity patterns associated with characters in Achebe's *Anthills*. In light of this, the study sought to address two particular concerns. First, it aimed to examine character development through the choice of transitivity patterns and relate this to the socio-political world-view presented in the novel. The second concern was to find out whether there was a relationship between point of view and the transitivity patterns in which characters were inscribed.

To this end, the study employed two notions in Systemic Functional Linguistics, namely, 'system network' and 'the metafunctions of language' as a theoretical lens. A System network is an interconnection of sets of linguistic signs simultaneously entering into both paradigmatic and syntagmatic

relationships with one another. This network is a representation of the meaning potential available to the language user. Language users make systematic choices from each set of items in a particular network to make preferred meaning.

The notion of the metafunctions of language, on the other hand, claims that language performs three functions that are intrinsic to its organisation. These functions are the ideational, interpersonal and textual metafunctions. The ideational metafunction is the experiential function of language; through language a writer/speaker encodes his experience or perception of the real world as well as the experience of the internal world of his own consciousness (Halliday, 1971). Language serves an interpersonal function in that it is a tool for establishing social relations, for creating and enacting identities and for creating social worlds. The textual function of language is the actualisation of its meaning potentials in the creation of text; that is, its internal organisation of information.

Being descriptive and exploratory in nature, the study adopted the qualitative research design. This type of design is interested in deriving and interpreting meaning from signs such as words or texts, pictures and/or observable behaviour. The particular qualitative approach employed by the study was content analysis and stylistic analysis was the method used in analysing and interpreting the text. Stylistic analysis progresses from the identification and description of relevant linguistic features in a text to the interpretation of the value these linguistic features have to the aesthetic quality and/or the thematic and ideological concerns of the text.

In order to answer the research questions, the novel was coded for the transitivity patterns in which the characters were inscribed. Specifically, Simpson's (2004) notion of transitivity profile, which he defined as a regular pattern of transitivity choices attributed to a character, was adopted. In this regard, the coding focused on identifying foregrounded patterns in the transitivity profile of each of the selected characters in order to answer research question one: what do the transitivity patterns attributed to characters in the narrative reveal about these characters and the writer's thematic concern?

For research question two (i.e. How do point of view and transitivity patterns interact to construct?), the transitivity profiles of each of the narrator-characters (Chris, Beatrice and Ikem) as are found in their individual narrative accounts and that of the omniscient narrator were identified separately and compared. Descriptive statistics, including frequency counts and percentage distributions, were employed to augment the qualitative discussion on the interplay between transitivity and point of view.

Key Findings

The study recorded some key findings for each of the two research questions. First, concerning the interplay between transitivity and character, the study demonstrated that five out of the six characters selected for the study, namely, Sam, Ikem, Beatrice, Elewa and Agatha, stereotypically represent Achebe's construction of key social actors in the socio-political world he presents in *Anthills*. Through the use of grammatical metaphor and circumstantial elements in the clause, Achebe constructs Sam as a very

powerful and authoritative political leader who terrorises his ministers at whim. Apparently, Sam in this sense represents the power drunk political leaders who characterised the successive military regimes of Nigeria.

The foregrounded features in the transitivity patterns associated with Ikem are mainly phrasal possessive relational processes that make him owner of militant and crusading editorials. In addition, Ikem is Actor in creative material processes in which the Goal participant is an editorial or a news story. These transitivity patterns circumscribe the political activism of Ikem around the *Gazette*. Ikem is a stereotype of those vociferous journalists and/or creative writers such as Dele Giwa who, through the media, vehemently oppose bad governance and the corrupt display of power in post-independence African nation states.

Beatrice enters into complex power relations with the other characters. Although she is the participant things are always done to in material processes that relate to intimate sexual activity, her actions potently affect other characters, including no less a person than Sam, the embodiment of authority and power. She acts to restrain the rampant display of the monstrous power exhibited by Sam (Reddy, 1994; Erritouni, 2006). Being often cast in transitive material processes and verbal processes, Beatrice is presented as more powerful than the other two female characters, Elewa and Agatha, in her interaction with each of them. In short, as Alden (1991) notes, she is a stereotype of the modern intellectual African woman.

Elewa stands for those uneducated citizens who are entangled with the elite in modern African nation-states, unable to comprehend their discourse and live their 'refined' ways. This observation is revealed by the fact that she

is often cast in emotive processes that projects her as helpless and behavioural processes that reflect her cognitive limitation, whenever she is with the elite, namely, Ikem, Chris, Beatrice, and also Mad Medico. Agatha also represents those ordinary and mostly uneducated citizens who by virtue of their low social status are confined to their job, virtually taking no part in the public life of their country, except for their association with social or religious institutions that give them solace. This aspect of her character is shown by the fact that the processes and situations in which she is cast are attended by the kitchen as a locative circumstantial element.

These five characters together create a world that serves as a background from which Chris emerges to foreground Achebe's message. The transitivity patterns associated with Chris in key passages that narrate his interaction with the forces of dictatorship, namely, Sam and his security agents, initially portray him as a helpless and ineffectual victim of power and circumstances. At this stage of his characterisation, the processes in which he is inscribed are generally characterised by meronymic agency, self-directed material processes, and verbal processes that for instance show an asymmetrical relationship between him and Sam and/or the military officer at the Three Cowrie Bridge. Thus, Chris is not up to the task of redeeming the ever deteriorating Kangan society from bad governance and oppression.

Towards the end of the novel and just before his murder, however, he is transformed into a very active character whose subversive intervention saved Adama, a student nurse, from sexual abuse by a police sergeant. Here, the material and verbal processes in which Chris is inscribed are imbued with force and power.

Through Chris, Achebe challenges the enlightened but apathetic citizens to rise up and struggle to redeem their nation from corruption and bad governance. Achebe seems to be thus suggesting a transformation in the attitude of the elite to power abuse as the solution to Nigeria's problem, the kind of transformation demonstrated by Chris. It is, however, arguable that Achebe should limit such a national call to only the elite in society. It is also not clear what nature the kind of struggle he proposes should take; whether through Ikem's verbal militancy or Chris subversive behaviour, both of which lead to the total destruction of the struggler. This dilemma appears to be deliberate (Asemrasah, 2006); for Achebe says through Ikem: "writers don't give prescriptions ... they give headaches!" (*Anthills*, p. 161).

The second key finding is that point of view (first person point of view, third person omniscient point of view, etc) influences the transitivity patterns associated with a character. First, it affects the frequency occurrence of mental processes and its associated participant roles with a character. Non-narrator characters in the first person point of view are less associated with mental processes and less frequently occur as Senser in these processes; a situation which projects I-narrators as more reflective than non-narrator characters. Also, I-narrators are cast in both narrative and metanarrative processes, and the latter are very often realised by cognitive and verbal processes. The implication is that these two processes will occur more with characters when they are narrators in the first person point of view than in other situations.

In relation to the above, it has also been demonstrated that other factors such as the attitude of a narrator towards a character, the situations and circumstances in which a character is cast, and the thematic concern of the

novel also complement point of view in determining the transitivity choices that are associated with a character. For instance, as a non-narrator character, Ikem is cast differently in Chris's and Beatrice's narratives. In Chris's narrative, he is cast most often in verbal processes, which projects him as more of a character of words and than of action. In Beatrice's narrative, however, he is most frequent in material processes, which emphasises him as an active character. This difference may be accounted for by the different dispositions of the narrators towards Ikem. Again, the variation in the processes associated with Chris in the Three Cowrie Bridge episode and the Great North Road episode plays out the transformation in his character and foregrounds the theme of struggle. However, all the three characters are most frequently assigned agency in processes irrespective of point of view.

Conclusions

The following conclusions may be drawn from the findings of the study. First, the study confirms that the choice of linguistic forms in a literary work is motivated (Halliday, 1971; Simpson, 2004). There are often several ways in which a writer can use the resources of a language to express the same experience or event in a text. In the creative process, literary writers either consciously or unconsciously choose certain linguistic items over others to represent an experience or event for stylistic effects. This study demonstrates that Achebe foregrounds particular transitivity patterns with particular characters for thematic effects.

Second, the study confirms that the language of a literary text is normally invested with ideologies that will help achieve the desired effect of

the writer. That is to say, a literary text is “ideologically constituted to make certain kinds of statements or transport meanings of particular social, cultural and political value” (Syal, 1994, p. 6). The meaning that a text projects will, therefore, always have an ideological orientation, which depends on the social, cultural and historical framework within which the text is produced.

Finally, the study supports the view that the choice of discursive features in a particular text could be relatively constrained by pragmatic factors. The selection of linguistic elements in any discourse to a large extent depends on the setting, the participants in the discourse, the nature and mode of interaction, the speaker/writer’s attitude to both the listener/reader and the topic (Gee, 1999). The study shows that the processes and participant roles associated with characters are to a considerable extent influenced by point of view, the situation and circumstances in which a character is cast, and the attitude of the narrator towards the character.

Implications of the Study

The research findings and the conclusions established above have implications for Systemic Functional Linguistic (SFL) theory, stylistic studies on transitivity, narratology and the critical perspectives on Achebe’s *Anthills*. First, the study confirms SFL’s claim that language users make systematic choices from the systemic organisation of language to realise preferred meanings (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004). What this study has done in this direction is to illustrate how Achebe has constructed his vision of a post-colonial African nation-state through the systematic choices he makes in the transitivity system.

Again, the study has shown that the choice of certain linguistic items in a text could be influenced by other factors such as the pragmatic variables of context of situation, narrator's attitude, and point of view. Thus, by blending points of view and for that matter presenting character through the lens of different narrators, Achebe appears to exploit these pragmatic variables for stylistic effects. He presents readers with alternative ways of viewing the principal characters he creates, sympathising with them in certain instances and being critical of them at other times.

The study also has implications for stylistic studies on transitivity. Since Halliday (1971), many stylisticians have used transitivity to explore characterisation (e.g. Kennedy, 1982; Simpson & Montgomery, 1995; Ji & Shen, 2004, 2005), power relations in texts (Burton, 1982), and the pragmatic organisation of narrative discourse (e.g. Adika & Denkabe, 1997). While some of these studies (e.g. Burton, 1982; Rodrigues, 2008) have taken point of view and context of situation for granted, the present study has demonstrated that point of view and also as well as narrator's attitude could influence the transitivity patterns in which a character is inscribed. Thus, this study, by focusing on a more traditional perspective of point of view than what has been explored by Simpson (1993, 2004) and Breem (2005), contributes to our understanding of the interplay between point of view and linguistic choices in a literary work.

In addition, to the best of my knowledge, no study has explored how the circumstantial elements of clause and the use of ideational metaphor could impact on the presentation of a character. Simpson (2004) even observes that circumstances are not of much significance in stylistic analysis. This study has

demonstrated that both circumstances and ideational metaphor function together to cast, for instance, Sam as a very authoritative and powerful character. Thus, the study has shown that exploratory research on transitivity can reveal several of its potentials beyond those already established by previous studies.

Also, unlike previous studies, which have mainly focused on single characters in key passages in a text, the present study has shown how the transitivity patterns systematically associated with characters in a narrative conflate to realise the theme of the narrative and/or the writer's ideological meaning. This analysis was done by adopting an exploratory approach, thereby heightening the potential of transitivity as an objective framework for stylistic analysis. This approach could be extended to other texts.

Further, the study has implications for explorations in narratology, particularly on narrative mood and point of view. The findings of this study reveal that the linguistic patterning of a text interacts with narrator's attitude and point of view. It also shows particular processes that realise particular functions of the narrator in the first person point of view. Studies in narratology may further explore what linguistic choices realise Gennete's (1980) four metanarrative functions of the narrator.

Another implication of the study is the contribution it makes to the scholarship on Achebe's *Anthills*. Many critics have explored the socio-political implications and ideologies invested in *Anthills*. However, the discussions of these studies are mainly focused on Ikem's activism. While these studies briefly talk about Chris, they do not recognise the significant role he plays in projecting Achebe's thematic concern. Reddy (1994) sees his death

together with that of Ikem as functioning to appease an embittered history while Brown (1991) sees it as suggesting Achebe's proposal of an 'enlightened dictatorship' to counter the corruption of power in African politics, a situation he notes contradicts Achebe's attack on the dictatorial system of governance. Through a systematic analysis of the transitivity patterns associated with Chris and relating this to both the textual and extratextual contexts of the novel, the present study demonstrates that Chris is Achebe's principal focus in the novel. Chris dramatises the resigned attitude of the elite and through him Achebe calls for a transformation that will eject oppression and the corrupt and monstrous display of power from society.

Finally, many studies have observed that *Anthills* is characterised by so-called contradictions. Previous studies have also noted the positive presentation of the female gender in the novel, as represented by Beatrice. However, to the best of my knowledge, no study has noted the complexity of power relations between and among the female and male genders. This study has demonstrated that while Beatrice is a powerful participant in her interaction with Elewa and Agatha as well as with male characters, including Sam; she is very often the one things are done to in intimate sexual contacts. This situation is arguably a reflection of the social complexity of post-independence Africa.

Recommendations for Future Research

This study investigated what particular foregrounded transitivity patterns in *Anthills* reveal about both characters and the ideological concern of the novel. Although these foregrounded patterns have been effectively used to

interpret the novel, it is doubtful if other readers will be able to identify them as foregrounded or as having the same implications as they have been assigned in this study. Further research should employ experimental techniques as those developed by van Peer (1986) to find out whether certain key passages marked in this study as foregrounded would elicit similar interpretations from readers. Alternatively, Simpson and Montgomery's (1995) test on transitivity profile could be adopted. The findings of such studies will inform the objectivity of stylistic analysis.

In addition, due to time and space constraints, the scope of the study, as far as SFL is concerned, was limited to the transitivity system. However, in the course of the analysis, it was observed that other SFL frameworks can be used to address some thematic and stylistic concerns of the novel. For instance, the appraisal theory can be used to explore how Chris, Ikem and Sam are constructed across points of view. The affiliation theory can also be used to examine the thematic value the polarisation of discourses and social group identity in the novel.

Finally, it has been observed in this study that the primary determinant of metanarrative functions performed by the narrator-characters is the use of the present tense. However, this phenomenon is not readily accessible in the narratives of Chris and Ikem. This is because much of the processes that realise what Genette (1980) calls the narrative function in the narratives of Chris and Ikem are also realised in the present tense. This variation in tense among Chris and Ikem, on the one hand, and Beatrice and the omniscient narrator, on the other hand, appears to have an implication for the

development of the plot of the novel. Therefore, future research should consider tense and narrativity in the novel.

Summary of Chapter

In this concluding chapter, the aims, methods and findings of the study have been summarised. Based on the findings, conclusions have been made in relation to the research questions and assumptions of the study, and implications have been drawn for previous and further research. The chapter concluded with recommendations for future research, which are mainly based on some limitations of and insights drawn from the study.

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