

Critical Discourse Analysis of Females' Language in Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*

BY

Barnabé Katsuva Ngitsi¹, Jacques Kambere Mukule², Joachim Paluku Vitsule³, and Nixon Katsuva Kayisavira⁴

¹Department of English and African Culture, ISP-Muhangi à Butembo, DRC

²Department of English and African Culture, ISTA-Goma, DRC

³Department of English and African Culture, ISP-Kirumba, DRC

⁴Department of English and African Culture, ISP-Muhangi à Butembo



Article History

Received: 13/10/2023

Accepted: 24/10/2023

Published: 26/10/2023

Corresponding author:

Barnabé Katsuva Ngitsi

Abstract

This study addresses the issue related to gender discourse as displayed in Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*. Through Critical Discourse Analysis and sociolinguistics methods, the findings of this study reveal that Achebe's craftsmanship of the language deposited in female characters is a nuanced portrayal that reflects the complexity of gender dynamics within the society of the novel. More importantly, the study explores linguistic features, socio-cultural contexts and speech acts put in the mouths of females with a focus on how Achebe highlights and values the role of women in Igbo tribe in particular and African society in general. Therefore, by employing the aforementioned methods, it is truly worthwhile to assert with modesty that Achebe's inclusion of women's voices, perspectives and experiences is a gateway to circumvent the challenges linked with the promotion of gender equality to acknowledge and value the role of women both in literature and society.

Keywords: Chinua Achebe, Critical Discourse Analysis, female characters, gender discourse speech acts

1. Introduction

Many works have been crafted to check whether female characters are assigned good roles or downgraded in the African writings. In this regard, some works written on Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* (TFA, hereinafter) express the sensational, and some others the sympathy on women's portrayal. The most striking work is Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* [1], a novel set in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). However, it triggered the attention of so many critics including Achebe himself. Conrad's aforementioned work portrays both female and male characters granting them awkward characteristics: they are said to be savages living in wilderness as read in the following lines: "*She was savage and superb, wild-eyed and magnificent. [...] She stood looking at us without a stir like the wilderness itself, with an air of brooding over an inscrutable purpose* [1:326].

Likewise, some African novelists have given female characters the low position and the males are aggressive towards the former. For

instance, Elechi Amadi, does not champion the cause of women's rights in his two novels. In [2:84] women are not only depicted as prostitutes but they are also denied everything. Women cannot speak in proverbs and they must not have titles, for only titled males can speak in proverbs. There is a great deal of taboo food in the world of Amadi's women. These women are *not allowed to climb trees, eat the meat of a kite, eat the gizzard of a bird, and so on. About being concubines of males, [3:9] has given powerful and assertive language to women as follows:*

If women were prostitutes

I'd like someone to tell me

with whom the prostitute

with women?

So you see, men prostitutes

don't consider themselves prostitute.

Likewise, in his [4], women stay at home with their children whereas their husbands can go to fish illicitly and fight the enemies. Furthermore, in Francis Selormey's "The Witch", (cited in [5:150-164]), the headmaster's wife and her girls stay in the kitchen cooking when her husband is dealing with books in the dining-room. In addition to cornering wives and their girls in kitchens, Selormey assigns the old women the roles of witches and sorceresses.

Indeed, TFA has also received diverse disparate opinions and interpretations since the time it was published in 1958. Achebe himself wrote a critic entitled "Image of Africa" (1974) to castigate and criticize the European view that Africa was a mere deep heart of darkness, bare and inhabited by uncivilized creatures who were devoid of sense. In so doing, critics like Juliet Okonkwo, argue that Chinua Achebe has used plenty of muffled women in his *Things Fall Apart*. For instance, Juliet Okonkwo [6], a feminist critic has underscored the point that Achebe has denied his female characters any speeches and roles except as spectators. The striking instance is *Things Fall Apart* where, like *Heart of Darkness*, no women can hold speech either in her home or in communal ceremonies. [6:2] sustains:

Achebe's cultural universe is the one in which women are to be seen not heard, coming and going with mounds of foofoo, pots of water, market baskets, fetching Kola, being scolded and beaten before they disappear behind the huts of their compound.

The settlement of the colonial administration in Africa comes to juxtapose and deepen the matter. It is confirmed by [7:9-10] who claims: "When the British colonialists took over power in Nigeria they only recognised the male 'Obi' (to whom they offered a monthly salary); they completely ignored the female 'Omu'" In fact, the scarcity of women's speeches in *Things Fall Apart* is obvious; but it might be justified by the fact that the novel is a retort to Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*. Unlike Conrad's universe that is populated by senseless black characters, Achebe's world has at least women who can weep and enjoy their husband's activities such as the wrestling match. There is no doubt that Achebe has not only given women roles but he has also given them sense. Surely, in Achebe's stories some women hold important responsibilities, apart from caretaking, cooking, for they attend traditional rites and rituals.

This work is triggered by questions as why the she-goats and hens should be used for the ceremonies of sacrifice rather than male animals. But did Achebe suppress femininity of his characters or did he, indeed, only empower them?

Clearly, it can be assumed that the illocutionary functions associated with male characters' flouting of polite principles are competitive and conflictive; and the females have struggled in order to surmount the tyranny of males. Therefore, as a reaction to [6] and other critics' claims about femininity, this paper purports to identify and analyse Achebe's use of females in his aforementioned celebrated novel in order to check if, in reality, he empowered or downgrade them.

2. Methodology

The present analysis of language in the speaking style of Achebe's female characters embodies methodologies of sociolinguistics and discourse analysis. Foremost and not the least, the study is qualitative paradigm that includes various approaches to discourse analysis together with the focus on Hymes' ethnographic approach. This approach puts much stress on settings, contexts, and social conventions as components of discourse analysis ([8]; [9]; and [10]).

The historical context of interaction that is incorporated in critical discourse analysis (CDA) is of paramount importance in this analysis, as well. This discourse-historical method (DH) has been set forth and discussed in ([11]; [12]). This approach is also worth applying in discourse, for it is a requirement for the content of discourse analysis to be confronted with all relevant historical facts and events ([12:op. cit.] quoted in [13:4]. As far as the CDA is concerned, [11:9] hold:

CD A researchers are interested in the way discourse (re)produce social domination, that is, the power abuse of one group over others, and how discriminated groups may discriminated resist such abuses.

Furthermore, the conversational analysis (CA) is a method of linguistic discourse analysis. It is relevant herein although some speech act theorists such as Austin (1962) and Searle (1975) have strongly debated against its applicability to literary discourse analysis. In this regard, some other linguistic methods such as Structuralism and Functionalism are used. The former derives literary meaning from abstract description of intertextual structures whose "narrative could be understood as interaction of semiotic levels by discovering the operations of transfer from deep structures to surface structures" ([13:5]). The latter assumes that language has a range of functions, including referential, stylistic, and social functions.

Alsoraihi ([14]) quoted in [15:2] assert that discourse analysis is worth applying, for it provides learners with new skills and strengthen these skills in language interpretation within their socio-cultural context. Furthermore, as the teacher's role is of a guide and facilitator, discourse analysis is useful in the teaching process since teachers can develop their teaching process by looking further at the language used inside and outside the classroom, such as students' online and informal interactions.

In nutshell, with regard to what has been said above, [16:17] argues that Discourse Analysis Approach is worth applying in an EFL classroom context for the following reasons:

- It is language-focused, i.e. it deals with stylistics and speech acts.
- It is text-centered focusing on structure, texture, and aesthetic.
- It is eclectic, i.e. it involves many literary approaches such as Formalism/New Criticism, Structuralism, and Functionalism.

3. Results and Discussion

The scarcity of women's speeches in [17]) is obvious and it is because [17] is a retort to [1]. Unlike Conrad's universe which is populated by senseless black characters, Achebe's world has at least women who can weep and enjoy their husband's activities such as the wrestling match. Indeed, Achebe has not only given women roles but he has also given them sense. Here below are the females' discourses and attitudes through the following utterances recorded from the novel:

- (1) 'Ezinma'
- (2) 'Onwumbiko'
- (3) 'Onvuna'
- (4) 'Ozoemena'
- (5) 'You have not eaten for two days' [...] 'so you must finish this' [17:44]
- (6) 'I shall wait here too [17:76]
- (7) 'It's enough Okonkwo.'
- (8) Silence
- (9) Weeping
- (10) Murmur
- (11) - Okonkwo: "Sit like a woman!"

- Ezinma brought her two legs together and stretched them in front of her [17:32].

As it can be remarked, of the twelve utterances or speech situations above, some of them (2), (3), (8), and (9) seem to express powerless speeches, at the surface level. In order to decipher deep meaning [18], quoted in [19:136], argues that the deep structure contains a sentence that does not appear in the surface structure, and it is up to the reader to perceive the missing item(s). For instance, in (8) and (9) the missing items might be the subjects and the verbs.

- (1) **Ezinma** → Eze-in-ma

Eze/Ozo, in Igbo language, means "elder or leader"

in: preposition of place

ma: shortening of "mama", referring to a woman past middle age

Interpretation. This is a girl's name given by Ekwefi, her mother. In fact, through this name, Ekwefi attempts to show her resentment about her husband, an aggressive man. Clearly, through the name Ekwefi assertively says: "there is a leader in mama" (my literal translation), i.e. "women are also able to rule"(non-literal translation).

- (2) (a) "**Onwumbiko**", that means, *Death I implore you.*
- (b) "**Onvuna**", that is to say, *Death may please himself.*
- (c) "**Ozoemena**", i.e. *may it happen again.*

Interpretation. As it can be remarked, the vowel sound "O" foregrounds the three items, the names given to Ekwefi's female children as they were born after many who passed away. Indeed, Hamon is quoted in [20:68] arguing that names can parallel character-traits through visual way as when the letter "O" is associated with a round and fat character. In addition, the letter "I" typifies a tall thin character. Like Okonkwo's name, profuse letter "O" implies powerful language on the part of Ekwefi who has

named after the children. Indeed, in "Okonkwo" we find three "O's" whereas in the aforesaid names we have respectively two, one, and two which also imply advancement on the part of females.

However, from the utterance (a), one notices that Okonkwo's wife, the addresser has used an assertive whose addressee is Death. It does not receive the attention it deserves because of the triviality stereotype it embeds. As Zimmerman [13:45] remarks, women's speech is stereotypically regarded as trivial; and it is for this reason that Death, the most powerful creature can never listen to women's imploration in (a). Besides, Ekwefi's powerless and caressive speech is implied through the verb "implore", a sign of politeness and meekness towards Death, a criminal character. Indeed, Ekwefi might have mastered the males' lessons that urge females to be silent in front of males as castigated by [21:47-8] who says:

If a little girl 'talks rough' like a boy, she will normally be ostracized, scolded, or made fun of... If she refuses to talk like a lady, she is ridiculed and subjected to criticism as unfeminine

As noticed above, Achebe might have given a weak language to females to show their eagerness to fight their counterpart males' vices. This is a step forward for women's liberation. The criminalization of males, i.e. Death is pursued in the form of "Wordplay" in (c) through the name of "Ozoemena". Debating on "Wordplay strategy", [22:24] makes it explicit: "*playing on names and distorting names thus has to be seen as denying and threatening the identity of a specific person.*" Thus, playing on the above name and its morphological parallel character-trait, Rimmon-Kenan [20:68] reveals that it comprises two main elements which are worth analyzing: "Ozo" and "men". Ozo is an Igbo word that means a man of titles or ranks (See A Glossary of Ibo words and Phrases, [17: 150].

In this regard, by naming her child Ozoemena, Ekwefi depicts the power of Death and Okonkwo, the evildoer types in her society. As they boast to be Ozo men or men of high ranks or powerful men, they can do whatever act they like such as killing other people. However, Ekwefi has to show not only her resignation towards these monsters but also her polite refusal of their meaningless titles. Therefore, she utters (b) and (c): "*May it happens again*"; "*Death may please himself*". But we wonder if such a monster can accept the earnest request of the victimized being.

Talmy in [23:111-2] holds that deontic modal (must, should, may, can) meanings are metaphorical extensions of force-dynamical concepts. So the use of "may" indicates that the antagonist, Ekwefi introduces no force opposing the agonist (Death/men) at all. In other words, the social authority of females does not oppose desire of males to go on subjugating females in Achebe's community. [24:31] comments:

The novel continues with a brief discussion of this continued abuse later when Okonkwo threatens Ekwefi with a gun after hearing her murmur under her breath. Yet, the next day, the New Yam Festival continues without a public outcry for this battered woman.

As a result to Ekwefi's meekness, Death is going to devour her children one after another to let her misfortune and cursed woman, since she cannot get rid of him. The modal 'may' in (ii)

and (iii) reinforces Ekwefi's weak speech as she gives ways to Death to dwell with her in her home. Thus Nuys is quoted by [23:137-8] claiming that such a performative use of modal involves the speaker's commitment to the evaluation being made.

Therefore, from the woman's (Ekwefi) trivial talk, only can we infer that male characters in her community have endorsed heavy responsibilities on her. Males think, like the Biblical Eve, Ekwefi has brought death in this community and so they cannot forgive her for that. Such an attitude of the males would be an unreasonable expectation on the part of males and imposition of unjustifiable responsibilities on females. Also, such an idea would be considered as a threat to the women's negative face which, according [25:171], is referred to the desire of every speaker that his/her actions should be unimpeded by others. Still, an idea of this sort is entirely inappropriate but it only displays a high degree of males' misconduct towards women in the dominating patriarchal community.

(d) 'You have not eaten for two days' [...] 'so you must finish this.'

Really, through these assertive, we understand that, unlike Achebe's females who fear their partners, Ezinma is different, for she is not afraid to command males. In using the deontic (expressing duty) modal "must" [23], Ezinma seems to engage in a conversation with a person who is her equal and the implicature here is that Ezinma seizes the opportunity to tell males that females are able to lead the society. Therefore, she commands her severe father as follows: "Finish this meal". Obviously, the emphasis on the deontic "must" stresses Ezinma eagerness to her father's attitudes change from the moment of utterance onwards in contrast to the past.

Arguing on the performative use of names, Sweetser, in the quotation of [26:672], states that names of gods are so powerful that they may invoke the presence of deity. So, in naming her children after Death, a harmful deity, Ekwefi might be asking Death to dwell with her in her home. In using the permissive modal 'may' Ekwefi seems to talk to a superior and mighty character, i.e. an addressee who is socially distant. However, as we have remarked above, Ekwefi's use of permissive "may" is somehow ironic, for it is intentionally inappropriate. Ekwefi who has lost too many children cannot ask Death to stay or to do what pleases him. Such speech acts of a female character is ironic, for it reveals her mockingly attitude towards Death and the males. She sides with Shakespeare who too downgrades Death through these/words: "*Death thou shalt die.*"

As far as the relation father-child is concerned, Ezinma is not polite at all. She has transgressed the standard politeness principle (Be polite). In violating the tact maxim by imposing meal to her father, Ezinma has succeeded in retaking her father's role and exerting her power over him. At the deeper level of interpretation, Ezinma implicates that women have taken up leadership through a reversal situation. So, males' use of frustration and resentment of females are empty strategies which lead the society in ruin. Adopting such an attitude is a way for women to eradicate "*the complex of the years of degeneration and self-debasement*" [27:44].

Assigning powerful speech to this small lady, Achebe might be doing an illicit parallel with the French Joan of Arc (1412-1431) who influenced all the males of her time to fight against the British domination and dominium. When Okonkwo enters Ekwefi's hut and prepares to eat the meal cooked by Ekwefi and Ezinma, he chides the child through the blatantly and harsh impositive: (11) "**Sit like a woman!**" This utterance presupposes that the little girl was sitting like a man. This act is forbidden in the novel society. However, instead of sitting like her counterpart females, Ezinma resorts to manly actions. For instance, she brought her two legs together and stretched them in front of her. One might equate the parallelism of her legs to the parallelism and equality of sex that the women are earnestly looking for.

Besides, in sitting like males, Ezinma is attempting to snatch her father's leadership. Therefore, she stretches the legs in front of her, a sign of mock politeness and submission through gender nonverbal communication as argued by [28]. As far as the white women's posture is concerned, [28] has found out that white women are often shown putting their legs together and putting their feet parallel to each other, or placing their arms close to the body. It is such a shy position that Okonkwo would like his daughter to adopt but she does not. Nonetheless, Nigerian women in particular, the Africans in general seem to perform an endless struggle for their rights as observed by [29: 233] who claims: "*Unless women empowerment and mobilization programs are carefully articulated, executed and monitored their level of participation will remain low.*"

In fact, he blatantly reproaches his daughter, which shows the extent to which he hates women. He does not want women to behave like men either. Actually, the utterance 'Sit like a woman'. Okonkwo violates once more the tact maxim by his use of a blunt imperative "sit". This syntactic use maximizes cost for the speaker because of the harsh tone with which he addresses Ezinma. In addition to breaking the tact maxim, Okonkwo also flouts the generosity maxim though his odd and brutal tone. Such an attitude urges him to minimize benefit to "self" and to maximize benefit to "other". In other terms, Okonkwo lacks generosity not only towards his only daughter, but he also downgrades the female community because he makes males' interests and power prevail on the detriment of females'.

Besides, Ekwefi's meekness and politeness towards Death sound insincere in that they are incompatible with the context of sorrow in which the woman lives. She only masks her disbelief in Death because she is subdued by him. Such a behaviour is referred to by [30:208] as a mere mock-politeness, i.e. the speaker seems to be polite whereas he/she is not.

(e) Okwonko: Don't be foolish /.../ I thought you were going into the shrine with Chielo. Go home and sleep [...] I shall wait here. Ekwefi: I shall wait here too [17:76]

Okonkwo is the representative of male characters together with their evil deeds towards females and children. His personality is underpinned by the imperatives "go" and "sleep" which denote the males' fear of women's progress. Additionally to this fear, Okonkwo, a strong sexist willingly breaks the tact maxim through

his harsh and rude language. This is an attempt to prevail his masculinity since he is afraid of being weak. Clearly, masculinity is expressed through males' duties, for example, making children, building huts, cultivating, and so forth.

Nevertheless, Ekwefi's utterances are foregrounded in parallelism and repetition. For example, to Okonkwo's assertive "I shall wait here", Ekwefi replies by repeating exactly her husband's utterances furthering the utterance "too". This connotes the advancement in the process of women's liberation. Truly, from Ekwefi's emphatic retort through that repetition, she also demonstrates her supremacy over her husband. Her language is simple but direct and powerful to undermine the male's assumption that a woman should keep silent in all circumstances. Thus it is noticed once again that Ekwefi catches her husband at the bend of the competition line. The researchers think it is the last straw for him to play monkey tricks to challenge women.

Furthermore, Ekwefi's only daughter Ezinma has also proven to be more assertive than her elders through a powerful speech. For example, it is said by the narrator that "Ezinma, unlike most children, called her mother by her name" [17:29]. In so doing, she (Ezinma) deliberately breaks the already established rules; and she attempts to live independently from the males' principles.

Consequently, all the females resort to revolting actions. In exempli gratia, when Okwonko beats his wife, the women in the village make a mob against him. They utter (7) "It's enough Okonkwo." Through this powerful speech of females, one realizes that they have moved from passivity to rebellion; from silence to retorts. This rebellious nature of Achebe's women is also noticed in the utterance of their husband's name, a taboo in Igbo model of feminine verb behavior, consisting in silence, for "silence was synonymous of obedience", (Coates quoted in [13:53]). Briefly, women express the paradox of females' silence towards their subjugation by their counterpart males which implicates mistrust.

In addition to women's disobedience, Okonkwo's wives seek to be his equals. Maybe, they even want to exert authority over him. Clearly, this attitude shows that they would utter the French pronoun "tu" instead of "vous", a sign of disrespect between the superior and the subordinate. [31:97] puts it:

A superior (manager, aristocrat, judge, teacher, etc.) may control power over subordinate by using *tu* or first name while the person of lower status may reply with *vous*, or the title and last name.

However, those who do not join the mob hide their dissatisfaction behind "weeping" and "murmurings". As the males act like monsters, some of Okonkwo's wives are cowards. They are afraid to be scolded and beaten in front of their children. Therefore, they keep silent and when beaten, they run behind the hut weeping or murmuring. Thus, they perform the Formality Principle (*keep aloof*) [21:88].

Another powerful reaction of women in Achebe's society is revealed through their earnest decision to join Christianity. Unfortunately, they meet in the Christian Church males who embody the same attitudes as their counterpart males in the traditional religion. These males emphasize the word of [32] to the

Corinthians saying: "Let your women keep silent in the churches, for they are not permitted to speak; but they are to be submissive, as the law also says". However, in "Marriage is a Private Affair", Achebe has created a woman with strong and manly characteristics. Nene, an educated lady and a teacher in Lagos schools is not afraid to tell the truth to her husband and her father-in-law. In the struggle between Okeke, her husband's father, Nene uses words full of wisdom and probity to convince her father-in-law to accept her and their two sons despite her being outsider from the Igbo tribe. Besides, she is a teacher, a duty that Igbo women are forbidden to do [33].

Moreover, Achebe has put powerful words in the narrator's mouth as displayed in both [17:94] and [27:98] where narrators mutter: "*Mother is Supreme*". This is paralleled with the utterance: "*Chukwu is Supreme*" [19:127]. Chukwu, the Supreme God, as He is called in the novel's society (Umuofia), is the all-giver and the all knower. Indeed, like Chukwu, Mother gives life, i.e. she is not only the children bearer but she is also an educator and protector at the child's early age... Doing so, Achebe might be struggling against the traditional belief that puts women on the lowest step of the social ladder in Igbo community, unlike Ayi Kwei Armah who portrays badly in his *The Beautiful (sic) Ones Are Not Yet Born* (1968). Here female characters, as [34] argues, are insulted through an obscene language which does deserve to be uttered openly in public places even in novel societies. [35: 4] also deploras such awkward beliefs where women have to undergo the atrocities of men's arrogance: "... a woman is compelled to drink water used in washing the corpse of her husband all in the bid to prove her innocence that she has no hand in his death..." However, Achebe as a feminist writer denounces the ills done to females and speaks for their liberation.

4. Conclusion

The present study has attempted to tackle the issue of women's discourses in Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* in order to disagree with the feminist critics who have said that Achebe ill-treated his female characters. It has been proven that in Achebe's stories some women not only hold important responsibilities, apart from caretaking, cooking, but they also attend traditional rites and rituals and hold powerful speeches. For instance, *Things Fall Apart* profuse with women deities whereas the white missionaries have not given such good positions to women rather than bearing Children. [36:196] holds: "*While male Africans could be trained to lead Christians and heathen natives, native women were supposed to bear children and raise them in a fit manner for these leaders*".

In *Things Fall Apart*, female characters are empowered and granted duties and rights which were ever before reserved for males. These females, like the Banande (Kinande, J 42 in Guthrie classification) women, are granted important roles including the education of children and husbands being their first babes [37]. In addition to attending important ceremonies, Achebe's female characters can name after their children. In this respect, Okonkwo's wives can seize this opportunity to mockingly look at her husband's feelings and thoughts. In so doing, they resort to evil behaviour in profaning Okonkwo's obi, the estate of males by

bringing in their lovers for sex intercourse. This is a sign of scorn and disrespect on the part of females. The “Obi”, as [38:118] holds, is the sacred hut where men sit to discuss important affair of the Igbo tribe. Hence, no woman care dare sit there. Besides, Okonkwo has named his grandson Obi to magnify him or give him more reverence than female characters in *No Longer at Ease* (1968).

Overall, let us concur with Achebe and [39:28] that females should be provided different opportunities such as jobs and training for unemployed women to reduce their burden related to unemployment. In addition, they should be empowered by giving them equal chance, equal education, and equal pay in order for them to enjoy the fruit of parity. In this regard, they should be granted the chance to sit in the “obi”, i.e. the parliament and office to partake to important decision-making. Therefore, Achebe’s attempt, is a step forward not only to sensitize women to go on struggling for their rights, but it is also a way to tell them that the males have already released the chain of sex discrimination. Rwandan females have understood that they are already free from their males’ tyranny and this has enjoined them to hold today important positions. According to [40], Rwanda is the first and only country in the world where more the half of parliamentarians are female. Not only the majority of Rwandan parliamentarians are women, females also hold office of some important institutions all over the world such as the *Francophonie* and many other institutions.

Therefore, the wonder is to know why some females and feminists like Juliet Okonkwo are still crying. Perhaps their problem can be set elsewhere among females themselves. Therefore, I concur with [41] that “Wars will end when men refuse to fight”. However, I (Ngitsi) give a rather different opinion: “Wars will end when married women begin to advise their husbands not to fight.” This should be, we think, would be the core of women’s fight for them to change the world, in addition to other struggles such struggle for the rights, for parity and so forth.

As this modest study cannot claim to be dogmatic and exhaustive, further researches can be dealt with to explore females’ language in Chinua Achebe’s others stories in order to decipher the real problem of African females in particular and the feminists in general.

References

1. J. Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*, 1945.
2. E. Amadi, *The Concubine*, London: Heinemann, 1966.
3. D. Mailu, *After 4.30*, Nairobi: CombBooks, 1974.
4. E. Amadi, *The Great Ponds*, Oxford: Heinemann Educational Publishers, 1969.
5. M. A. Paul Edwards *West African Narratives: An Anthology for Schools*, London and Edinburgh: Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd, 1966.
6. J. Okonkwo, *The Talented Women in African Literature*, London: African Quarterly, 1997
7. S. Tamale, “African Women Claiming their Space”. In C. Sweetman (ed.) *Women and Liberation*, 2000. <http://policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/putorder-mr-speaker-african>
8. D. Hymes, Models of the Interaction of Language and Social Life. In J. Gumperz & D. Hymes (Eds.), *Directions in Sociolinguistics: The Ethnography of Communication* (pp. 35- 71), New York: Holt, Rhinehart & Winston, 1972.
9. M. Saville-Troike, *Introduction to Second Language Acquisition*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.
10. M. McCarthy, C. Matthiessen, & D. Slade, *Discourse Analysis*. In: N. Schmitt (ed.), *An Introduction to Applied Linguistics*, pp. 55-73, New York: Arnold, 2002.
11. R. Wodak “Critical Discourse Analysis: History, Agenda, Theory, and Methodology, in R. Wodak and M. Meyer (eds.), 1-33; 1991.
12. S. Tischer et al. *Methods of Texts and Discourse Analysis*, Sage Publication, 2000.
13. Y. Zimmerman, “Female Discourse: Powerful and Powerless Sir Thomas Malory’s *Le Morte Darthur*”, A Ph.D. Thesis, Defended and Published at the University of Florida, 2005.
14. R. Wodak and M. Meyer (Eds). *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis*, London: Sage Publications, 2015.
15. M. S. Alsoraihi, “Bridging the Gap between Discourse Analysis and Language Classroom Practice”, *English Language Teaching*, 12(6), 79-88, 2019.
16. K. Ngitsi, “A Reflection on Teaching Poetic Texts to Tertiary EFL Congolese Learners through Discourse Analysis Approach: Case of Graduate Level at ISP-Muhangi à Butembo”, *Multidisciplinary Research Academic Journal (MDRAJ)*, Vol 8. Issue 1, pp 13-21, 2023.
17. T. Derin et al. “Discourse Analysis (DA) in the Context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL): A Chronological Review,” *Journal of English Language Studies*, Vol. 2, No 1, 1-8, 2020.
18. N. Chomsky, *Aspects of the Theory Syntax*, Cambridge: MIT Press, 1965.
19. C. Achebe, *Things Fall Apart*, Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers Ltd, 1958/2001.
20. S. Rimmon-Kenan, *Narrative Fiction: Contemporary Poetics*, London and New York: Methuen, 1983.
21. D. Birch, *Language, Literature and Critical Practice*, New York: Routledge, 1989.
22. R. Wodak, “Pragmatics and critical discourse analysis: A cross-disciplinary inquiry”, *Pragmatics and Cognition*, 15:1, 203-225, 2007.
23. P. Portner, *Modality*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.
24. R. Lakoff, “Language in Woman’s Place”, *Language in Society*, 2:1 pp 45-80, 1973, URL: <http://www.jstr.org/stable/4166707>
25. R. Carter and P. Simpson (Eds) *Language, Discourse, and Literature: An Introductory Reader in Discourse Stylistics*, London and New York: Unwin Hyman Ltd, 1989

26. E. Ngara, Portrayal of Women in African Literature, *Kanapipi*, Vol. 11 (3), pp. 34-40, 1989 <https://to.vow.ed.au/kanapipi/vol11/iss3/10>
27. C. Achebe, *Anthills of Savannah*, Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers Ltd, 1987.
28. N. M. Henly, "Body Politics: Power, Sex, and Nonverbal Communication, 1977 in <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals>
29. M. Chukwemeka, "Democratization and Women's Political Space in Nigeria: A Critical Appraisal", *Journal of Public Administration and Governance*, Vol. 1(1): 219-236, 2011.
30. Mbokani, K. Bulambo (2008). "A Pragmatic Analysis of the Poem 'Esprits ya Bien'", in *Cahiers du CERUKI, Nouvelle Série*, No 37, pp. 100-109.
31. R. Fowler, *Linguistic Criticism*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986.
32. "Holy Bible": The Billy Graham Training Center, Nashville: Thomas Nelson Inc., 2004
33. C. Achebe, "Marriage is a Private Affair" in *Girls at War and Other Stories*, 1973.
34. B. K. Ngitsi, "Obscenity and Vulgarity in the Language of Ayi Kwei Armah's *The Beautyful (sic) Ones Are Not Yet Born*: A Pragmatic Outlook", *Journal of Oriental and African Studies*, Vol. 26: 335-350, 2017.
35. Chux, "Scourge of Widowhood", *Action Woman*, Vol. 1, Enugu: WACOL, 2002.
36. R. B. Gaidzanwa, "Continuity and Change in Women's Shona and Ndebele writing in Zimbabwe: A Gender Analysis", in Z. Mguni, M. Furusa and R. Magosvongwe, (Eds). *African Womanhood in Zimbabwe Literature: New critical Perspectives on Women's Literature in African Languages*, Harare: College Press, 195-211, 2006.
37. T. Mbafu-Moja and K. Kayenga, "L'homme et la femme deux partis politiques : Des considérations sur la culture Yira, un des grains négro-africain", *Annales de l'ISP-Muhangi à Butembo*, Vol. 1, No 7, pp. 51-86, 2016.
38. B. K. Ngitsi, "The Great Lakes Looming Crisis as Displayed in Elechi Amadi's *The Great Ponds*: A Discourse Analysis Perspective", *International Journal of Sciences: Basic and Applied Research*, Volume 60, No 5, pp 105-123, 2021.
39. W. A. Dessie, "Women and Unemployment in Bahir Dar City, Ethiopia: Determinants and Consequences", in *American Scientific Research Journal for Engineering, Technology, and Sciences*, Volume 8, No 1, pp 14-41, 2015.
40. AFRICA GENDER EQUALITY INDEX, *Empowering African Women: An Agenda for Action*, African Development Bank Group, 2015.
41. N. Allot et al. (eds.), *The Responsibility of Intellectuals: Reflections of Chomsky and Others after 50 Years*, London: UCL Press, 2019.