

Speech and Thought Presentation in Chigozie Obioma's *An Orchestra of Minorities*

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Abstract

This study is a stylistic investigation of speech and thought presentation in Chigozie Obioma's *An Orchestra of Minorities* (2019). The study investigate how the author employs the stylistic methods of speech and thought presentation to focus on the questions of fate, destiny and the complexities of love in the novel. Ten excerpts which have narrative prominence and are regarded as valid representations of the narrative structure of the text are extracted for the study. The study adopts the stylistic methods of point of view in narrative and a corpus stylistic approach using AntConc 3.5.8 (2019) software as analytical models. This is to enable us reveal the different patterns of speech and thought presentation and how the different patterns of speech and thought are projected in the text to achieve texture and cohesion. The findings reveal that the Narrative Report of Speech Acts is the most used variant of speech presentation in the novel and it gives the author the freedom to express his artistic prowess and project the messages of the text. It also affords the author a means of cutting out unnecessary renditions of speech from minor characters by using the point of view of the character indicated through the use of verbs of perception or cognition. The study concludes that further studies on speech and thought presentation should not be isolated from point of view and should employ the use of computational analysis.

Key words: Speech, Thought, Presentation, Narrative, Corpus Stylistics, AntConc, *An Orchestra of Minorities*

Introduction

Chigozie Obioma's *An Orchestra of Minorities* (2019) explores the Igbo axiom that where one thing lies, another thing lies beside it too. In the novel, the author espouses the questions of fate and destiny through the prism of the Igbo worldview by having the "Chi", a 700 year old reincarnating spirit, chronicling the landmarks of Igbo history from the first encounter with the Europeans to the Biafra war, as a narrator. The novel is culturally hinged on the phenomenon that there is no distinction between the world of the living and the world of the dead. In the same vein, the author is said to believe that there is no distinction between the three realms of fiction: the realm of the real, of the fictional, and of the extraordinary, hence, the artistic choices of the author.

The narrative technique is unlike what we find in most works of fiction. The Chi works both as a first and third person narrator throughout the novel. The novel combines the techniques of the first person narrator which is usually a character looking back on events, but not often representing them as if they were happening for the first time. They are often said to be limited (they do not know all the facts) or unreliable (they trick the reader by withholding information or telling untruths). On the other hand, if the narrator is not a character in the fiction, he or she is usually called the third-person narrator, because reference to all the

characters in the fiction will involve the use of the third-person pronouns – he, she, it or they. The third-person narrator is said to be much more authentic and allows the strong ‘default assumption’ which most readers appear to hold, namely that, other things being equal, we should assume that the narrator and the author are the same person. At other times, the Chi functions as a second person narrator.

All of the above thrives on the premise of language, therefore, language is an enabling device which allows us to articulate the sequence of choices, decisions, responses, acts and consequences that make up our lives. We all read literary texts because they are interesting, enjoyable and / or moving. This reading pleasure, however, is only the first step in the study of literary texts. An important aspect of the study of literature is that we must struggle to explain a very difficult thing, namely, how it is that we come to understand literary works.

This study examines how language as used in literary text acts as the basis for our understanding and responses when we read. Understanding involves an important contribution to the reader who brings along background knowledge and processes for inferring meaning. More extensively, the text plays an essential part in prompting and guiding interpretative efforts. In literary studies, criticisms have been offered to comment, criticize or appreciate a text. Readers have choices as to which critical approach best suits their interests or needs, depending on what genre or certain issues the work brings.

Chigozie Obioma is best known for his works *The Fishermen* (2015) and *An Orchestra of Minorities* (2019) amongst others. With numerous stellar reviews and awards won, he certainly is one author who cannot be overlooked. His blend of life experiences infused in his rich Igbo culture reaffirms his fecundity as a literary scholar and a story teller. *An Orchestra of Minorities* (2019) is a relatively new fiction. This explains why it has not been the centre of a number of research studies. Therefore, it appears that not much work has been done in *An Orchestra of Minorities*. Thus, this study intends to fill that gap.

In the light of the above, this research focuses on speech and thought presentation in *An Orchestra of Minorities* (2019) by means of the linguistic theory, Speech and Thought Presentation proposed by Leech and Short (2007). Therefore, this study divulges speech and thought presentation and identifies either the characters responsible for representing their speech and thought or the narrator whose speech and thought gets to be represented in the text.

Point of View in Narrative

Point of view is the perspective from which a story is written. It is important in narratives in considering who speaks and who sees when analysing the perspective from which a story is told (Gibbons & Whiteley, 2018). Abbott (2002) defines narrative as the representation of an event or a series of events. "Event" is the key word here, though some people prefer the word "action." Without an event or an action, you may have a "description," an "exposition," an "argument," a "lyric," some combination of these or something else altogether, but you won't have a narrative (Abbott, 2001, p.12). Therefore, a narrative is a story that includes characters, events, and what the characters say and do whether told in verse or prose. Some literary forms are explicit narratives told by the narrator, like the short stories and novels in a prose and the epic and romance in a verse (Abrams & Harpham, 2009). Hence, anything narrated by the narrator can be defined as a narrative. Narration can take place in the first person pronouns

using “I” and “me”, second person pronoun using “you” or the third person pronouns “he”, “she”, “him” or “her” (Zebari & Muhammadzadeh, 2021).

As the topic implies, the study focuses on the analysis of speech and thought presentation. However, without point of view, the presentation of speech and thought cannot be accurately studied. Point of view in narrative is a focal angle of seeing, hearing, smelling and sensing the story’s settings, characters and events (Al-Alami, 2019). It is what the character or narrator telling the story can see (his or her perspective). The viewpoint will give the narrator a partial or whole view of events as they happen. The author chooses “who” is to tell the story determining the point of view. Researchers within the field of language asserts that there are three main types of narrator: first person, second person and third person (Al-Alami, 2019). In a narrative, point of view is the narrator’s position in the description of characters and events. It determines the amount of information the narrator shares with the reader. It can also influence the degree to which the reader can identify with the protagonist (Al-Alami, 2016). Simpson (2010) asserts that point of view embraces the angle of narrating in fiction. Since point of view is related to general discourse in the novel, therefore, it can be assumed that the linguistic choices are controlled by the author. Short (2013) states the linguistic indicators of point of view which include schema-oriented language which claims that viewpoint can be controlled by choosing to describe only what can be seen from a particular position. The value-laden expressions indicates viewpoint by choosing what to describe. Novelists can also indicate by how it is described, particularly through expressions which are evaluative in nature. Given and new information is what linguists use to make a distinction between what they call given and new information, in terms of how information is ‘packaged’ by speakers – if you want to refer to something which is not already known by your addressee, you will typically use the indefinite reference, whereas, if what you want to refer to is already known to your addressee, you will use definite reference, in other words, the addressee’s viewpoint is taken into account.

Linguistic Approach

The linguistic approach adopted for this study is Stylistics. Stylistics has been defined as a sub-discipline of applied linguistics that is concerned with the systematic analysis of style in language and how it can vary according to factors such as genre, context, historical period and author (Jefferies & McIntyre, 2010). In an investigation carried out by Tariq (2018) establishes that stylistics studies the language of literature in all its manifestation and is one of the moderate approaches to literature. Consequently, stylistics can simply be defined as the study of style. In stylistic study, different definitions of the term have been given. Crystal and Davy (1969) in defining style as the effectiveness of mode of expression gave four senses which we can use to distinguish the term “style” (Maledo, 2021). First, it refers to the language habit of an individual. An earlier definition of this was given by Buffon (1753) who says “style is the man”, meaning that one’s chosen style reflects one’s essential characteristics. Next, it was stated that style “refers to some or all of the language habits shared by a group of people at one time or over a period of time”. The emphasis here is on period style. Third, style is seen as “effectiveness of mode of expression”. Lastly, style was defined in the evaluative sense, thus: good style, bad style, beautiful, old, odd, or modern style. The pivotal point of these definitions is the fact that style has to do with variation in language use (Maledo, 2021). The view of

Enkvist (1971) summarizes all that has been said which is the fact that style is “a systematic variation in language use” which Wales (1989) further agrees to that style can be seen as variation in language use whether literary or non-literary.

Comprehension, to a large extent, is the basis on which works can be fully appreciated. Tuncer (2017) investigates this premise. This study investigates the effect of speech and thought presentation on the comprehension and appreciation of English prose fiction by Turkish students. A total of 42 students from the English Language Teaching Department of Çukurova University participated and submitted a questionnaire about their reading habits and self-image in terms of being good readers of Turkish and English literature. Additionally, the participants were presented three different tasks for six extracts (taken from five novels and one short story) in which their comprehension and appreciation were probed in relation to point of view and speech and thought presentation modes. The first task focused on the general understanding of the extract and its point of view; the second task asked the participants to identify whose point of view (perspective) was expressed in each sentence (27 sentences for each extract). The third task was comprised of 18 questions, the locus of which was on the comprehension and appreciation of the extracts. Additionally, the researcher interviewed 30 participants in order to clarify their written answers. The data were analysed both qualitatively and quantitatively, and the results provided insights into how non-native speakers of English are affected by speech and thought presentation modes in English prose fiction. As it was presented in the review of related literature, the participants experienced difficulty in comprehending sections where FDT was presented. This shows that when speech and thought presentation modes move from the “narrator controlled” parts (e.g. NRA) to more “character-controlled” parts (e.g. FDT), readers get lost and cannot grasp what is happening, who is talking, etc. There is a significant difference in results (based on t-tests) between non-native speakers who prefer reading English fiction over those who prefer reading English non-fiction. Participants who prefer reading English fiction were more successful than those who prefer non-fiction. This study recommends that to make a generalization on non-native speakers of English, more research is necessary. Since English is a global language, proper concentration on pedagogy will help improve the speech and thought presentation of non-native speakers of English, especially for the lot who are enthusiasts of English language fiction.

From the above, it is crystal clear that there are two approaches to the analysis of literary text: the evaluative (literary) approach and the descriptive (linguistic) approach. The evaluative approach subjects the text to evaluative analysis and makes values and subjective judgment while the descriptive approach subjects literary texts to a description of the sets of linguistic features inherent in a text. This approach is objective and scientific and therefore verifiable. It is this approach that has been adopted in the study of Chigozie Obioma’s *An Orchestra of Minorities* (2019).

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study is Speech and Thought Presentation proposed by Leech and Short (2007) and the AntConc 3.5.8 software (Anthony, 2019). According to Fludernik (1993), there are a number of macro-textual and interpretative aspects of the reading process in general. They serve as distinctive markers in literary works. The use of direct speech,

for example, is usually an attempt to engage the readers to the work; it can also be supported by the use of first person pronoun ‘I’ to show the narrator’s subjectivity his characters (Isti’annah, 2018). The author’s purpose in writing literary text is one which attracts scholars to analyze literary works. In linguistic study, stylistics is used to figure out how “meaning in language comes about through the linguistic choices that the writer makes” (Jeffries & McIntyre, 2010). One of the linguistic features available in literary works is in the forms of the narrator’s style. In literary representation, a narrator’s style signifies the perspectives of point of view. A narrator chooses the subjective or objective point of view, marked by the language choice. A narrator can also have multiple perspectives on events and to draw the reader into sharing them (Verdonk, 2002). Speech presentation is realized through the following variations which includes Indirect Speech, Direct Speech, Narrative Report of Speech Acts, Free Direct Speech and Free Indirect Speech. Thought presentation takes the same form as speech presentation and they include Indirect thought, Direct Thought, Narrative Report of Thought Acts, Free Direct Thought and Free Indirect Thought. All these variations serve to account for the narrative pattern in a story and how readers get to understand the story as it relates to the themes being projected.

Methodology

The methodology adopted for this study is textual analysis. Excerpts from the novel are extracted and presented as data and they are analyzed in terms of the patterns of speech and thought and how they project the thematic preoccupation of the text. The variations in speech and thought presentation are looked into using viewpoint as the angle for proper knowledge of the characters in the text and to obtain precise results for objective and reliable interpretations. Furthermore, the AntConc 3.5.8 software (Anthony, 2019) is also used for further to obtain precise result for the sake of objectivity. In all ten excerpts were extracted from the texts for analysis before the application of the AntCone 3.5.8 software.

Data Analysis

In what follows, the excerpts are presented, followed by the analysis.

Excerpt I

OBASIDINELU— I stand before you here in the magnificent court of *Bechukwu*, in *Eluigwe*, the land of eternal, luminous light, where the perpetual song of the flute serenades the air— Like other guardian spirits, I have gone to *uwa* in many cycles of reincarnations, inhabiting a freshly created body each time— I have come in haste, soaring untrammelled like a spear through the immense tracts of the universe because my message is urgent, a matter of life and death— I stand knowing that a *Chi* is supposed to testify before you if his host is dead and his host’s soul has ascended into *Benmuo*, that liminal space crowded with spirits and discarnate beings of every hue and scale. It is only then that you request that guardian spirits come to your dwelling place, this grand celestial court, and ask you to grant the souls of our hosts safe passage into *AlandiiChie*, the habitation of the

ancestors— We make this intercession because we know that a man’s soul can return to the world in the form of an *onyeuwa*, to be reborn, only if that soul has been received in the domain of the ancestors — *Chukwu*, creator of all, I concede that I have done something out of the ordinary by coming here now to testify while my host is still alive— But I am here because the old fathers say that we bring only the blade sharp enough to cut the firewood to the forest. If a situation deserves exigent measures, then one must give it that— They say that dust lies on the ground and stars lie in the sky. They do not mix

The first incantation is narrated in the first person by the protagonist’s guardian spirit known as the *Chi*. It is indicated with the repeated use of the personal pronoun “I” which denotes the *Chi*’s point of view. His expressions are overtly value-laden because of his use of adjectives such as “magnificent”, “luminous”, “perpetual”, “luminal”, “discarnate” which allows us to create a mental picture of his location - which must be majestic with these vivid descriptions and the person or personality being referred to. The message is not so clear yet as this is the first time we are listening to this character but it seems like the information is a report of what had happened which is still not known to us. Here, it is new information which is realised with the expression, “a matter of life and death”, with the indefinite article “a” giving the semantic value to that expression. Since the readers are unsure of the subject which is being discussed and the supposed crime which the *Chi*’s host may have committed, the further they read to uncover this mystery. The speech presentation used here to give this effect is the Free Direct Speech. This variation of speech presentation allows Chinonso’s guardian spirit speak immediately without the interference of the writer or author acting as an intermediary. It can be inferred that the *Chi* sure knows why he is there, hence the assertiveness in his speech. The dashes in the sequence of the narration indicates that the readers are only getting snatches of the conversation. The lexical forms such as the reiteration of the personal pronoun “I” sounds persuasive, though it sounds like he is pleading on behalf of his host but it allows room for us to perceive that the persuasiveness is for his own benefit as well. This further reinstates that he is one with his host.

Excerpt II

To you the old fathers ascribed names and honorifics too numerous to count:
Chukwu, Egbunu, Oseburuwa, Ezeuwa, Ebubedike, Gaganaogwu,
Agujiegbe, Obasidinelu, Agbatta-Alumalu, Ijango-ijango, Okaaome,
Akwaakwuru and many more

In this excerpt, the author swiftly blends into the second person narrator with the use of the pronoun “you” which is used anaphorically to refer to “Obasidinelu”. Here, the addressee’s viewpoint is taken into account. We know for sure that there is a character who is being addressed. From an African point of view, when honorifics are used as in the above excerpt, it conveys esteem, courtesy or respect for the person or personality being addressed. These elegant variations are called social deixis in the study of style. They are expressions that refer

to the same person but with a very high esteem and respect. As a consequence, the point of view of the *Chi* is explored which shows his relationship with the personality being spoken to. The speech is still presented in the Free Direct Speech variation.

Excerpt III

CHUKWU, if one is a guardian spirit sent for the first time to inhabit a host who will come into the world in *Umuahia*, a town in the land of the great fathers, the first thing that strikes the spirit would be the immensity of the land. As the guardian spirit descends with the reincarnating body of the new host towards the land, what reveals itself to the eye astonishes. Suddenly, as if some primordial curtain has been peeled off, one is exposed to an interminable stretch of leaf green vegetation. As one draws closer to *Umuahia*, one is enticed by the elements around the land of the fathers: the hills, the thick, great forest of *Ogbuti-ukwu*, a forest as old as the first man who hunted in it. The early fathers had been told that signs of the cosmic explosion that birthed the world could be seen here and that from the beginning, when the world was partitioned into sky, water, forest and land, the *Ogbuti* forest had become a country, a country more expansive than any poem about it

The *Chi* is still the narrator in this sub-chapter. We hear his voice throughout the novel but in different narrations to create a character-character effect or author-reader effect. In this chapter, he is said to be speaking from the third person perspective. There are no third person pronouns to indicate this fact but the syntactic indicators reinforced by the choice of lexical forms such as “if one is a guardian spirit” and “as the guardian spirit descends” referring to himself as if he was not there explains his omniscience. This perspective is ideological because he goes on and on, more as a representative of a group of people, stating general mindsets or outlook of the world he inhabits. The use of spatio-temporal locations such as “Umuahia”, “Ogbuti-ukwu”, “Ogbuti” gives the readers an insight of his knowledge about the cosmology of the world which validates the length of years he has spent on earth. The narration is presented in the form of free direct thought. Here, we get to know the mind of the *Chi* and what he thinks about being a guardian spirit. This cognitive activity foregrounds the impression that the *Chi* is knowledgeable and fully immersed in his role as a guardian spirit.

Excerpt IV

Egbunu, the testimony for which I have come to your luminous court this night began at the Imo River nearly seven years ago. My host had travelled to Enugu that morning to replenish his stock, as he often did. It had rained in Enugu the previous night, and water was everywhere – trickling down from the roofs of buildings, in potholes on the roads, on the leaves of trees, dripping from orbs of spiderwebs – and a slight drizzle was on the faces and clothes of people

This excerpt begins again from the viewpoint of the *Chi* who switches to the first person narrator. Psychological sequencing is used as a linguistic indicator to recreate the perceptions of the narrator at the time the events happened. Here, we can guarantee that he is a character in the novel, though not recognised or seen by the other characters, his communications are mainly of character-character value. We can infer that he is talking to somebody who is of great personality but not seen in the novel. The addressee is recognised with the constant use of elegant variations of names which the narrator, in person of the *Chi*, calls his addressee. He withholds the information on who the addressee is but through the repetitions of the names, the author indulges the readers' minds so they do not forget that there is a personality who is being referred to. The speech is presented using the Narrative Report of Speech Acts. The use of the adjective "luminous" is value-laden as it creates a picture in the minds of the reader concerning the place since the setting is not explicitly explained.

Excerpt V

He went about the market in high spirit, his trousers rolled up over his ankles so as not to stain the hems with dirty water as he walked from shed to shed, stall to stall.

The narration takes the form of the third person narrator from the point of view of the protagonist where he is first mentioned. We know from the initial testimony that there is a "host", a person who is the main character in the novel but he does not get the luxury to tell his own story, however, his story is accurately told by his guardian spirit who inhabits his body. Invariably, the guardian spirit is one with his host but does not have control over his actions. The author uses the third person because it will accurately tell the story from an objective point of view. As a result, the author uses the third person pronoun "he" to express the omniscience of the *Chi*. It is used anaphorically to refer to "my host" previously mentioned in his incantation. This is the first time direct reference is made to the *Chi*'s host particularly about his actions. Since we are already aware of the host from his incantation, there was no need for the writer to further explain who "he" is because it is already given information and it allows the reader to immediately infer that "he" refers to the host of the narrator. The speech is presented in the Narrative Report of Speech Acts where the narrator reports actions being carried out from his point of view. This explains the use of the third person narrator. There is the author-reader discourse, the need to sustain the interest of the readers by explicitly giving an account of what built up to that moment.

Excerpt VI

The market seethed with people, as it always was even in the time of the great fathers when the market was the centre of everything. It was here that goods were exchanged, festivals were held and negotiations between villages were conducted. Throughout the land of the fathers, the shrine of Ala, the great mother, was often located close to the market. In the imagination of the fathers, the market was also the one human gathering that attracted the most

vagrant spirits – akaliogolis, amosu, tricksters and various vagabond discarnate beings. For in the earth, a spirit without a host is nothing.

The expressions such as “the great fathers”. “the market”. “the centre of everything”, “the land of the fathers”, “the shrine of Ala”, “the one human”, all with the use of the definite article “the” reveals that the narrator and the narratee have been collapsed into character-character discourse which communicates that the information being given is known to both parties involved in this conversation. We can only see the perspective of the narrator because of how the speech is presented. Third person narration is often foregrounded by the use of the past tense. Past tense expressions such as “seethed”, “was”, “were exchanged”, “festivals were held”, “were conducted” and so on are used as deictic elements to express significant historical events. As a consequence, it is confirmed that the Chi has lived for centuries. It is a series of speech acts being reported by the narrator, therefore, Narrative Report of Speech Acts comes to play. It is a more indirect form than indirect speech and it allows the narrator to remove himself from the scene so that his perspective is more objective and believable. This explains why this narration is in the third person. The third person pronoun “it” is used anaphorically to refer to “the market”- an already given information. The use of the deictic term “here” is speaker related. It tells us that the narrator has inhabited that place, so the speech acts that come after, further shows his knowledge about that world.

Excerpt VII

And so these spirits are in constant search for vessels to occupy, and insatiable in their pursuit of corporeality. They must be avoided at all costs. I once saw such a being inhabit the body of a dead dog in desperation. And it managed, by some alchemical means, to stir this carrion to life and make it amble a few steps before leaving the dog to lie dead again in the grass. It was a fearful sight. This is why it is considered ill advised for a Chi to leave the body of its host in such a place or to step far away from a host who is asleep or in an unconscious state.

The deictic element such as “these” helps the reader to see the mental state of the narrator as he speaks about other spirits, unlike him, who do not have where to inhabit. We can infer from the narration that it is a disastrous reality for the spirits and he must be lucky to have a human body to inhabit. “They” is used to refer to “the spirits” from whose perspective the narrator explains these ordeals. This narration started off from the point of view of the narrator which was done in the third person but the narrator switches to the first person which is indicated with the use of the first person pronoun “I”. As a consequence, we are guided to the fact that he is not much of a remote voice but a character who is very much in the story relating what had happened. Obioma uses this narrative effect, which is heavily foregrounded, to help the narrator navigate the presentation of speech so he is not limited in any way. Since there are still instances of reported speech, the Narrative Report of Speech Acts is implored to state accounts of what had happened.

Excerpt VIII

This is why you, Chukwu, warn us against such journeys, especially at night!
For when a foreign spirit embodies a person, it is difficult to get it out!

Deictic expressions explain space and time and how it can be mentally realised by a speaker. The deictic term “this” indicates a change in viewpoint where the narrator quickly moves from the perspective of the “spirits” to a now evaluative expression. The narration takes on the second person indicated by the use of the second person pronoun “you”. The viewpoint we see here is the addressee’s viewpoint whom has not said anything so far, but from this perspective and the use of the verb “warn”, we can infer that Chukwu disapproves of spirits leaving his or her host’s body to journey away. The speech is presented with the NRSA variation because it is still a build-up of the story.

Excerpt IX

For a moment, the seller and even the bird in his hands appeared as a shimmering illusion. The seller watched him in what seemed to be astonishment, perhaps wondering why my host had been so moved by the sight of the Chicken. The man did not know that my host was a man of instinct and passion.

We see the viewpoint of Chinonso through the use of the verb of perception “appeared”. We can ascertain from this angle that the protagonist is a real person because he relates with other characters, in this case, the seller. This shows that he has a physical presence, unlike the narrator who is a spirit. The narrator takes the viewpoint of the seller when he claims that “the seller watched him in what seemed to be astonishment, perhaps wondering why my host had been so moved by the sight of the Chicken”. This expression reveals the seller’s viewpoint which is indicated by the use of the verb of perception “wondering”. This shows how novelists manipulate viewpoints to avoid unnecessary stretch of conversations. The author presents this narration in form of a thought using the free direct thought variation. Therefore, we can say that the cognitive activity of the seller foregrounds the impression that what is presented is what the seller really thinks. It is still being narrated in the third person.

Excerpt X

Agujiegbe, how uncanny that my host had been thinking for days about a woman who’d drowned, and suddenly he found himself before another who had climbed one ledge up the rails, her body bent over as she attempted to throw herself into the river. And once he saw her, he was stirred within. He pulled the van to a halt, jumped out, and ran forward into the darkness, shouting, ‘No, no, don’t. Please, don’t! Don’t do that. Biko, eme na!’

As the story progresses, we get to see more interactions from the Chi’s host. From the thoughts he inhabits to the actions he carries out, the Chi narrates all to us. In doing so, he mostly takes on his host’s viewpoint. This reveals that, though he lives in his host and he is one with his

host, they have independent minds. As a result, he switches the viewpoints occasionally from his to that of his host. The author uses the third person narrator so he can easily switch perspectives. This is because the third person narrator is authentic and not limited. The use of the introductory reporting clause “that” reveals that a thought is being reported in all its propositional content, therefore, it is an Indirect Thought, an unspoken reaction to a previous action or thought. The verb of perception “thinking” indicates this fact. At the point where he saw a lady attempting to throw herself in the river, Obioma switches from Indirect Thought to Direct Speech. DS is often reserved for the more important and more dramatic, heart tugging information. ‘No, no, don’t. Please, don’t! Don’t do that. Biko, eme na!’ - this presentation is foregrounded because it engages the readers to the work.

Ant Conc 3.5.8 for Further Analysis

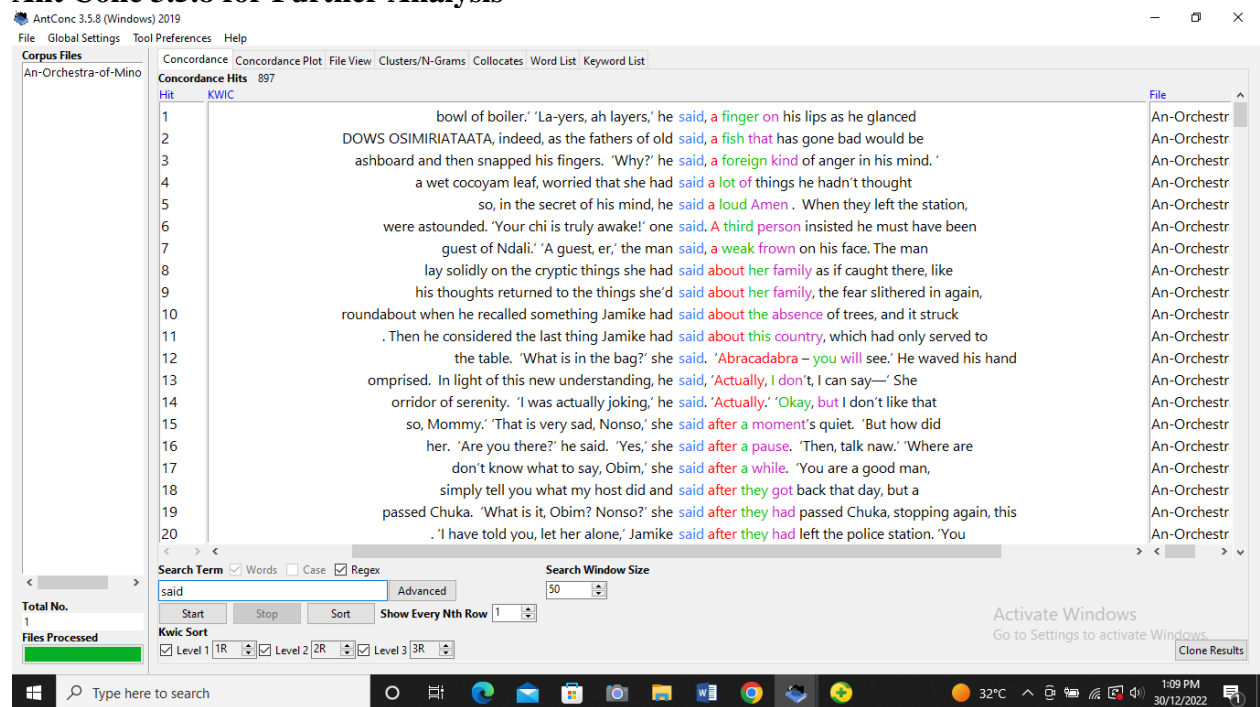


Figure 1.0 Frequency of the Verb “Said”

The word “said” was used 897 times in the novel. It is the 7th most used word in the novel. The variants of speech was mostly expressed with the word “said” which covered all the variants such as making up the reporting clause for direct and indirect speech which includes narrative report of speech acts, free direct speech and free indirect speech. This shows that there were interplays in the presentation of speech and thought which caused complexity in the point of view. The narration was in the third person because the lexical item is in its past tense.

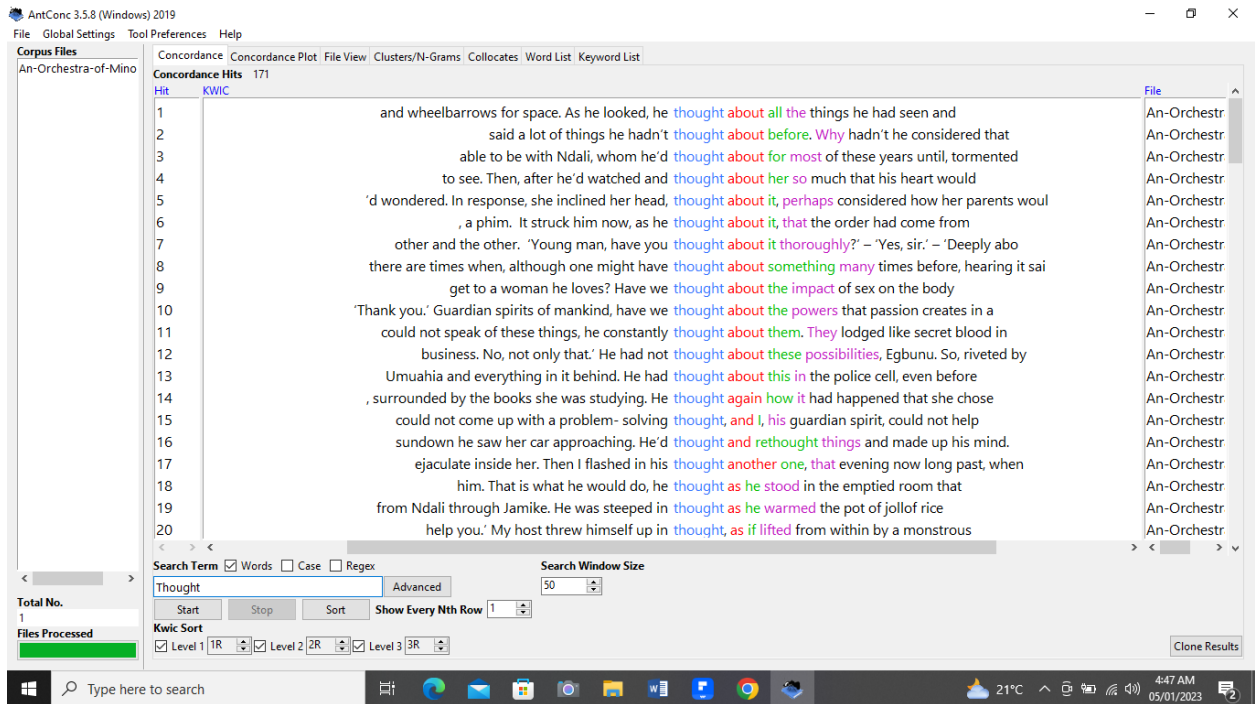


Figure 2.0 Frequency of the Verb “Thought”

The word “thought” serves as the lexical compass for thought presentation in the novel. Though, for the sake of point of view, other lexical items such as verbs of perception or cognition were used as lexical indicators. However, the word “thought” was used 171 times in the novel. This is more than the frequency of times other lexical indicators occurred. This confirms the use of thought presentation in the novel.

Discussion of Findings

From the analysis, it is clear that narration is the platform on which speech and thought presentation thrives. Narration can take place in the first person, second person and third person. However, without point of view, the presentation of speech and thought cannot be accurately studied. Point of view in narrative is the focal angle for seeing, hearing, smelling and sensing the story’s settings, characters and events. This study emphasised the almost boundless versatility of speech and thought presentation as a means of varying point of view, tone and distance. It comes from the theoretically limitless embedding process through the narrative of the Chi which was actualised in the linguistic choices of the author which includes the creative use of words to suit the context, cohesive features which involve anaphors, deixis as well as the use of parallelism and proverbial expressions for aesthetic purposes. Like a hall of mirror, each mirror capable of replicating image in another, a discourse can embody narrators within narrations, reflectors within reflections, and so on (Leech and Short, 1981). In practical terms, this means that an author has all the resources he needs to call up a multiplicity of viewpoints on the same subject matter. The discourse presentation of the plot in the novel takes the forms

of the first person narrator, the second person narrator and the third person narrator. This is inclusive of the fact that the novel explores all the points of view which gives readers a balanced perspective.

The use of AntConc (2019) for analytical purposes may seem unlikely that computational analysis can be done in linguistics but this study has shown that in cases where there is large data and speech and thought presentation has to be studied, computational analysis can be adopted to give an objective side to the study. The excerpts in the study illustrates that there is definitely interactions between speech and thought presentation and point of view. Hence, as Leech and Short (1981) puts it, they have become one of the richest and open-ended areas of interpretative significance in the novel and thus, constitute an extremely fruitful aspect of the study of style in fiction, specifically speech and thought presentation. The study further recommends that speech and thought presentation should not be studied in isolation with point of view as the interaction between these areas allows for better interpretative efforts. Also, computational analysis should be considered in further studies of speech and thought presentation.

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