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Tenor of Discourse and Modality Examination in Achebe's *Anthills of the Savannah***Dr Daniel Yokossi**

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Abstract: This study has examined the tenor of discourse and modality in two excerpts from Achebe's *Anthills of the Savannah*. The study aims at decoding the writer's subtly encoded messages through both the interrelationships established among the participants of the selected excerpts and his use of modality. To attain such objectives, the investigation uses the descriptive quantitative and qualitative methodology. The research has arrived at valuable findings. Among several others presented in the subsection entitled interpretation of findings, the study has unveiled that power among the participants of the excerpts is unequal, contact infrequent, and affective involvement low. The tenor or social role relationship played by such participants as Major Sam, Chris Oriko, and Ikem Osodi is a formal one describing a formal situation. This implies that Achebe's message in these excerpts is a serious one depicting of the real political unrest and the dominantly unmanageable discontent of Nigerians by the time he wrote these texts. The social role relationship carried out by the

salespeople and their potential customers depict an informal tenor highlighting Achebe's claim for a change in the Nigerians' mind, and indirectly in the Africans' ways of life. The overriding use of modalization over modulation in the analyzed excerpts highlights the way the writer creates a less authoritative, more suggestive tenor balancing, by this means, the power inequality inherent in the modulation.

Keywords: Contact, discourse, meaning, participants, power

1. INTRODUCTION

As a political fiction dealing with matters about political unrest in Nigeria in particular and in Africa by and large, Achebe's *Anthills of the Savannah* is not a good read from a number of perspectives. There are so many messages symbolically conveyed in the novel. For instance, the word "Anthill" in the title of the novel is symbolic. To unveil what it really stands for, one has to read between lines to discover that "Anthill" symbolizes collaboration, determination, perseverance, and struggle. Several other symbolism and metaphors like this infuse the novel making it quite hard to read and understand easily. The present research work aims at contributing in solving that problem. Following Halliday's (1985a) claim that "language itself is organized to make meanings about fields, modes, and tenors because those are the meanings that we want and need to make (Egins, 1994, p. 81)", the study examines both the tenor of discourse and modality in two samples of texts taken from Achebe's above-pinpointed novel. The investigation aims at unveiling the various meanings that the writer has encoded through the social role relationship played by the

participants implicated in the selected excerpts in the fulfillment of the different roles the writer has designed them for. As indicated in its title, the article also looks into the use of modality via its two different dimensions to decode the writer's intended meanings. Though a lot of research works have been carried out on the novel at hand, none so far, to our best knowledge, has focused on the selected excerpts for the study of tenor and modality dimensions for meaning decoding, hence the originality of this investigation. In addition to this introduction, this paper includes an abstract that summarizes the investigation. It also includes a theoretical framework and a literature review. Under this crux, the theory guiding the study of tenor and modality has succinctly been presented and the related literature to this study explored. The methodology subsection that ensued presents the research design used to meet the objectives of the study. The fourth subdivision deals with the identification of the mood, modality, and adjuncts types and recaps the collected data statistically in tables. In the interpretation of the findings subsection that ensues, the encoded meanings of the excerpts have been decoded in the light of the applied theory. The conclusion rounds the study off by summarizing the findings while showing the limits of this research and how they open up avenues for future investigations. Like any scientific study; this also provides a reference list.

2. Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

Under this subsection, the theory underpinning the study has been summarized and the related literature reviewed.

2.1. Theoretical Framework

Tenor is one of the three register variables. It is concerned with the role relations of power and solidarity. Alternatively put, the tenor has to do with the role relationships between the interactants in a text. For instance, roles such as student/lecturer, customer/salesperson, friend/ friend (Eggins, 2004, p. 99), are illustrative of the tenor. The kind of social role participants play in a situation will have an effect on how they use language. For example, you do not talk to your boss the same way as you talk to your driver. Drawing upon early studies of language variation and role relationship variables such as formality, politeness, and reciprocity (e.g. Brown and Gilman 1960/1972), Cate Poynton (1985) has suggested that tenor can be broken down into three different continua; power, contact and affective involvement. Power reveals whether the roles we are playing are those in which we are of equal or unequal power. Instances of roles of equal power are those of friends. Examples of roles of unequal (non-reciprocal) power would be those of boss/employee. As far as contact is concerned, it tells whether the roles we are playing are those that bring us into frequent or infrequent contact. The contrast between the frequent contact between spouses and the occasional contact with distant acquaintances (Eggins, 2004,p. 100) is a perfect illustration. Affective involvement can be high or low. In fact, the effective involvement dimension refers to the extent to which we are emotionally involved or committed in a situation. Friends or lovers for example are obviously effectively involved. Actually, tenor describes not only the interpersonal aspects of situations but also the link between language and context especially as our role occupation in a given situation will have an impact on how we use language. Examining the tenor of a text entails exploring its moods, modality, and adjuncts types structuring.

According to Halliday (1984, 1985a:68-71), one of the things we do when we use language is to establish a relationship among us that is to say, between the person speaking now and the person who is probably next. In this process, participants take on different speech roles like giving and

demanding, and make such moves as a statement, question, offer and command. Halliday (ibid) called these moves speech functions. The realization of the speech functions occurs in terms of mood choices and modality realized by modal operators (Eggs 2004: 172). Halliday(1985a) cited in Eggs (1994:155) describes the mood element as the one carrying “the burden of the clause as an interactive event”. More to the point, Eggs(1994) emphasized that the mood element “functions to carry the argument[so that] it remains constant as the nub of the proposition”(p.155).

There are five major types of moods namely, declarative moods, interrogative, modulated, imperative, and modulated imperative moods. Declarative moods imply giving information by stating what is or happens. Their typical structure involves Subject^ Finite^ Predicator^ Complement^ Adjunct. Interrogative moods embrace both polar and wh-interrogatives is shown as requests of information. Modulated interrogative moods are indirect/tempered requests of information. As for the imperative moods, they are recognizable by the absence of a Subject and require getting someone to do something. Modulated imperative moods on the other hand are expressed via an indirect way of getting someone to do something.

Modality is a Complex area of English grammar. It is concerned with the different ways in which a language user can intrude on his/her message expressing attitudes and judgments of different kinds. According to Halliday (1985a:335), “modality is the area of meaning that lies between yes and no – the intermediate ground between positive and negative polarity.” In other respects, Fowler (1986) stated the following about modality:

Modality is the grammar of explicit comment, the means by which people express their degree of commitment to the truth of the propositions they utter, and their views on the desirability or otherwise, of the states of affairs referred to (p. 132)

When a clause is used to exchange information or to argue about whether something is or isn't, it is called proposition and when it is used to exchange goods and services or to argue about whether something happens or does not happen, it is referred to as proposal. As a matter of fact, when modality is used to argue about the probability or frequency of propositions, it is referred to as **modalization**. Conversely, when modality is used to argue about the obligation or inclination of proposals, it is referred to as **modulation**.

Eggs (1994:180) views modalization as the expression of the speaker's attitude towards what s/he is saying. It is the way the speaker gets into the text: expressing a judgment about the certainty, likelihood, or frequency of something happening or being. Modalization always expresses the implicit judgment of the speaker. Nevertheless, because people play with language, modalization can also be realized explicitly when speakers make it quite obvious that it is their judgment that is being expressed through such mood adjuncts as: *I'm sure, I think, it is possible, it is certain, it is probable*, to name but these only. Indeed, modalization embraces the expression of two kinds of meanings viz. probability which includes the expression of judgment as regards the likelihood or probability of something happening or being, and usuality which involves the expression of judgment as to the frequency with which something happens or is. the meaning conveyed via modalization can then figure out in the clause in three key possible ways namely through the choice of a finite modal operator like *may might, could can*, etc; or further, through the use of mood adjuncts of probability, certainty such as *possibly, maybe, perhaps, probably*, and eventually through both together that is to say a modal finite and a mood adjunct.

In other respects, modulation which is the second dimension of modality complementing modalization in propositions is a way for speakers to express their judgments or attitudes about actions and events. To be more specific, it is the expression of degrees of obligation and inclination. Halliday (1985a:86) holds that both obligation and inclination can be expressed in two key ways: either, by such finite modal operators as a *must*, *should have to*, etc, or by an expansion of the Predicator via a passive verb or an adjective.

Exploring the role relationship played by participants in a text also implies looking into the different adjunct types embedded in it. In fact, there are seven (07) types of adjuncts. The following table provides a recap of the different types of adjuncts, their sub-types, the meaning each one of them convey, the class of item via which they are expressed and their location in the analysis.

Table 2.1.: Recap table showing different types of adjuncts (Eggins, 1994:171).

Type	Sub-type	Meanings	Class of item	Location in analysis
experiential	circumstantial	time, manner, location etc	prepositional phrase, adverb	in RESIDUE
interpersonal (modal)	mood	intensity, probability usuality,presumption	adverb	in MOOD
	polarity	Positive or negative	Yes/no (elliptical)	in MOOD
	comment	Speaker's assessment of whole message	Adverb,prepositional phrase	not in MOOD or RESIDUE
	vocative	Nominating, next speaker	Name	not in MOOD or RESIDUE
textual	conjunctive	Logical linking of messages	conjunction	not in MOOD or RESIDUE
	continuity	Message coming	minor clauses, adverbs, yeh/nah	not in MOOD or RESIDUE

2.2. Literature Review

Many studies have already been carried out in relation to tenor and modality analyses within the systemic functional linguistics framework. Results of the reviewed researches show that the tenor and interpersonal meaning theory is a very useful one for encoded meanings unveiling in written prose fiction. Some of the reviewed literature summaries below accounts for this.

Meiristiani (2011) conducted a research work entitled: Understanding Tenor in Spoken Texts in Year XII English Textbook to Improve the Appropriacy of the Texts. The study aimed at investigating the interpersonal relations (tenor) of the interactants in the conversation texts as well as the appropriacy of their realization in the given contexts. The study appealed to discourse

analysis by applying a descriptive qualitative method. Four out of eight texts were selected to be analyzed based on the variety of the speakers' roles and on the assumption that they potentially showed a high possibility of inappropriacy. Those samples were coded, segmented into single clauses, and labeled based on their mood category. Then, the realization of the tenor of the texts was further analyzed in terms of appropriacy to suggest an improvement. The results of the study show that the tenor indicates relationships between mother-son, teacher-student, student-student, and friend-friend; the power is equal and unequal; the social distances show frequent contact, relatively frequent contact, relatively low contact, high and low affective involvement, relatively informal, and relatively formal language. There are also some indications of the inappropriacy of tenor realization in the four texts. The researcher finally recommended that they be improved in the realization of establishing power, social distance, the use of the degree of formality, and affective involvement.

Koussouhon & Tchibozo-Laine (2016) carried out research work on Tenor and Interpersonal Meaning in Amma Darko's Fiction: A Feminist Approach. In this study, the researchers have looked into the tenor of discourse and interpersonal meaning in *Beyond the Horizon (1995)*, *The Housemaid (1998)*, and *Faceless (2003)*. Their investigation seeks to exude how the participants in the selected extracts establish and maintain interpersonal relationships therein. Besides, using the SFL theory, their study aims at unveiling the feminist voice and struggle of Darko as encoded in the language of her fiction under scrutiny. Their investigation has unveiled that the examined texts taken from the above-mentioned novels deal with women's treatment and condition, the easiness used by women to get what they want, and hard work, which eventually emerges as the only means whereby women can get satisfaction and personal achievement. The researchers then conclude that Darko, through her literary work, is defending women's social status which leads to the cycle of frustration-reaction to ensure women's emancipation and empowerment. Although this research has made important findings, it has failed to show the degrees of power continua among the implicated participants. The research has also not highlighted how the use of modality has influenced the language use of the extracts participants and how the participants' language use is characteristic of the social role played by each one of them in their studied texts. The current study looks into all these details to show how the theory of tenor and interpersonal meaning is a valuable resource for deep meaning-making.

Achsan and Sofwan (2016) carried out research work on The Realization of Tenor in the Conversation Texts Found in Grade x English Textbooks "*Pathway to English*" and "*Bahasa Inggris Kelas x* to explain the tenor of the interactants in the conversation texts found in grade X English textbooks as well as the appropriateness of their realization in the given contexts. The study also explains the similarities and differences between conversation texts found in both English textbooks in realizing tenor. Moreover, the study was qualitative research employing a descriptive comparative method. The comparative method compares conversation texts found in two English textbooks entitled "*Pathway to English*" and "*Bahasa Inggris Kelas X*" to find their similarities and differences in realizing tenor. The result of lexico-grammatical analysis of the conversation texts found in two English textbooks showed that the texts of two textbooks were dominated by declarative mood structures. This meant that the mood in the models of the conversation texts tended to give information rather than demanding information or demanding goods and services. They were between teacher and student, student and student, and friend and friend. Furthermore, there were various statuses found in these texts. They were unequal and equal. Finally, the social

distances showed low contact and low affective involvement and high contact and high affective involvement.

Syamsidar, Yatmikasari, and Nurraachman (2019) investigated Mood and Modality in Soekarno's 1955 Speech. Their study focuses on analyzing mood types and choice of modality in the selected speech. They aim at examining how the choice of mood types and modality represents the theme of solidarity and brotherhood in the above-pinpointed speech. To realize this, the researchers employed the framework of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), particularly on mood and modality systems by Halliday and Mathiessen (2004). From the discussion they carried out, it is found that clauses are mostly categorized as declarative clauses. It proves that the Asian African conference was held by the realization of solidarity and brotherhood. The use of declarative clauses indicates the speaker's competencies in delivering persuasive speeches by conveying factual information. In addition, it is found that

the speaker is neutral and seems to have close relationships with the audience. Meanwhile, the use of a low degree of modality is helpful to encourage the audience's confidence to act together. Although the study has arrived at important findings, the research has failed to look into the forms of address as used in the speech via the different types of adjuncts embedded in it to comprehend the type of relationship the Indonesian president Soekarno has established between himself and his audience. This would have allowed knowing the degree of consideration he has for the people under his ruling power and the kind of president he is. The present article considers all these aspects of the theory though not in the same speech.

As it can be witnessed from the above-reviewed literature, there is still room for this investigation to be carried out. As a consequence, this research work is not coming in as a superfluous one but as one that unquestionably extends the knowledge limits in the matters related to tenor and modality examinations in pieces of texts for deep meanings decoding. Additionally, the study is more than welcome especially as no such research has so far, to our best knowledge, been carried out in samples of texts taken from Achebe's *Anthills of the Savannah*.

3. Methodology of the Study

The study has appealed to the descriptive quantitative and qualitative methodology. Via the quantitative component of the adopted method, two excerpts have been purposefully culled from Achebe's *Anthills of the Savannah*. The selection of the excerpts is based on a number of criteria. First, the excerpts should fit for the analysis to be carried out. Second, they should be ones that are dialogic to some extent. They should eventually involve the key participants of the novel in interaction to help probe their tenor continua viz. power, contact, and affective involvement. The examined excerpts in this article have really yielded to these criteria, hence their selection for the study. Once the selection of the excerpt is done, the excerpts have been broken into their clause constituents especially as the unit of analysis for studies as the one at hand, within the systemic functional linguistics framework, is the clause. After this, the description of the moods, modality, and adjunct patterns of the excerpts has been carried out. The collected data has been organized, categorized, numerated, and presented in an informative way. The data has further been statistically described for better visibility of their distribution in the examined texts. This descriptive method of analysis has paved the way for the qualitative component of the adopted methodology. Under this component, the writer's encoded meanings via the moods patterns as well as the social role

relationship played by the participants of the selected excerpts have been decoded for their fuller understanding as it can be witnessed in the interpretation of findings subsection of this paper.

4. Mood, Modality, and Adjuncts Types Identification in the Selected Excerpts

The different types of mood, adjunct, and modality have been described in the selected excerpts. The data collected from the analysis carried out is presented below per category as follows.

4.1. Mood Types Identification

Using the analysis keys presented at the beginning of the appendices, both selected excerpts have been described and mood types, modality as well as adjunct types identified. The following is the statistical table that tabulates the distribution of the different mood types embedded in the studied excerpts.

Table 4.1. Recap statistical table of mood types distribution in the selected excerpts.

Mood types		Excerpt N01	Excerpt N02	Total number per type in both excerpts & Percentage
Declarative	Full declarative	133	90	223 (87.79%)
	Elliptical declarative	02	01	03 (1.18%)
Interrogative	Full polar interrogative	06	01	07(2.75%)
	Elliptical Polar interrogative	02	01	03(1.18%)
	Full wh-interrogative	08	00	08(3.14%)
	Elliptical Wh-interrogative	00	00	00 (00%)
Modulated interrogative		00	00	00 (00%)
Imperative		09	01	10 (3.93%)
Total number per excerpt		160	94	
Overall number in both excerpts		254		

A look at the above statistical table shows that the declarative mood type especially the full declarative moods sub-class of this category, predominate over the other mood types. More specifically, the full declarative mood structures form a total of two hundred and twenty-three (223) representing 87.79% of the overall mood types identified in the two excerpts. Three elliptical declaratives have been registered in the selected excerpts representing 01.18%. Besides; the full wh-interrogative sub-class dominates the interrogative mood category. It is followed in the ranking order by the full polar interrogatives. While three elliptical polar interrogatives have been recorded in the studied excerpts, no elliptical wh-interrogative has been identified. Just as the elliptical wh-interrogative, the modulated interrogative are neither identified in the first excerpt nor recorded in the second excerpt. The imperative mood types are ten (10) in number in both examined excerpts. All in all one hundred and sixty (160) mood types have been recorded in the first excerpt. The second excerpt counts fewer mood types and records just ninety-four (94) mood types. Overall, two hundred and fifty-four (254) different mood types have been recorded in both examined excerpts. It

is important to highlight that the percentage of the total number of each mood type in both excerpts has been calculated by taking the number of each mood type in the two excerpts times 100 divided by the overall number of mood structures recorded in both studied excerpts taken together.

4.2. Modality Identification

Both divisions of modality viz. modalization and modulation have been recorded in the studied excerpts. The statistical table of the recorded different types of modality is presented below.

Table 4.2. Recap statistical table of modality in the selected excerpts.

		Excerpt N01	Excerpt N02	Total number per type in both excerpts and percentage
Modality types	Modalization	19	02	21 (67.74%)
	Modulation	09	01	10 (32.25 % [^])
Total number per excerpt		28	03	
Overall number in both excerpts		31		

As it can be noticed from the above statistical table, the modularization selections override by far those of modulation in the studied excerpts. To get into specifics, the modalized structures are twenty-one (21) on the whole representing 67.74% of the overall modality types recorded in the excerpts. Modulated structures on the other hand are just ten (10) in number. In the examined excerpts, both modalization and modulation are realized through finite modal operators and a modulated predicator as indicated in clause 153 of the analysis carried out in the first excerpt.

4.3. Adjuncts Identification

As it appears below, all the adjunct types have been recorded. The following table tabulates the distribution of the different types of adjuncts embedded in the analyzed excerpts.

Table4.3. Recap statistical table of the types of adjuncts identified in the selected excerpts

		Excerpt N01	Excerpt N02	Total number per type in both excerpts & percentage
<i>Types of Adjuncts</i>	Circumstantial	86	80	166 (60.14%)
	Mood	07	02	09 (03.26%)
	Polarity	00	01	01 (0.36%)
	Comment	03	01	04(1.44 %)
	Vocative	03	05	08 (02.89%)
	Conjunctive	47	31	78 (28.26%)

	Continuity	09	01	10 (03.62%)
Total Adjuncts per excerpt		155	121	
Overall number in both excerpts		276		

As it can be witnessed from the above statistical table, the circumstantial adjuncts dominate the other adjunct types with a total number of one hundred and sixty-six (166) circumstantial adjuncts representing 60.14% of the overall adjuncts embedded in the excerpts. Conjunctive adjuncts rank second in the studied texts and are seventy-eight (78) in number representing 28.26%. Though largely fewer in number, the continuity adjuncts rank third and are ten (10) on the whole. They represent 03.62% of the overall adjunct types recorded in the excerpts. The Mood adjuncts have also been identified in the selected excerpts. In fact, they constitute a total number of nine (09). A close look into the above statistical table reveals that the examined texts also embed vocative, comment, and polarity adjuncts. While the vocative adjuncts are eight (08) in number, the comment adjuncts are just four (04). There is only one polarity adjunct identified in the excerpt.

5. Interpretation of Findings

The mood properties unveiled by the analysis of the studied excerpts from Achebe's *Anthills of the Savannah* reveal that they are linguistically rich and full of meanings. Of all the mood types recorded, the full declarative mood properties are the ones prevailing over the others in each of the studied excerpts. This dominant use of the full declarative mood structures in the selected excerpts implies that Achebe has a lot of information to exchange with his readers and indirectly with his contemporaries. As a matter of fact, the information being exchange here is unquestionably tremendously important from the writer's perspective. Such information relates to how the disruptive social upheaval and political instabilities were by the 1970s, and how they affected every facet of the Nigerian society after independence in 1960. Moreover, the pieces of information being exchanged via these texts also highlight how the vestiges of the colonial years remained after independence, including borders and new political ideas and structures which caused awful political unrest generating uncontrollable discontent of the Nigerian people. More specifically, during that time, Nigeria had been governed by a succession of corrupt and greedy rulers. Achebe during this period of time had dedicated himself to political activism in a nation like his under severe stress. Having a lot to say about all these dreadful social evils with a view to bringing his contemporaries out of the aforementioned odd ways, Achebe has intensively made use of the full declarative mood properties to state his full mind. In fact, the dominance of the full declarative mood structures is indicative of the linguistic consequences of the tenor of the studied texts. More to the point, full forms, according to Eggins (1994:64) are characteristics of formal language. So this preponderant use of full declarative forms also implies that Achebe has applied himself to write his texts with a formal style. This is certainly one of the reasons why he is not easily read in *Anthills of the Savannah*. Furthermore, the writer has used the **elliptical declarative mood patterns in the examined excerpts** to provide feedbacks to his readers. The presence of this mood type in the excerpts is also revelatory of their dialogic mode.

The interrogative mood types configuration in the studied excerpts evokes a number of messages that the writer is trying to get across. A look at the statistical table reveals that only one full polar interrogative and one elliptical polar interrogative have been identified in the second excerpt. The

full wh-interrogative, as well as the elliptical wh-interrogative, are systematically not figuring up in the same excerpt. These features of the interrogative mood structures in the second excerpt mean that Achebe is quite well aware of what he is writing about. We normally do not ask questions about things we know quite well about. In fact, such social evils as the callousness, selfishness, and irresponsibility of African dictatorial leaders; the widespread oppression and corruption, to name only a few of them, undermining the lives of his contemporaries were nothing hidden or odd to him. Nevertheless, the presence of one full polar interrogative and one elliptical polar interrogative are indications that though Achebe knew quite a lot about the social issues undermining his era, there were some aspects of them escaping him and he would like to know more about for better solutions to suggest.

The interrogative mood structures of the first excerpt reveal that Major Sam has used most of them. This actually highlights the authority and power that this participant embodies as the new head of the state of Kangan. The reader witnesses this powerful influence he is endowed with over the other participants he is in relationship within some of the interrogative moods as those in clauses 70, 114, 115, and 137. Indeed, Achebe has certainly used this linguistic construct to show how treacherous, callous and wicked the politicians of this era in Nigeria were. The full polar interrogative used by Chris in clause 59 highlights the crushing power inequality existing between him and Major Sam and by extension between the politicians of this period and their nations in Nigeria in particular and Africa on the whole.

The absence of the modulated interrogatives suggests that the power in the social relationship played by the interactants in the text is equal. That is why there hasn't been any need of modulating or attenuating requests while addressing themselves to one another. In addition, the missing modulated interrogatives can also be accounted for by the contact continuum. As a matter of fact, a careful look into the contact continuum reveals that the contact among the interactants in these excerpts is very frequent. Indeed, as friends, Chris, Emmanuel, and Braimoh are affectively involved in their role relationships.

In other respects, the two excerpts altogether count ten (10) imperative mood structures most of which have been used by Major Sam the new head of state of Kangan to highlight the authority that he embodies. To descend to particulars, Major Sam's crushing authority over such other participants of the studied texts as Chris and Ikem is displayed to the reader via his use of the imperative moods in clauses 138, 139, and 140 of the first excerpt specifically. Achebe has used the above pinpointed imperative moods to show how selfish politicians are. They manage to fight just for their own interests no matter what it costs others (the people under their leadership). In addition, the writer has skillfully used some of the imperatives to show that these politicians only care for or show kindness to their people and peers when their interests are at stake as illustrated in clause 160 of the first excerpt. Moreover, Chris's use of the imperative mood in clause 20 of the same excerpt with the vocative adjunct occurring with it is symbolic of his politeness towards the authoritarian Major Sam. In fact the imperative moods in the examined texts signal that they are doing more than simply giving information. The writer has certainly used this linguistic construct to highlight the crushing power the political leaders of the era were invested with. Indeed, they were so full of themselves that they could do whatever they wanted to meet their selfishness; hence the political unrest. The social role relationship played by such participants as Major Sam, Chris Oriko, and Ikem Osodi in the first excerpt is a vivid illustrative example. In addition, the imperative

linguistic feature, as displayed in the studied excerpts, is symbolic of a formal tenor role relationship among the participants pinpointed above. This formal role relationship among participants describes a formal situation which implies that Achebe's message in this novel is a serious one; depictive of the real political unrest and the dominantly unmanageable discontent of Nigerians by the time he wrote these texts. However, the imperative mood structure in the second excerpt as illustrated in clause 52 of the analysis carried out suggests an informal tenor among some of the personae involved in the interaction, especially the salespeople and their potential customers appealed to. It is expedient to say that through the repeated imperative mood features in both excerpts; Chinua Achebe is reiterating his claim for a change in the Nigerians' minds, and indirectly in the Africans' ways of life.

The higher use of modularization over modulation in the first excerpt highlights the way the writer creates a less authoritative, more suggestive tenor balancing, by this means, the power inequality inherent in the modulation. Via this linguistic construct, Achebe is showing what he wants his society to be like. He certainly dreams of a society where power is balanced among its people; where the highly ranked people do not misuse their power to crush down the others under their power. Additionally, the very few numbers of modalized finite verbal operators in the second excerpt confirm that Achebe, has not written about things he is not sure of. He has indeed written about factual events in a fictitious way in his *Anthills of the Savannah*. Furthermore, the few selections in modalization in the second excerpt are also indicative of the fact that only a few of the social evils being castigated in this novel escapes the writer.

In other respects, the use of the modulated mood structures is revelatory of the obligation that is incumbent on Achebe and his contemporaries to get the ball rolling on doing something against such evils as power abuse, callousness, selfishness, and the prevailing political unrest in order to recover from them all. This necessity to get something done and let the evil doers know that enough is enough is revealed through Chris Oriko's total refusal to enforce Major Sam's decision against Ikem Osodi as witnessed in the first excerpt. Besides, the single modulated mood property in the second excerpt is indicative of the necessity for every Nigerian citizen to make a little contribution (small drops of water make a mighty ocean) with a view of changing the fatal future foreshadowed by the prevailing evils.

In other respects, the modulation identified in the second text is not one operating among any of the participants engaged in the text. It is rather one operating between a participant (the cab driver Mr. Abdul) and the Almighty God he was addressing a prayer to. That is why, the power continuum is one in which Abdul the cab driver is modulating and attenuating his request to the Most High. This attests to what Paul said in his letter to the Philippians in the Roman province of Macedonia, the first church he established on European soil: "and so, in honour of the name of Jesus all beings in heaven, on earth and in the world below will fall on their knees and all will openly proclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father", GOOD NEWS BIBLE (1994: PHILIPPIANS 2:10-11).

The circumstantial mood adjuncts are the dominant adjunct types in the selected excerpts. This crushing number of circumstantial adjuncts has been used to increase the experiential contents of the excerpts. Indeed, they add up to one hundred and sixty-six (166) in number and are dominantly circumstantial mood adjuncts of location both temporal and spatial; manner especially of comparison sub-type, cause of reason and behalf, matter, and accompaniment. As a matter of fact,

these linguistic features are fully pregnant with meanings. Indeed, Chinua Achebe has used the comparative manner circumstantial mood adjuncts in these excerpts, to convey the message that the evils pinpointed in the novel at hand, as mentioned above, are not just specific to Nigeria. In fact, Achebe's message goes farther across borders. Actually, through this novel, Achebe is addressing all African countries after independence. While the manner circumstantial adjuncts have been used to highlight what is being dealt with in these excerpts, the circumstantial adjuncts of cause underline the reasons for the matters being dealt with in the novel and their beneficiaries. Furthermore, the accompaniment circumstantial adjuncts, as used in the excerpts, are symbolic of Achebe's strong call to all African nations to get united joining their strengths together for a brighter future so that Africa could be totally delivered from neocolonialism in all its several different facets. Moreover, the prominence of the circumstantial adjuncts in the excerpts is symptomatic of the writer's naturally gifted writing skills in combining or putting together several different pieces of important information to achieve successful communication with his audience viz. his readership.

As for the conjunctive adjuncts, they are seventy-eight (78) in number and are of two categories viz. the coordinators such as *and, then, but etc.* and the subordinators like *when, until, as, in spite of, that etc.* Of all the coordinators identified in the excerpts, "and" is predominantly used. As a matter of fact, according to Quirk and Greenbaum (1973), "and" expresses multiple semantic implications between clauses. A close look into its various uses in these excerpts shows that it has not only been used to reinforce the chronology of the events narrated in the text but it has also been used to make addition given that the novel presents different facets of society. The rhetorical use of both the coordinators and the subordinators is what makes the information in the novel well structured, logical, accessible although very complex. The mood adjuncts of the excerpts are those expressing usuality, intensification, minimization, and presumption. The usuality mood adjuncts imply that the evils being denounced here are not strange at all since they are direct consequences of colonization. As such, Achebe through these mood adjuncts features is highlighting that the evils can be eradicated given that their causes are known. Interestingly enough, none of the nine mood adjuncts embedded in these excerpts expresses probability. Eggins (1994, pp. 182-183) stated the following: "if we are sure of something, we do not use any modality. Thus the use of any modality at all however strong it appears, makes our proposition more tentative than it would be without any modality." Drawing upon this statement, and knowing that in modality there is modularization which includes the expression of probability, the mood adjuncts depiction in the studied excerpts is suggestive that Chinua Achebe is neither doubtful nor skeptical about the change he is actively working at. He is rather optimistic and hopes the change will work out one day. As a matter of fact, the writer discreetly conveys this as a message through the survival of one of the four main characters of the novel.

The comment adjunct in the second excerpt expresses an assessment of what the landscape Chris and his companions were travelling through looked like. On the other hand, they have been used to assess Chris's and Sam's judgments. As for the continuity adjuncts, Achebe has rhetorically used them to introduce a new topic about food supply in the excerpt. The writer has used them to highlight the argument that Chris and Major Sam had as regards the suspension letter Sam wanted Chris to write and hand over to Ikem.

The vocative adjuncts in the first excerpt have been used to highlight the power inequality between Chris and Major Sam. In fact, the use of vocative adjuncts has been non-reciprocal between these pinpointed participants. As illustration, whereas Chris uses the title “Your Excellency” to address Major Sam as witnessed in clauses 20 and 110 of the first excerpt, the latter Addresses Chris using his first name “Chris” or the personal subject pronoun “you” as highlighted in clauses 150 and 140 of the first excerpt to name these ones only. It then goes without saying those vocative adjuncts as used in these excerpts depict unequal power because they are non- reciprocally used. This linguistic feature really highlights the dictatorship prevailing in the epoch. Moreover, the terms of address, as used here, also show that contact among the participants involved is infrequent and that there is low affective involvement as a consequence of the unequal power. Through these terms of address, Chinua Achebe is conveying the message that differences in power positions and/or social classes shouldn’t be any excuse for dictatorial ruling systems and brutalities. In fact, the writer via these linguistic properties is calling his contemporary's dear attention to some of the causes of the evils undermining them. To get out of these troubles, Achebe would like them to get united pushing back the barriers to real social integration, while continuously showing tolerance regardless of the social and political differences.

In the second excerpt, the vocative adjuncts have all been used to draw customers’ attention to the foods on sale, on the one hand (see clauses 49, 50, 51, 53), and to call people’s attention to Chris, Emmanuel, and Braimoh as being from the south (clause 80) on the other hand. **Indeed, the vocative use in this excerpt is non-reciprocal** which suggests that the power relationship between the proprietor of the decent restaurant and her customers Chris, Emmanuel, and Braimoh is absolutely unequal.

Actually, both studied texts depict a friendly ordinary tenor. For example, in the second excerpt, we witness friends on a journey talking to one another in a personal conversational way. In the first excerpt as well, we witness two former classmates of Lord Lugard College: Chris Oriko and Major Sam speaking to each other and stating their opinions freely without fearing anything. What Achebe is advocating here, is the permanent dialogue that should exist among the different social strata of both Nigerian and indirectly African societies. Truly, this established enduring dialogue should be devoid of hypocrisy, betrayal, and treachery so that people can discuss confront ideas and, hand in hand, make rewarding decisions that could help get their communities out of the rut on the one hand, and favor their sustainable development on the other.

6. Conclusion

This study has examined the tenor of discourse and modality in two excerpts from Achebe’s *Anthills of the Savannah*. Indeed, a careful reading of this novel reveals that the writer has subtly encoded so many important messages via his characters and their interrelationships in the fulfillment of the roles and purposes he has designed them for. In order to decode these various messages, the study explores the tenor and modality constructs of two sample texts taken from the above-pinpointed novel. The investigation appeals to the descriptive quantitative and qualitative method to help reach the above-mentioned objective. The research has interestingly arrived at valuable findings. Such research results are presented in the foregoing subsection entitled interpretation of findings. Nevertheless this conclusion highlights some of them hereafter. The imperative mood structures as displayed in the studied excerpts are symbolic of a formal tenor role relationship among such key participants of the excerpts as Major Sam, Chris Oriko, and Ikem

Osodi. This formal role relationship among these participants describes a formal situation which implies that Achebe's messages in the examined excerpts are serious ones; depictive of the real political unrest and the dominantly unmanageable discontent of Nigerians by the time he wrote these texts. Besides, the vocative adjuncts as used in these excerpts depict unequal power relationships especially as they are non-reciprocally used among the above-mentioned key participants. This linguistic feature really highlights the dictatorship prevailing by the time both texts got written. Moreover, the terms of address as used in the studied texts also show that contact among the participants involved is infrequent and that there is low affective involvement as a consequence of the unequal power relationship in between them. Through these terms of address, the writer is conveying the message that differences in power positions and/or social classes shouldn't be any excuse for dictatorial ruling systems and brutalities.

Modality in the studied excerpts has helped to unveil the writer's messages as well. Indeed, the higher use of modalization over modulation in the first excerpt highlights the way the writer creates a less authoritative, more suggestive tenor balancing, by this means, the power inequality inherent in the modulation. Via this linguistic construct, Achebe is showing what he wants his society to be like. He certainly dreams of a society where power is balanced among its people; where the highly ranked people do not misuse their power to crush down the others under their power. Furthermore, the use of modulated mood structures in the excerpts is revelatory of the obligation that is incumbent on Achebe and his contemporaries to get the ball rolling on doing something against such evils as power abuse, callousness, selfishness, and the prevailing political unrest in order to recover from them all. This necessity to get something done and let the evildoers know that enough is enough is revealed through Chris Oriko's total refusal to enforce Major Sam's decision against Ikem Osodi as witnessed in the first excerpt. Besides, the single modulated mood property in the second excerpt is indicative of the necessity for every Nigerian citizen to make a little contribution (small drops of water make a mighty ocean) with a view of changing the fatal future foreshadowed by the prevailing evils.

To round off, this study has examined the tenor of discourse and modality in only two excerpts from Achebe's *Anthills of the Savannah*. Carrying out the same investigation in other excerpts from the same novel or in the whole novel would certainly contribute in digging up more encoded meanings by the writer. This remains an avenue opened up by this research work for further ones to follow.

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