

A Comparative Analysis of Narrative Technique and Plot Structure in two
Zambian Novels: John Luangala's *The Chosen Bud* and Malama
Katulwende's *Bitterness*.

By

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the degree of Master of Arts in Literature

THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA

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DECLARATION

I, Mwaka Siluonde, declare that this dissertation:

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ABSTRACT

This study is a comparative analysis of narrative technique and plot structure in two Zambian novels. There are no available studies on the plot structure and narrative techniques of the two novels, John Luangala's *The Chosen Bud* and Malama Katulwende's *Bitterness* more especially a comparative analysis of the two. The aim of the study is to draw attention to areas of convergence and divergence in the plot structure and narrative technique of the two novels under analysis. The study is governed by three theories. These are the Formalist, Structuralist and Narratological theories. The study is a qualitative desk research. Four categories are used to deal with narrative technique and these are narrative time, narrative mood, narrative instance and narrative level. In terms of plot structure, the novels are subjected to a modified Freytag plot structure, Denise Paulme's plot structure models and a scrutiny of whether they are simple or complex. When both the techniques and plot structures were compared the common discovery is that the novels show more similarities in their use of technique and plot structure than differences. They both have most of the techniques and plot structures concerned but with different ways and degrees of implementation and also with different roles. The similarities and differences are significant because they clearly show influence from western literature and oral African literature.

To all my children

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CHAPTER ONE

General Introduction

1.1 Introduction

In Zambia like in most of Africa, “the novel is the only literary art form that has been totally imported and imposed over and above development from an indigenous pattern...in a preliterate society no...function existed for the novel” (Dathorne,1974:53). In this country as in most parts of Africa the preliterate society was based on oral literature which always had a social role of being didactic, no matter how entertaining. Wendland (2004:1) in his description of the Nyanja oral narrative tradition states that it

has played an important social role in the life of Nyanja-speaking people and many other African peoples. This performing art functions not only as an effective means of educating the young in the knowledge of their physical and cultural environment, but due to its essentially conservative nature and continued repetition over the years, it also serves to uphold and reaffirm the people’s ideals, institutions and identity.

Hence in whatever form and whether they were told at the king’s court, around fires, on occasions such as birth, circumcision, weddings and death, oral narratives were very much a part of society.

Consequently, even the narrators or story tellers of the narratives only told their stories on demand or request from their society. Suffice to say however that, emphasis was on the social role. Dathorne (1974: x) calls this “The group concept” and concludes that

African people in certain parts of the continent share, in a basic way, their attitude to their literature, deriving as it does from their concept to life itself. The group concept in the literature accounts for the fertile enclosures of culture and the artist's specific responsibility to these.

The coming of literacy did not only bring a demand for writing the oral narratives down but also the foreign concept of the novel. The novel in western terms and in a strict sense is a piece of work which is longer than a short story and has certain defining characteristics. (Britannica, 2009). Further it is these elements which give the novel its aesthetic value. According to Booker (1996), having a subject is not enough for a work to be classified as a novel.

The newly literate Zambians thence had the job of adapting to this new form. Dathorne (1974) in his analysis of Zambian literature states that Zambian written literature around the 1950s and around the independence years was usually in the local languages and describes this literature as not being different from the oral narratives, the only difference being that it was being written down. Examples of the indigenous authors are Stephen Andrea Mpashi (*Cekesoni Aingila Mubusoja*, 1950) and others. He declares that their “themes do not vary much—detective stories, adaptations of legends and tales, moral stories about young men who go wrong or others in search of an education, and so on” (1974:54). Albeit these led the way, showing that it was possible to write.

As such, even novels written in English began to surface around the same time. The novels may be termed “anthropological”, “for the writer was interested not in characterisation, but in the detailed examination of culture. Those characters that did exist were stereotypes, and the importance of the narration was in the telling. This might be a hangover from the folktale” (Dathorne,1974: 53). Earlier novels like Dominic Mulaisho’s *Tongue of the Dumb* have been said to pay little attention to narrative technique. That is why Mbwayu (1991) has even called

the novel clumsy in terms of craftsmanship. Similarly, Andrey Masiye's *Before Dawn* (1971), which describes life in a village in the Chiparamba valley during the 1930s and 1940s, is a documentation of the customs of the people is viewed as such. However, this does not necessarily mean the novels had no plot structure or narrative technique but the question is what kind of plot structure or narrative technique do they have?

Aristotle's view was that every narrative the Zambian one included has a plot, and hence a plot structure. This is different from the story; the story is just a raw material. The author uses the story to form the plot which is then the finished form and what the reader will read. Aristotle in his book *Poetics* (1974) explains the structure of a plot. According to him the plot should have a beginning, middle and an end. This is what we see in his plot structure pyramid which has the following components: inciting incident (exposition), rising action or crisis, climax, falling action and the resolution or dénouement (French for resolution). Another important aspect of a plot is the conflict without which a plot would be useless. The main character or protagonist may have a conflict with a natural phenomenon, gods or anything supernatural, an antagonist or may struggle with something within (internal). Whatever happens this must be resolved by the end of the narration. In Aristotle's version of the plot there is no place whatsoever for plots which remain unresolved or are left hanging.

He emphasises unity of action, that the action should be one and whole. A whole is that which has a beginning, middle, and an end.

A beginning is that which does not itself follow anything by causal necessity, but after which something naturally is or comes to be. An end, on the contrary, is that which itself naturally follows some other thing, either by necessity, or as a rule, but has nothing following it. A middle

is that which follows something as some other thing follows it. A well constructed plot, therefore, must neither begin nor end at haphazard, but conform to these principles (Aristotle, 1974: 52).

He however recognises the existence of two types of plot, the simple one and the complex one. The simple one follows a chronological sequence while the complex one may distort the story time. The Greek tragedies on stage are good examples of the simple plot because they are chronological, while others like the *Odyssey* epic where the story is not a chronological narration are examples of the complicated plot. Although Aristotle's focus is on tragedy, his work in *Poetics* is the basis of the narrative plot even to date. Later works like Freytag's have modified his views but some elements remain much the same.

Formalists also maintain Aristotle's thoughts on the plot in relation to the story, that the story is not important, what is important is the final form of the work, which becomes a reconstruction of the related events of the story. The Russian Formalist Shklovski differentiates between events in the *fabula* (story) and *Suizhet* (plot). Shklovski defines the *Suizhet* as "a construction which, having resource of events, characters and settings, compressing time and transposing it, creates as a result a certain perceptible phenomenon, which is experienced the way the author wants us to experience it" (<http://www.signosemio.com/genette/narratology.asp> accessed on 23/4/2013)

It is not enough to simply look at the plot as a structure of events in the story as this would not be too different from just considering the events in the story but just changing their position. This is not what happens in an actual plot. The plot is not independent of certain narrative techniques which make it identifiable as a whole. According to formalist thought, the issue of plot is not just an issue of being able to rearrange events but a combination of these with the narrative techniques employed, thus making the plot and the techniques a single entity. They agree with Aristotle's simple and complex plot. A simple plot is the

unmarked order of chronological succession of events...the... narrative order keeps the reader completely informed of the progress of the fabula: there is no need of coming back to retake some unexplained event; everything has been told and therefore the attention of the reader is riveted on the future, not on the past. The peculiar emotion produced by this kind of straightforward narrative is suspense: the reader wonders what will happen, and the whole of his interpretive attention is projected to the future.

(<http://www.signosemio.com/genette/narratology.asp>visited on 23/4/2013)

In terms of the complex plot:

the logic is double: as in straightforward narrative, we wonder what will happen next, but, since important facts are being concealed from us for the moment, we also wonder what has happened. That is, curiosity is the reader's main passion here, or curiosity combined with suspense. We wonder about the nature of the past in order to explain the present, but we also wonder about the way in which the past will be revealed, the revelation of its full hold on the present. The prototype for this kind of story is the detective story, which unfolds simultaneously toward the origin and toward the conclusion of the fabula. This second kind of story can't be content with a simple, one-way progression into the future. It needs to come back on itself, and finish what was left unfinished, tell us the mystery which has been hidden all through the story. A temporal distortion is needed, the most basic one, a return to the past which will enable us to understand the present (<http://www.signosemio.com/genette/narratology.asp>visited on 23/4/2013).

Over the years there has been a lot of experimentation with narrative technique with regards to complex plots. Of the many, one theorist stands out and this is Gérard Genette. In his *Narrative Discourse, An Essay in Method* (1980), he proposes a narratological theory which recognises that it is not enough to simply identify the structure of a plot but also to identify the narrative techniques used to achieve the very plot. Bal (1985: i) affirms the need to have a narrative theory to go with the plot theories which already exist in order to use these for analysis of texts. The scholar advises that if

the necessary characteristics can be defined, these same characteristics can serve as the point of departure for the next phase: a description of the way each narrative text is constructed. Once this is accomplished, we have a description; we can then examine the variations that are possible when the narrative system is concretised into narrative texts. This last step presupposes that an infinite number of concepts are contained within the narrative system.

Genette suggests five ways in which a fabula may be manipulated to come up with a plot and which may be used to analyse narratives. These are Order, Duration, Frequency, Mood, and Narrative Instance.

In the first instance of order, an author may choose not to arrange events exactly the way they follow each other in the story. This distortion may be called *anachrony*. Genette identifies two types, *analepsis* (flashback) where the narrator “recounts after the fact an event that took place earlier than the present point in the main story” (<http://www.signosemio.com/genette/narratology.asp> accessed on 23/4/2013). A good example of this technique is James Joyce’s *A Portrait of an Artist as a Young Man* (2003), the method of telling Stephen Dedalus’ story using the stream of consciousness in acts of flashbacks. On the very first page of the book he remembers how he used to sit by the hearth and in fact the rest of the story is a series of remembering.

The second type is the *prolepsis* (flash forward), “the narrator anticipates events that will occur after the main story ends”(http://www.signosemio.com/genette/narratology.asp accessed on 23/4/2014). Ralph Ellison’s *Invisible Man* (1952) is an example of a plot which starts with a future event then goes back in flashbacks till it reaches the very start of the story.

The second form is Duration and Narrative Speed. The narrator can either speed up or slow down the duration of a narrative instance. Genette (1980) recognises four ways in which this can happen.

If N_t stands for narrative time, n for narrative, St for story time then;

1. Pause: $N_t=n$, $St=0$, the event or story is interrupted to make room for narration discourse, static descriptions fall into this category.
2. Scene: $N_t=St$, Narrative time corresponds to the story time. An example is a dialogue.
3. Summary: $N_t < St$, some part of the events of the story is summarised in the narrative, creating an acceleration. Summaries can be of various lengths.
4. Ellipsis: $N_t= 0$; $St=n$ The narrative says absolutely nothing about some event in the story.

The other manipulation technique is through frequency of events. This is the number of times an event occurs in a story and the number of times it is mentioned in the narrative. This may be singulative, if the event occurs once and is mentioned once in the narrative, but may be called a repeating narrative if it happens once but is narrated more than once, it is called iterative if it happens several times but narrated once. However, you can also narrate several times what happened several times.

Genette proposes that an author may choose the narrative mood which they wish to achieve in their work. This is achieved by various degrees of diegesis and can be seen in two ways, “the distance” and the “functions of the narrator”.

One needs to know the distance. This can be measured by whether there is narrated speech, transposed speech (indirect), transposed speech (free indirect style), reported speech. If the speech is narrated, the character’s words and actions are integrated into the narration and treated like any other event, here the narrative is not distant. If the speech is transposed, the words and actions are reported by the narrator, who presents them with his interpretation, this may either be distant or not. In a case where the speech is transposed but with a free indirect

style, the words and actions of the character are reported by the narrator but without using subordinating conjunctions and this could be distant or not. The last instance is reported speech, the characters words are cited in verbatim by the narrator, this is not distant.

The role a narrator is playing may also reveal the mood of a narrative. A narrator may have the role of narrative function. Here the narrator acts as a story teller and is detached from the story whether present in the narrative or not. The narrator may also be the director; the directing function is evident when he interrupts the story to comment on the organisation or articulation of his text. This is a more involved narrator. The narrator may also have a communicative function, he addresses the narratee (potential reader) directly in order to establish or maintain contact with him or her. The narrator is here again involved in the text. Another role would be the testimonial function. The narrator affirms the truth of the story, the degree of precision in his narration, his certainty regarding the events, his sources of information and so on. This is also seen when he expresses his emotions about the story. This narrator is also involved. Ideologically, the narrator may function by interrupting his story to introduce instructive comments or general wisdom concerning his narrative. This one also calls for involvement on the narrator's part.

The last analytical category Genette proposes which is more familiar is that of narrative instance. That is the narrative voice (who is speaking?), time of narration (when does telling occur relative to the story?), narrative perspective (through whom are we perceiving the narrative). To start with, the narrative voice may be heterodiegetic or extradiegetic, that is outside the story and homodiegetic or intra-diegetic that is inside the story. In terms of time of narration, it may be a subsequent narration (narrated in past time), prior narration (future

narration), simultaneous narration (moment when it occurs) and interpolative narration (prior and simultaneous).

There is also the narrative perspective. This is what is commonly called point of view but Genette calls it focalisation. Identified are, zero focalisation in which the narrator knows more than the characters. This narrator is omniscient. Internal focalisation is yet another perspective where the narrator knows as much as the focal character. Then there is external focalisation, here the narrator knows less than the characters. The narrator just follows the actions of the protagonist and guesses the thoughts of characters. Related to perspective are the levels of the narrative. Different reading effects result from shifts in narrative levels or embedding. Within the main plot the author can insert other short embedded narratives, told from other narrative perspectives. This adds diversity and increases the complexity of a narrative.

This study also identified other narrative techniques pertaining to the plot which authors have used over the years. The first is *the back story* which is a story that precedes events in the story being told, past events or background that add meaning to current circumstances. A good example of this is Ngugi wa Thiong'o's *The River Between* (1965) which begins first by giving us a history of the two ridges Makuyu and Kameno which are separated by a valley, this history makes understanding of the conflict between the two places easier. Another method is what is called *Chekhov's gun* (this can also be foreshadowing or repetitive designation) This is a situation in which the author inserts an apparently irrelevant object early in a narrative for a purpose only revealed later, this can be seen especially in Greek tragedies which used the chorus in such a way. More specific is a play like *Dr. Faustus* (2000) where we see the students who act as a chorus, foreshadowing Dr. Faustus' demise in the opening and how they continue to appear warning Dr. Faustus.

The third is a *cliffhanger*, in this case the narrative ends unresolved and sometimes this is done to draw the audience back to a future episode for the resolution. Margaret Atwood's *Handmaid's Tale* (1986) has this technique; we do not know what becomes of Offred after she is revealed as a traitor. At the end of the novel, she is just taken away and we do not know whether it is friend or foe that has her. The *cut-up technique* is yet another literary technique in which a text is cut up and rearranged to create a new text. Most commonly, cut-ups are used to offer a non-linear alternative to traditional reading and writing.

A fifth method is the *deus ex machina* (a machination, or act of god). The resolution of the primary conflict is by a means unrelated to the story (e.g., a god appears and solves everything). This device dates back to ancient Greek theatre. The *euclastrophe* which was coined by J. R. R. Tolkien is a climatic event through which the protagonist appears to be facing a catastrophic change. However, this change does not materialise and the protagonist finds himself as the benefactor of such a climatic event, an example is the story of Jesus in the bible, in which what looked like the death of Jesus, ironically worked for good by being the key to life. The seventh term is the *frame story*, or a *story within a story*. This is a main story that organises a series of shorter stories. This is the method employed by Ngugi wa Thiong'o in *A Grain of Wheat* (1968) in which he uses the method to show that the characters' stories or backgrounds are actually interrelated in the main story of the present.

The *framing device* is also used in Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (1902) where a single action, scene, event, setting, or any element of significance at the beginning and end of a work.

The use of framing devices allow for frame stories to exist. The character of Marlow tells the story of his trip to the Congo to other characters in the novel, but his telling is a framing because through recounting the story, he is also telling the readers. The eighth method is the *MacGuffin* which is a plot device in the form of some goal, desired object, or other motivator that the protagonist pursues, often with little or no narrative explanation as to why it is considered so important. Herman Melville's *Moby Dick* (1851) where Captain Ahab chases after the whale Moby Dick is an example.

The term *in medias res* is also used for the method of beginning the story in the middle of a sequence of events. This is a specific form of narrative hook (story opening that "hooks" readers' attention so they will keep reading), most detective stories start like this, and the object of investigation like a murder has already taken place at the start of the novel. A tenth method is *plot twist*. This is a situation in which there is an unexpected change ("twist") in the direction or expected outcome of the plot. An example is those mystery stories in which the seemingly innocent ends up being the villain. A situation of *poetic justice* is one in which virtue is ultimately rewarded, or vice punished, by an ironic twist of fate related to the character's own conduct. This is usually used in fairy tales. The *quibble* is another technique, it is a plot device based on an argument that an agreement's intended meaning holds no legal value, and that only the exact, literal words agreed on apply. For example, William Shakespeare used a quibble in *The Merchant of Venice* (1600). Portia saves Antonio in a court of law by pointing out that the agreement called for a pound of flesh, but no blood, so Shylock can collect only if he sheds no blood. The thirteenth method is the *red herring* which is a rhetorical tactic of diverting attention away from an item of significance. This is again common in mystery novels, where the guilty

party is usually the one on whom attention has not been throughout the novel. Then there is the *self-fulfilling prophecy* which is a prediction that, by being made, makes itself come true like in *Oedipus the King* (1970). Lastly, the *Unreliable narrator* may be used, here the narrator used in the story is not sincere, or introduces a bias in his narration and possibly misleads the reader, hiding or minimising events, characters, or motivations, the narrator may be a mad person or even a drunk (http://Literary technique#Literary techniques_pertaining_to_narrative_perspective.com accessed on 01/02/2014).

Finally, from such a background one realises that research on plot structure and narrative technique on Zambian novels has been rare. As scholars there is a need to take up the challenge from our end by writing and researching more about the Zambian literature, especially with regards to authors who have not been researched on yet. Hence the comparative analysis of plot structure and narrative technique in two Zambian novels: John Luangala's *The Chosen Bud* and Malama Katulwende's *Bitterness*.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to highlight areas of convergence and divergence in the plot structure and narrative technique of the two novels under analysis.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

There are no studies which reveal the plot structure and narrative techniques of John Luangala's *The Chosen Bud* and Malama Katulwende's *Bitterness* or especially a comparative analysis of the two. Thus, in studying the plot structures and narrative techniques of the two novels, the researcher was addressing that lacuna.

Put as a statement, the problem or question this study was addressing is, “What are the similarities and differences in the plot structure and narrative techniques of John Luangala’s *The Chosen Bud* and Malama Katulwende’s *Bitterness?*”

1.4 Research Objectives

The objectives of the study are;

- i. to evaluate the narrative technique employed in the two novels;
- ii. to analyse the plot structure of the two novels;
- iii. to determine the areas of convergence and divergence in the narrative technique and plot structure of the two fictional works;
- iv. to evaluate the significance of the similarities and differences of the narration technique and plot structure of the two texts.

1.5 Research Questions

- i. What are the narrative techniques employed in the two works?
- ii. What are the plot structures of the two novels?
- iii. What are the areas of convergence and divergence in the narrative technique and plot structure of the two fictional works?
- iv. What is the significance of the similarities and differences of the narration techniques and plot structure of the two texts?

1.6 Significance of Study

It is hoped that the findings of this study may be useful to the authors under study and also other Zambian authors, researchers and the general public. For would be Zambian authors just

breaking out, it is anticipated that the findings of this study will give them some insight as they enter the field. For those who are already published like the authors under analysis, it will “map the field” for future work as this will act as some sort of feedback for their work as authors.

In the area of research, it is hoped that the results of this research may add new information about Zambian Literature. Further, it is hoped that this study will stimulate more research into narrative techniques and plot structure in Zambian prose fiction and also other elements of style. Not only that, it is also hoped that the results may help in designing approaches directed at promoting Zambian literature.

As for the general public such as readers and others, it is anticipated that the findings of this research may bring about appreciation of the Zambian novel as well as an awareness of the existence of such novels and their techniques.

1.7.0 Theoretical Framework

The study will be governed by three theories. These are the Formalist, Structuralist and Narratological Theory.

1.7.1 Formalist Theory

Among the proponents of the Formalist theory are renowned scholars like Cleanth Brooks, W.K. Wimsatt and Monroe Beardsley. Scholars in this school of thought are of the view that true analysis of any literary text lies primarily in the text itself. Wimsatt and Beardsley, go further by proposing the “intentional fallacy” and the “affective fallacy” which discourage seeking the meaning of a text in the original expressive intention of the author or the emotional response of the reader respectively (Booker, 1996).

Specifically, “the Formalists were interested in analysing literature in its component parts and in describing its principal devices and modes of operation” (Rivkin and Ryan, 1998:4). They insisted that literature has to be read closely and in a special way because the different stylistic manipulations of language play roles in literary texts that are different from and more important than the roles they play in ordinary discursive texts. Language may then be seen as the material from which dresses are cut and the individual styles, the specific dress designs chosen. Another way would be to liken style to a web. “The web, then, or the pattern: a web at once sensuous and logical, an elegant and pregnant texture: that is style, which is the foundation of the art of literature” (www.literatureproject.com/art-of.../art_1.htm, accessed on 03/10/2013).

Analysis for this group was based on two main forms in the two major literary genres of prose narrative and poetry. In the case of the narrative which is relevant to this study, formalist scholars noticed that

narrative literature consisted of two major components: the plot, by which they meant the story as narrated within the pages of the book (with all the attendant arrangements of chronological sequence, point of view, e.t.c), and the story, by which they meant the sequence of events in the order and actual duration in which they ostensibly occurred. Once this simple distinction is made, one can begin to analyse all of the features of storytelling, the many devices such as point of view, delayed disclosure, narrative voice, and the like that go into the creation of the imaginary story through the manipulation of plot or storytelling devices” (Rivkin and Ryan, 1998:4).

1.7.2 Structuralist Literary Theory

Prominent among Structuralist literary analysts are scholars such as Roland Barthes a renowned critic, and anthropologist, Claude Lévi-Strauss who among others initiated this school of thought by applying linguistically inspired formal methods to literature and related phenomena.

The theory informs this study in that it too agrees with the Formalists that literary texts should be analysed based on the contents of the text without involvement of the author. As such, Roland Barthes coined the statement, “The death of the author” which essentially means that an author’s job is that of scripter, after that whatever interpretations if made should be based on what the words in the book communicate and nothing else. He puts it very clearly when he argues that “our literature is characterised by the...divorce between the producer of the text and its user, between its owner and its customer, between its author and its reader” (Barthes,2008; Britannica, 2008).

In literary theory, Structuralist criticism relates literary texts to a larger structure which may be a particular genre or range of intertextual connections, a model of a universal narrative structure or a system of recurrent patterns (Burry, 2002). They give this as an explanation why it is easier for an analyst who has more experience and exposure to literary theory to interpret a text than otherwise. Consequently, everything that is written seems to be governed by particular rules or what Seldon (2009; Britannica, 2009) call a “grammar of literature”, that one learns in educational institutions and that are to be unmasked.”

1.7.3 Narratological theory

Narratology is a theory of narrative texts which also guides this work. Of note concerning the theory are scholars like Gérard Genette and Mieke Bal. The theory may be applied to every

type of narrative text. This method is based on the assumption that certain characteristics can be defined in relation to narrative texts and these same characteristics used as tools for analysis of such texts. These characteristics are given the name “narrative system” (Bal, 1997:3).

As is the case with the formalists only the text is used during analysis to make a textual description. The concepts help the analyst to articulate or explain clearly and logically how they interpret a given text (Bal, 1997).

1.8 Research Method

The research was a qualitative desk research and the thematic method was used to analyse data.

1.9 Delimitation of the Study

The two novels, *The Chosen Bud* and *Bitterness* were the choice for this study. The choice of these two is not because other *Zambian* novels do not exist or that they are not potential subjects for study. On the other hand, having read the two novels, the researcher felt that they would make interesting subjects for such a research as this one.

1.10 Structure of the Dissertation

This dissertation is composed of six chapters. The first chapter provides the general introduction to the study. Further, this chapter covers the following items: introduction, purpose of the study, statement of the problem, objectives, research questions, study rationale, theoretical framework and the research method. Delimitations of the work are also highlighted in this chapter followed by the organisation of the dissertation. Other sections include a summary of the items dealt with in the chapter and operational definitions.

The second chapter reviews literature relevant to the study. In this chapter, the following sections are covered: studies conducted outside Africa, studies conducted in Africa with an exception of Zambia, studies conducted in Zambia and a conclusion of the literature reviewed.

The third chapter focuses on the Synopses of the two novels under study, John Luangala's *The Chosen Bud* and Malama Katulwende's *Bitterness*.

The fourth chapter deals with the narrative technique employed in the two texts under study, whereas the fifth chapter concerns itself with plot structures of the two texts. Finally the sixth chapter gives a summary of the findings of and recommendations are made here. They are all drawn from the findings of the study. The pages that come after this section cover the bibliography.

1.11 Conclusion

This chapter lays the foundation for the study. One may conclude that the Zambian novel has a background of the oral narrative and as such is probably influenced by the western concept of the novel but also the pre-literacy narrative. This being the case, it is possible to learn about the narrative techniques and plot structures of Zambian texts like most African novels by using two types of analytical tools. On one end, one may apply the principles of pre-literate or oral literature but on the other hand like the choice of this dissertation, Western methods may also be used. Therefore even if the principles of oral narratives will not be directly used their influence should not be ignored.

1.12 Operational Definitions

Below is a list of terms which have been defined in relation to how they are used in the dissertation:

- a) Narration: the act or process of telling a story.
- b) Narrative Text: A text in which an agent/ narrator relates (tells) a story in a particular medium (Bal, 1997).
- c) Narrative Technique: the author's choice of how or what methods the narrator will use to tell a story.
- d) Narrator: the person who is telling a story in a novel.
- e) Point of View: The perspective from which the reader views the action and characters.
- f) Prose Fiction: writing that does not adhere to any particular formal structures and is based on imaginary characters who resolve the conflicts of imagined events.
- g) Story-line: events following the order in which they actually happened
- h) Style: the kinds of words and sentences a writer chooses and the way the writer forms and weaves these into a complete work.
- i) **Zambian Prose Fiction** : Prose fiction which is published in Zambia, thematises life in Zambia or whose author has been/is resident in Zambia, either permanently or temporarily (Primorac, 2011).

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

2.0 Introduction

The previous chapter provided the introduction to this study. This chapter focuses on reviewing research based on narrative technique and plot structure of novels. Firstly, research on non African novels will be looked at. This will be followed by studies in relation to African novels with an exception of studies on Zambian texts. Studies conducted on Zambian novels will then be presented and discussed separately for the sake of clarity.

2.1 Non African Texts

The analysis of literature using formalist methods is not a new phenomenon the world over. Dr Lata Marina Varghese who though not comparing styles preferred studying a novel with a focus on style as a more thorough and distinctive method. It is her method of choice in her 2012 paper, “Stylistic Analysis of Emily Bronte’s *Wuthering Heights*.” According to her, a novel comes into existence through the creativity of the writer. The readers come in contact with the fictional world of the novels through its language. Hence, for comprehending fictional texts, a close study and analysis of language is a necessary prerequisite.

Stylistic analysis is used as a formalist analytical tool to see textual patterns and their significance. It is based on statistical data that validates how language, vocabulary and syntax are used to bring about interpretation of the text. Her study reveals that Bronte’s *Wuthering*

Heights contains multiple styles. She ultimately gives this as a probable reason the novel has modern critics speaking highly of the strength of the novel's structure and on Emily Bronte's dynamic and disciplined handling of language (Varghese, 2012).

Booker (1996) puts Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaids Tale* and Toni Morrison's *Beloved* under formalist scrutiny. According to him, *The Handmaids Tale* responds well to New Critical readings. Atwood who is an established poet, shows the evidence of close attention to language in the book. *The Handmaids Tale* is a story about a repressive dystopian America of the near future; it uses language that is "rhetoric, figurative, often playful and highly literary" (Booker, 1996: 258). For example Offred one of the key characters of the novel says, "we are two legged wombs, that's all: sacred vessels, ambulatory chalices" (Atwood, 1987:176). This reference to vessels and chalices is clearly ironic, linking the traditional religious significance of such items with traditional social attitudes toward women, attitudes that have been spectacularly literalised in the society of Gilead (Booker, 1996).

Booker calls Toni Morrison's *Beloved* an

extremely complex work of art that employs a number of sophisticated, self-conscious literary strategies. These strategies powerfully interact with the content of the book to make a statement about slavery and its effects, the impact of this statement potentially exceed any that might be achieved through a direct "scientific" account of the historical facts (1996: 256).

According to him, the most salient literary technique the author uses is the construction of the plot of the book. Following a distinction made by the Russian Formalists, the new critics highlight the strict difference between a story-as a sequence of events in chronological order-and a plot, which is the "structuring of the action as presented in a piece of fiction" (Brooks and

Warren, 1960: 80). This presentation may require a great deal of artistic intervention and restructuring of the action in non-sequential order.

The story of Sethe and her children is based on the real historical experiences of Margaret Gardner. In changing the events to fiction, Morrison changes a number of details to enhance the impact of her narrative. Most significantly, she relates the story not in chronological order but “in a highly complex and nonlinear form. The plot functions as kind of a puzzle, with bits and pieces of the story gradually falling into place as the reader makes her way through the book” (Booker, 1996: 286). In terms of narration, instead of presenting the narrative from the single objective point of view common in most conventional histories, Morrison narrates different parts of the story from the perspectives of different characters (Booker, 1996).

The studies discussed so far are relevant to the current study by virtue of them being formalist in nature. They may be concerned with other elements of style but still help to put the study into context. The following studies have dealt with one or even other elements of style like narrative technique and plot which are the core issues of this dissertation.

The *Signifying Monkey* (Gates, 1988) investigates the connection between Black vernacular tradition and the Afro-American literary tradition. The book is an effort to recognise a theory of criticism that is inscribed within the black vernacular tradition and inspires the shape of the Afro-American literary tradition. Gates uses this critical frame to study numerous key African-American works with emphasis on their narration style. In his chapter entitled, “Color Me Zora: Alice Walker’s (Re) Writing of the Speakerly Text” he shows through examination of The Anglo-American narrators published between 1770 and 1815 how the concern to

depict the quest of the black speaking subject to find his or her voice has been its most central trope. A double voiced narrative strategy as one of the ways of finding a voice has functioned as a sign both of the formal unity of the Afro-American literary tradition and of the integrity of the black subjects depicted in this literature (Gates, 1988: 239).

In *The Color Purple*, Celie as narrator is an example. “Celie’s voice in *The Color Purple*...is a spoken or mimetic voice, cast in dialect, yet marked as a written one—a mimetic voice masking as a mimetic one. If mimesis is a showing of the fact of telling, then Celie’s letters are visual representations that attempt to tell the fact of showing” (Gates, 1988: 243).

James Joyce’s master piece, *Ulysses* (1922), is put under the microscope in the 6th Edition of *Elements of Literature*. The novel is applauded for having had greater effect on the fiction of the twentieth century than any other work of its time, mostly as a result of his innovations in narrative method. With reference to this novel and *The Portrait of an Artist as a Young Man*, “Joyce’s use of point of view and his presentation of thoughts directed by association led to the best known characteristics of his mature style, called stream of consciousness” (Anderson *et al*, 1993: 969). In *Ulysses* much of the action of the novel is presented through the thoughts of its protagonists.

This is different from Mark Twain’s use of Huckleberry as narrator and point of view character. In an article entitled, ‘Romance and Reality, Land and River: The Journey as Repetitive Form in Huckleberry Finn’ (Guerin, 1966:124) we are informed that

Twain was not limited to a pattern that can be charted, as it were on graph paper. In a master stroke of the creative art, he chose Huck Finn himself as the point-of-view character. In doing so, Twain abandoned the simpler omniscient (or authorial) point of view that he had very

successfully used in The Adventures of Tom Sawyer for a relatively sophisticated technique. He allowed the central character to relate his adventures in his own way-the point of view called first-person narrator.

In terms of the plot, its progression has an effect on the total shape of the work. The apparently aimless plot with its straight forward sequence, what happened, what happened next, and then what happened after that, to paraphrase Gertrude Stein, is admirably suited to the personality of Huck as the narrator (Guerin, 1966). The novel has no real centre to the plot, instead we have what Kenneth Burke has called repetitive form: “The consistent maintaining of the principle under new guises...a restatement of the same thing in different ways...A succession of images, each of them regiving the same lyric changing situations; the sustaining of an attitude as in satire....” (1953:125). In spite of different settings and dramatis personae, the separate episodes share a collective role which is their repetitive form (respectability and piety).

2.2 African Texts

The formalist method of analysis can be seen on the African scene as well. Oyekan (2009) uses the method to conclude that the new trend in Lusophone African literature manifests itself mainly in poetry style in which it infuses issues of identity, ethnicity, and alienation. One critic has described this “as tropical sensuousness” (Oyekan, 2009:1).

George Heron’s close reading reveals the style and language of *Song of Lawino* and *Song of Ocol*. He argues that a big influence on *Song of Lawino* is the way in which Okot has translated the Acoli poem *Wer pa Lawino*. His translation is very literal and this leads to extraordinary uses of English which help to give the poem its special character (1975).

Evidence of formalist reading and the employment of special narrative technique has been revealed in Dathorne's analysis of Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* and Ngugi wa Thiongo's *A Grain of Wheat*. He argues that in *Things Fall Apart*, Okonkwo's story is not biographical. Achebe manages to create a fictitious hero, a compelling man with weird old-world qualities. Because Achebe imaginatively brings his world to life, one can believe in Okonkwo's values especially because these values matter to the message of the novel. He resorts to a number of devices which make his plot unique. For example, he uses folktales and proverbs, which help to give a flavour of authenticity to the writing "and the conversations, do not simply exist as anthropological curiosities but are well integrated into the Novel" (1974: 68).

Of *A Grain of Wheat*, Dathorne (1974) concludes that, although it centres on the struggle for independence, the plot demonstrates a developed manipulation of the literary art. Through nonstop flashbacks, Ngugi introduces a variety of interconnected characters and shows how the past of each character has influenced other characters and how their present is a mere masking of the past.

2.3 Zambian Texts

In Zambia not many studies have been done in critical study of Zambian literature. In terms of the actual texts which have been published, some bibliographies exist. The first one is John Chileshe's which is a compilation of works in English published in Zambia up to 1986. This work includes works by Zambian authors but also a few by non-Zambians who have published in Zambia. Some of the non-Zambian authors include Beatrice Archer, Robert Baptie, Timothy Holmes, Fergus Macpherson, Carl Mason, Liebetraut Rothert-Sarvan, David Wallace and Chiman Vyas (Chileshe, 1988).

Ranka Primorac in her later bibliography which covers Zambian novels up to 2011 called Chileshe's work a pioneering effort (Primorac, 2011) and even sources some of her information from it. In 2011 the lecturer from the University of South Hampton compiled a bibliography of Zambian Literature with the title "*Zambia's Literature, an Overshadowed Literature: Mapping the Field: A Bibliography of Zambia's Literature in English*". Indeed the two bibliographies have helped to map the field of literature which most Zambians did not even know existed.

Of the literature itself, Primorac posits that Zambian written literature in English is not large and not much of it is (or has been) globally marketed. She however refuses to see this lack as a symptom of literary "underdevelopment"; she instead sees it thus:

I choose to read Zambian writing in English as the embodiment of what might be called a literariness of crisis. For much of its history, written literary texts from Zambia have been produced by a tiny cultural elite, which was prevented (by economic and political circumstances) from specialising in, or professionalising, the practice of producing English-language writing. Such circumstances have produced a body of work in which the aesthetic functioning of texts is not separate from their non-aesthetic, or utilitarian, functioning. (Primorac, 2011:1)

When it comes to the actual study of novels, most available work is thematic with very little focusing on narrative technique or plot structure or even other elements of style. The few studies which are relevant to this study were published more than twenty years ago but have become rarer over the years. Dathorne's (1974) analysis of Dominic Mulaisho's *Tongue of The Dumb* and Andrey Masiye's *New Dawn*, Leonard Chirwa's "*The Zambian Short Story In English, Contextual Study Of Form*"(1989) and Joseph Likokoto Mbuyu's "*Craftmanship and Partisanship in Zambian Prose Fiction Since Independence: A Critical Evaluation of the Novels of Mulaisho, Masiye, Saidi and Sibale*" (1991) are such works.

Darhorne (1974) in his analysis of Zambian prose fiction in English looks at *Tongue of the Dumb* (1971) and *Before Dawn*, amongst others. He points to Mulaisho's use of proverbs, songs and other oral material which help to give validity to the novel. Nevertheless, he adds that the author does not seem to be at all times aware of "the strictness of control that a novel has; so journeys are made, characters introduced, incidents narrated without contributing to the central effect of the novel" (1974:149).

Of *Before Dawn*, he advises that it has infrequent parts of documentary interest but because the writer is sometimes not sure of his position as novelist,

he tries to pack too much into his one hundred and thirty-six pages...to have bundled them all together means that the reader ends up with a bad love story, a sloppy war account, a half-hearted treatment of the African/European confrontation, and a superficial portrayal of local life and customs (1974:147).

Chirwa's is a contextual study of form, theme and linguistic medium. His paper offers a brief history on short story writing in Zambia and highlights literary and extra literary influences on the main thematic and technical trends and subjects selected texts to scrutiny. He discovers the lack of discipline and design in the mismanagement of promising plots, the inclusion of incidental detail, the needless qualification of characters' speeches, the unnecessary elucidation of well-known traditional concepts, ungrammatical English and over-reliance on stereotyped plots. Further he discovered the use in some of the works not only of traditional proverbs but also what he calls "zambianisms" and other language strategies drawn from the use of English in Zambia.

Mbwayu's study examines craftsmanship and partisanship in the following texts, *Before Dawn*, *Between Two Worlds*, *The Hanging*, *The Tongue of The Dumb* and *The Smoke that Thunders*. His conclusions, very similar to Dathorne's, are that the technical skills of the selected writers are generally clumsy and this is shown in many ways. The characters tend to be wooden, there is usually unnecessary inclusion of sociological information for its own sake; and in the language and style there is a tendency to overuse the direct style, a practice which tends to reduce the significance of the texts (Mbwayu, 1991).

In recent years two studies come close to our study, one is Cheela Chilala's 2006 "*An analysis of Gender Issues in Zambian Literature in English*" because it is based on English novels. The study analyses how gender issues are treated in six Zambian texts written in English. These novels are *The Accusing Finger*, *Ticklish Sensation*, *Changing Shadows*, *Picking up the Pieces*, *Behind the Closed Doors*, and *Fight for Justice* by Nyambe Wina, Gideon Phiri, Henry Musenge, Maliya Mzyece Sililo, Susan Chitabanta and Josephine Bwalya Muchelemba respectively. The purpose was to identify intratextual and intertextual common features and trends. His findings were that Zambian Literary works in English "are not only male dominated, but also perpetuate and largely reflect the gender inequalities of Zambian society" (2006: iii).

The other work is Shadreck Kondala's "*Nature of Plots in Bemba Novels: The Case of Chilangwa's Sheli wa citatu, Kasonkomona's Ubuseko mu Bulanda, and Luanshi's Ukutangila Tekufika.*" Kondala's 2013 work focuses on plot structure though in Zambian novels written in Bemba. Kondala specifically looked at the nature of plots in the three novels written in Bemba. His work investigates Chilangwa's *Sheli Wa Citatu*, Kasonkomona's *Ubuseko Mu Bulanda*, and

Launshi's *Ukutangila Tekufika*. He uses Freytag's pyramid and Denise Paulme's model as his theoretical framework. He opts to use Freytag's pyramid of plot progression as opposed to Aristotle's plot structure model although the former is a hybrid form of the latter. The researcher informs that the theory of choice is associated with Gustav Freytag (1816-1895), a German novelist and dramatist who developed this type of analysis of plot in his work *Technique of the Drama* (1863).

The Freytag's pyramid is especially useful in plotting the course of the conflict from the beginning to the end of a text: As the plot unfolds, it goes through the following stages: the first is the exposition in which characters are introduced and the author can use it to set the scene, provide background information and establish the situation and date the action. The second main step is the rising action before which something happens and propels the rising action. This event is called the inciting incident and it is sometimes called the complication. In the rising action the story is built up and gets more exciting. The conflict may also be introduced in here if it has not been mentioned before in the exposition. After this, comes the climax which is followed by the falling action. The climax is a point of emotional intensity and directly precipitates the resolution of the conflict. It is the moment of greatest tension in a story. In most instances, the climax is the most exciting event. The falling action involves actions that happen as a result of the climax and shows the reader that the story will soon end. Lastly, the resolution indicates directly how the conflict has been settled. This part shows how the character solves the main conflict or how someone solves it for him or her. The dénouement (French for 'untying') comes last. (Kondala, 2013)

The second model on which Kondala's work is based is by Denise Paulme (1976:19-50).

According to her there are seven structural plot types which can be identified based on the events or actions that take place in a narrative.

The first is ascendancy where at the beginning of this type of story, or specifically plot, there is lack. This is followed by amelioration (improvement) that ends with the liquidation of lack (lack is eliminated). Next is descendancy which begins with a normal situation and then deteriorates into lack. The sequence that follows is permanent negative condition. The third plot type is cyclical which starts from the one situation other and back to the first one. The fourth is the spiral type. The fifth type is the mirror image. This structural type involves two main characters taking equal sequence of tests but their actions are inversely related; one is good and the other bad. The positive character is rewarded while the negative one is punished. The next type is the hour glass which is similar to the mirror image. However, while in the mirror image the actions of the two characters are parallel to each other, the actions of the two characters in the hour glass are in opposition to each other. The protagonist moves from lack to normal situation whereas the antagonist descends from normal situation to lack. The final and the seventh is the complex type. This type shares a similarity with the hour glass by having two characters opposing each other. (Kondala, 2013:20-21).

The research revealed that not all the novels that are written in the Bemba language are made up of *traditional* plots (simple). Some authors adopt a *traditional* style while others adopt a *complex* one. *Ubuseko Mu Bulanda* has a *complex* plot on the basis that the novel follows more than one major character, that is, Ronald and Webster and it is not strictly chronological. On the contrary, *Sheli Wa Citatu* and *Ukutangila Tekufika* have *traditional* plots that are mainly chronological and their plots follow strictly the story of the main character, that is, Sheli and Lucy, respectively.

2.4 Conclusion

It may be noted that there have been more studies of this nature outside the African continent than within. In Zambia the situation is even worse, such work is extremely inadequate. Although

some of the studies point at examples of Zambian prose fiction style, they were carried out not less than two decades ago. Further, while these studies were more general, this research concentrates on specific elements of style, narration and plot structure. Of Chilala's and Kondala's, one is only similar to this study because it is focused on novels written in English and the other one as much as it looked at plot did so by studying Bemba novels. Not only that but the approach is different from our study. It is therefore clear to see that this work is the first of its kind in Zambia. This study is therefore new not only for this reason but it was not a study based on international novels or African novels outside Zambia.

CHAPTER THREE

Synopses of *The Chosen Bud* and *Bitterness*

3.0 Introduction

The present chapter will give detailed summaries of the two novels under study. There are *The Chosen Bud and Bitterness* by John Luangala and Malama Katulwende respectively.

3.1 The Chosen Bud

John Luangala's novel was published in 1991 by the Kenneth Kaunda Foundation. This novel centres on the unjust killing of Leria, a much loved young woman ("the chosen bud") who comes back from the dead to seek her revenge. Leria's appearance shocks and baffles members of her clan. According to the elders, this has a very important message which they must find and sort out so that their loved one can rest.

The novel opens with an epigraph by the author which clearly tells us that the story will be about a bud whose life has been cut short. The main narration then starts with a scene in Malenga village in the Eastern Province of Zambia. We see an apparently dead person appearing to the villagers. After this chapter the story moves back and forth and we learn about characters through their memories and then these take us back to the present.

We are introduced to Chinsamba through a flashback and we learn that he and Nanzama are the parents to the late Leria. It is here that we are introduced to life in the village, how Chinsamba and his age mates took part in the dancing competition with other villages and how he was one of the best drummers in his own village. It was on one of these trips that he first saw Nanzama

and married her. At the same time we learn that most of Nanzama's family were dead due to a family curse and she is the only one left who can carry the family to the next generation through her offspring. When Leria is born, the responsibility of continuing Nanzama's family line now rests on Leria because Nanzama does not have any more children.

In another flashback which is old Sicholo's, we learn more about the family. In a previous chapter we learnt that he is the older brother to Leria's grandmother, Chikasi. He is the oldest living relative of Leria. He remembers a similar incident to Leria's when his grandfather Chimbamba had been in the forefront of sorting out the problem. The case was a difficult one. One of his relatives Malipa had married a third wife but his second wife Mphingo was not happy thinking that he would begin to favour the third wife. However Malipa was very fair to all his wives, but despite this, Mphingo found herself a secret lover, Malipa's brother, Mbambiko. The two met many a night but they soon became dissatisfied with just being lovers and wanted more.

Using medicine from Mbambiko's aunt Nyakasinya (who was a witch and favoured Mbambiko over Malipa) the two lovers kill Malipa. They get married but their marriage is short lived because not only is there a challenge during his burial but he begins to appear to the villagers and soon to the two lovers, a clear sign of protest over his unfair death. The elders of the village meet and they only know of one solution, "The custom dictated that they go to the village shrines and consult their ancestors. The ancestors would explain everything to them and tell them what to do to appease Malipa's spirit so that it could go back and rest with those who had already departed and were already in another world" (Luangala,1991:44). This is what was done and the culprits were brought to book. At a meeting held by the family, Sicholo presides over proceedings and the family decide that as in Malipa's case, they will approach their ancestors at the village shrine for direction. A decision is reached to go the following morning.

In the next chapter we see Sicholo failing to sleep, he is bothered that the family seems to have lost the favour of the ancestors. If it is that they still protected them they would not have allowed Leria's death. According to him, he is certain the ancestors have forsaken them because they have allowed one of their children to go astray. This is his daughter Nthimbiko's son and also his grandson Kalimbambo. This child has become an important person in government but does not want to have anything to do with his roots. He rarely comes to the village except to campaign by cheating people.

Sicholo remembers how he came back tongue tied on his last visit to his grandson's home in Lusaka. Kalimbambo had a very good wife by the name of Esneya who had been with him for a number of years and had borne him six children and would have had more had he not left her for another girl. When Sicholo visits Kalimbambo's home in Lusaka, his grandson rarely talks to him and when he does, it is to curtly answer questions. He never allows his children to sit with their grandfather stating that he does not want them to associate with witches, that the village his grandfather came from was a filthy place and so on.

When their father is not around, they sit with him but as soon as they hear the voice of their father they disappear. His wife, Esneya informs him that Kalimbambo has banned the children from learning Nsenga and told them to only speak English. This upsets Sicholo and when he tries to confront his grandchild, the confrontation ends in a bleeding mouth for Esneya and old Sicholo being pushed and falling. After this Sicholo gathers his belongings and sleeps at a neighbour's servant quarters. The following day after explaining the situation to the neighbours, the Mulengas, they tell him to reconcile with his grandchild, to which he refuses. They help him with his bus fare and he goes back to his home.

Sicholo's memories take him back to how Kalimbambo behaved when Esneya took his children to the village. He had always refused her to take them there. When he goes abroad, she brings them home but they do not stay long because their father returns earlier than expected and comes to get his children. When Esneya goes back to Lusaka, she finds another woman in the house, a fight ensues and that is the end of her marriage. Kalimbambo's new wife is a disgrace to the family. When Kalimbambo's mother, who does not listen to Sicholo's warning goes to visit, she ends up coming back faster than she went. She disowns him and the next time he shows his face in the village she refuses to see him. Sicholo also comments on how Kalimbambo is not behaving worthy of the name of the grandfather after whom he was named.

In the next chapter we find out that even Nanzama mother of Leria cannot sleep that night. She remembers how the early days in her marriage to Chinsamba had been. The following day, early in the morning the family elders led by Sicholo trek to the village shrine. Upon reaching the shrine, Sicholo digs a small hole in which he puts a white chicken after killing it and allows its blood to flow into the hole. He then pours unfermented beer into the same hole. After doing so he presents their problem to the ancestors. The group then hears a strange voice which informs them that the cause of the problem is Kalimbambo – just as Sicholo suspected. He killed Leria for his own selfish ambitions.

The narration shifts to Kalimbambo and we are told how he had driven to Bauleni compound to see a medicine man that his best friend had recommended as a way of getting votes. Kalimbambo is very much against the people in rural areas and shanty compounds and feels that they should be left the way they are and those who, like him, are destined to rule must be left to do so. They are the ones after all who say, "the tortoise does not hope to eat from the tree one

day” (Luangala, 1991: 153). What he had experienced during colonial rule had left a huge mark on him such that he just knew that people like him were meant to rule.

Kalimbambo’s thoughts take him further back to his childhood, he does not know exactly when he was born nor did his parents or grandparents. He was educated by missionaries in a nearby village up to Standard Three but when he wanted to proceed, he needed more money as further education could only be gotten from a missionary further away from the village. His family did not understand why he wanted to be educated and so did not support him financially even after he tried every trick he knew. He instead ended up getting married to Esneya.

It was about this time that everyone had to pay hut tax. The colonial agents would sometimes come unannounced and this was stressful for the villagers. One time they arrived and Kalimbambo and others who did not pay were handcuffed and taken to Fort Jameson to be formally arrested. When he learnt to behave calmly and be obedient, he was released after five months. On his way back home he heard of paid work in Lusaka and decided that he would go there.

He travelled with other job seekers and managed to get his first job at a Boer’s farm in Chisamba area. After his experience at Fort Jameson, he was very hard working and soon became a kitchen boy. After one year the Boer sold his farm to a Mr. Timble who Kalimbambo now worked for, the new master was not as rough. After two years he was transferred to work for Tom Timble the younger brother to his master. At this time he had already brought his wife to live with him. He ended up having an affair with his boss’s wife such that when the time came for the couple to go back to England, after three years, the madam convinced her husband to take him with them.

In England she became careless and ended up having a child by him. This was too much and Kalimbambo was sent back to Zambia. His mistress did not abandon him though, she wrote good references for him to a friend at a Ndola hotel. It was while working at the hotel that he started to discover his pride as a human being. He got involved in federation time politics, the Chachacha of the 1960's, and became a prominent leader in UNIP. He was one of the first MPs and for the first years stood for elections in a constituency in Ndola until he was connected to some scandals there. He then moved to his own home village where his scandals were not known. He had always won elections easily but now things did not look good for him. Previously people in his constituency were less politically conscious and more tolerant of his political manipulation.

We are taken back to Kalimbambo's trip to the shanty compound. When he reaches the wizard's house, he is told that in order to win the election the wizard will concoct a very strong medicine but besides that he will have to sacrifice one of his relatives, a niece or nephew most loved in the family. Kalimbambo readily offers Leria while pretending to be sorry. Leria will be the main sacrifice but her one year old son Nsangu must be included to strengthen the medicine. The wizard tells him that the deaths will be so sudden that the people will not even know what has killed their relatives. He advises that the minister will receive a telegram about the death but he is not supposed to see the coffins or the charms will be rendered powerless. Hence the plan is that the deaths should take place while he is outside the country but that he has to show his presence at the village after two weeks. After that the election would be simple. When it would be time for nominations, he would be unopposed. The minister is happy about the outcome because he believes that he has sorted out the problem.

In the next chapter, we are taken to Leria's husband's village. His name is Luponda and he is still mourning his lost love and wife. He has heard about the consultations taking place at his in-law's village. He remembers how he had married his young bride. They were the pride of the village and everyone was even happier when Nsangu was born. Luponda would never forget the night his wife and child died.

The last stage of the funeral rites which is the beer party was due in two weeks when Leria began to appear to the people. Someone had suggested a witch finder be sought as this was clearly witchcraft but Sicholo had refused saying it would just antagonise the family. They would instead do what used to be done in the past, wait on the ancestors if they had something to communicate because they knew very well what had happened. With such memories Luponda cannot help but start weeping loudly again and it is his grandmother who comes to comfort him.

Kalimbambo starts having nightmares and Leria begins to appear to him even during the day. He does not tell his wife but decides to see the wizard again. The wizard tells him that he forgot to give him the protective medicine. To make it, he would have to provide hairs from his nostril, some saliva, his urine and a toe nail from his foot. Not only that but he would also have to get some soil from the graves of the deceased which the wizard is sure he being a brave man would not be scared to collect at night. Kalimbambo therefore decides to set out the very day and does not tell even his young wife where he is going.

Kalimbambo reaches the village but to no welcome at all. He is killed and all evidence hidden. What follows are rumour after rumour without anything concrete information on Kalimbambo's fate.

3.2 Bitterness

Malama Katulwende's *Bitterness* was published in 2005 by Mondial in New York . It is a bildungsroman, it is not only a boy's growth from childhood to adulthood but also his psychological growth from ignorance to an open minded awareness of himself. In order for this transformation to take place, the protagonist Besa must defy all odds and defy his family's wishes. His journey takes him from his home village in Samfya to the University of Zambia, back to his village and finally Lusaka.

The story opens with a prologue in which an elderly man is cursing a son who we assume is his son for abandoning the ways of the land and taking up new ways. He says: "Now I know my son, that you have betrayed this land, this Ngumbo country for which I am cursing you, you traitor of my own blood" (Katulwende, 2005: i).

In the first chapter we are introduced to Musunga Fyonse who we later learn is Besa's father. We are taken through his typical day which reveals life in the village, in Samfya Luapula Province of Zambia. He visits the shrine and we learn that he does not only believe in the traditional religion but is also a priest at the shrine, a position which is inherited through the family line. He decides to take cassava to his cousin's home. On his way he has to pass through the town centre where we are presented with a usual day at the shops or business centre.

Business is on as usual but he is appalled at the trading situation at Samfya town. According to him things have changed. He muses that this is not the way things used to be, modernity has slowly crept in destroying the core of traditional life, which was kinship. This reminds him of the incident he witnessed when he was at the shrine where a family were trying to take their sick relative to the hospital on a wheel barrow. When they tried to ask for a ride from a passing car

the driver who was a black man passed them without stopping and the sick woman died before even reaching the hospital. At the market a boy is beaten for stealing what Musunga learns was maize meal and it makes him wonder why this is happening when in old times no one would beat up a hungry person who probably just needed to eat.

At his cousins place we discover from the conversation taking place that Musunga has a son Besa who has done very well in his Secondary School Leaving Exams and will be going to one of the colleges or even University in Lusaka. It is clear that this is an opportunity for one of the family members to get educated and help the family out of poverty.

In the chapters Four to Seven we first meet Musunga's son our protagonist Besa. We learn that he is eager to go to college; he is a rather quiet guy though very confident and hardworking. While waiting to go to college, he engages himself in odd jobs like being a tour guide in the area. As he is walking on the Samfya beach, he sees two girls who seem to be a little misplaced and his suspicions are confirmed when he learns that the two are students from Evelyn Hone college and are just on work attachment at Samfya Hospital. They approach him to ask about the area and he offers to give them a tour of the place at a fee. They agree and in fact suggest that he should show them all the key sights and they suggest doing this every weekend until they leave.

The girls are named Musonda and Beauty. Besa becomes interested in Musonda whom he describes as not being very physically attractive but he explains that she has a very good character, and he finds that she is unlike the village girls who are only interested in him because of his education. After many attempts at making her his girlfriend she agrees upon being certain

of his seriousness. They become inseparable, with promises to love each other till the end. Besa receives his acceptance letter from the University of Zambia.

In chapters Seven and Eight we are taken back to Musunga's reminisces of the lost past. In the next chapter, we find Besa in a University of Zambia room studying. We are informed that he is a second year History student in the School of Education. A girl comes looking for him at his room, but he denies his identity for security reasons. We learn that he is secretary of a controversial University publication in which he writes under a pseudonym, 'Ferio'. The girl wants to become a contributor to the publication. When he changes his mind to go after the girl who we later learn is Shantiee, he does not find her. He sees her some time later in the library but she refuses to talk to him, having known all along that he had lied about his true identity. However later on as he is coming out of a tutorial, he meets her going for a lecture and approaches her. She is sorry for her actions in the library and he too is sorry about his behaviour at the room. At this stage we do not know what has happened to his relationship with Musonda because the last time he was with her "he led his beloved to a room at a rest house" (Katulwende, 2005:81) in Samfya.

In this chapter, the girl is flirting with Besa and Besa is clearly flirting back. In order to make up for her over reaction in the library she offers him supper and he agrees:

"Can we have supper together and maybe share a drink in my place? I have a bottle of wine."

Besa replies, "That sounds great, but when?" and she replies, "Today! I'll come to your place at eighteen and we'll go to Makumbi."

He answers: "That's okay with me. So we have a date!"

and She says, "I'll see you later. Take care" (Katulwende, 2006:121).

It is only in Chapter Ten that we learn as Besa narrates to Shantiee that Musonda actually drowned and died in Lake Bangweulu and Besa was deeply scarred by the ordeal. He remembers how he and Musonda had continued communicating frequently via phone and mail after his going to the university. How one day he was called out of a lecture by the academic office that he had received a phone call. It was Beauty, Musonda's friend, who had called to inform him that Musonda had gotten lost along with some other passengers when the canoe in which they were travelling capsized. He immediately left for Samfya but when Musonda's body was found, she was dead.

After this chapter Shantiee and Besa are inseparable. She comes from a very wealthy family in Mufulira. She is daughter of a prominent Italian businessman and a black Zambian woman. She is a first year Microbiology student. The government which has its ears on the ground over any kind of student activism soon realises that University publications including the one Besa contributes to are becoming a major threat to government operations. They ban all such publications. The students demonstrate and despite being discouraged by Shantiee Besa joins the other students. After all he under the Ferio pseudonym had written a lot of things condemning government policies. He and some other students are arrested for student activism but released after their fellow students march to the police station and protest there. It is during the arrest that Shantiee realises that she is in love with Besa and she reads more of his work and understands him better. After this Besa and Shantiee get engaged. Only her parents who adore Besa attend the engagement party, together with one of Besa's friends, an engineering student. His name is Washama also from the same village as Besa. His parents are not in attendance.

In the next chapter the story shifts to Besa after school. He is living a life of poverty in Chawama township of Lusaka. He is a teacher but has not been included on the payroll for three months. He is heavy in debt and does not even know where to turn. We are again kept in the dark about Besa's relationship with Shantie until Besa meets his friend Washama who is now an engineer. Washama advises his friend not to be embarrassed about his life now and communicate with Shantie who he has avoided since his graduation because he does not want her to see his sorry state.

The communication lapse is soon sorted out when Besa loses his mother. Shantie is not the only one who Besa feels he has let down. Even if he is now working, he has not been able to live up to his parent's and relatives' expectations. He remembers how his whole extended family had sent him off, with a party and gifts, how his uncle had even taken him through a religious ritual for protection.

He receives a letter from his father informing him of his mother's illness. His father complains of how the family have not benefited in any way from his education and assume he has abandoned them. He informs Besa that his mother had fallen and broken her back while fetching water. Due to lack of money the family has failed to take her to the University Teaching Hospital in Lusaka as recommended by the doctors. He is told that he is their only hope. Besa is reduced to tears; he gets some time off from work and decides to first call Samfya hospital before making arrangements to travel. He is told that his mother already passed on that very morning. He collapses and as he is coming round the only name he remembers is Washama's girlfriend and her work place, The British Council. The next time he wakes up he is at Washama's flat. His friend makes arrangements for him to travel and he leaves for Samfya.

After the burial, his uncle comes to him reminding him of the village girl they had chosen for him before he left for the university. They inform him that they need to make progress on the issue. Besa informs them that he has not changed his mind about not wanting to marry her. In fact he tells them that he is to marry Shantiee the girl he had told his father about. His father scolds him and tells him that he will not support his intention to marry a woman who is not only from another part of the country but also coloured. He uses this opportunity to curse his son who he condemns for not even being able to buy a coffin for his mother who has been buried in a *chitenge* material. He disowns him and tells him that since he no longer wants to comply with the traditions of his home, he is no longer his father's son.

After Chapter Thirteen, Besa goes back to Lusaka only to find that his friend Washama has informed Shantiee about his mother's death and how devastated he has been. Washama arranges a meeting for Besa and Shantiee at his flat. The two lovebirds reconcile and Shantiee assures him that she would never leave him or be ashamed of his poverty. She informs him how even her wealthy parent's story is one of rags to riches. Together with Washama they persuade him to resign and come out of his misery. Shantiee advises him that serving the country does not necessarily mean they should stay in the country. They decide that it is better for him to go and teach in another country where conditions are better, just for a while, then the two would be back home actually better equipped to contribute to the country. We now see a liberated Besa who resigns and is ready to face the world.

The novel ends in the same way it started, with an epilogue, the last words of the speaker in the prologue. "My eyes are now closed, and my tongue has clung to the roof of my mouth. I have a beginning and an end" (Katulwende, 2005: 277). There is nothing more that can be said.

3.3 Conclusion

This chapter has given detailed summaries of the two novels under analysis. These are John Luangala's, *The Chosen Bud* and Malama Katulwende's *Bitterness*. The next chapter will begin to discuss the findings of the research.

CHAPTER FOUR

Narrative Techniques in *The Chosen Bud* and *Bitterness*

4.0 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is first to examine the narrative techniques used in the two novels under study. Secondly, to discuss the similarities and differences between the narrative techniques of *The Chosen Bud* and *Bitterness*. Thirdly, the significance of the similarities and differences will be discussed. The narrative techniques have been divided into four categories: narrative time, narrative mood, narrative instance and narrative level (Genette, 1980) and will be discussed as such.

4.1 Narrative Techniques

The four areas stated in the introduction will be the focus of this section. However it is paramount to add detail on the categories. Narrative time is divided into *order*, *duration* and *frequency*. According to Genette (1980) the *order* or chronology of a story can be manipulated by what he calls *anachrony*. Anachronies are of two types and these are *analepsis* (flashback) and *prolepsis* (flashforward). He further differentiates between internal and external analepses. An external analepsis is one whose entire extent remains external to the extent of the narrative and internal analepsis is one whose extent is within the confines of the narrative. An anachrony can reach into the past or the future either more or less far from the “present” moment and this temporal distance is called the anachrony’s reach. The anachrony itself can also cover duration of story that is more or less long and this is referred to as its extent.

Concerning the aspect of *duration*, it is not easy to measure the duration of a story in relation to the duration of the narrative for the simple reason that duration of the narrative is normally the reading time and this is relative from one person to another. Therefore it is variations in narrative speed (isochronism) which were measured:

Not relatively by comparing its duration to that of the story it tells, but in a way that is more or less absolute and autonomous, as steadiness in speed. By speed we mean the relationship between a temporal dimension and a spatial dimension...the speed of a narrative will be defined by the relationship between a duration (that of the story, measured in seconds, minutes, hours, days, months and years) and a length (that of the text measured in lines and pages) (Genette,1985:87).

There are four ways of speeding up or slowing down a narrative and these are *summary*, *pause*, *scene* and *ellipsis*. *Summary* is used when the author summarises a part of the story with the effect of speeding up the narrative. In this case story time (ST) becomes greater than the narrative time (NT), that is $NT < ST$. *Pause* or descriptive pause has to do with description made by the narrator which has nothing to do with characters' actions but "where the narrator departing from the course of the story makes it his business, in his name and solely for the information of his reader, to describe a scene that at this point in the story no one, strictly speaking is looking at" (Genette,1980:100).

Ellipsis is another way of manipulating the speed of a narrative with the result of quickening it. This is done by leaving gaps or eliding some story time. It may be explicit: that is the time evaded is specifically or definitely mentioned ("20 years ago" for example) and also indefinitely ("some years passed"). The *ellipsis* may also be implicit when the gap is concluded by the

seeming lapse in time between two instances. The story time (ST) is greater than the narrative time (NT).

Scene as opposed to *summary* refers to the detailed dramatic instances of a narrative. Conventionally these instances are equal in time to that of the story (Genette, 1980). Examples of such instances are dialogues. Here the story time (ST) is equal to narrative time (NT).

Narrative *frequency* has to do with narrative time. It is the number of times an event happens in the story in relation to how many times it is mentioned in the narrative. The situation may be reduced to three categories which are singulative (when an action which happened once is mentioned once), repeating narrative (when an event which happened once is repeated more than once), iterative narrative (when an event which happened many times is mentioned only once).

The second category is narrative mood. This technique has to do with how the narrator narrates events in a narrative to get the effect of seeming more or less involved in the narrative. Genette contends that “there are degrees of diegesis (telling) with the narrator either more involved or less involved in the narrative leaving less room or more for the narrative act” (<http://www.signosemio.com/genette/narratology.asp> accessed on 18/06/2014). This effect can be achieved by manipulation of what is called *distance*.

Distance deals with the choice of language which ranges from most distant to least distant. The *narratised* speech is the most distant because thought, action and speech are one. Here the narrator narrates every event like any other event such that the narrator does not at any time seem involved in the action of the narrative. An example is: “He arrived home and found his wife with another man. In anger he threw plates on the floor, broke the t.v, beat up the man and his

wife, then told her to pack her bags.” In *narratised* speech one need not mention all the things he did but just that “the man was very angry”.

Further we have the *transposed indirect speech* which is more involved than the *narratised* mode although it does not use the actual words spoken but uses indirect speech: “I told my sister that I would buy her a car.” The *transposed free indirect* style is similar to the former but does not use the subordinating conjunction: “I told my sister: I would buy her a car.” The use of the *reported speech* is by far the most involved or the least distant form of narration. The narrator uses direct speech of the characters: “I will buy you a car,” I told my sister.

The third category of concern is *narrative instance*. The narrative instance is the conjunction between narrative perspective (through whom are we perceiving?), narrative voice (who is telling the story) and time of the narration (when does the telling occur, relative to the story?). By investigating the narrative instance we can gain a better understanding of the relations between the narrator and the story in a given narrative.

The *perspective* is what is traditionally known as “point of view” but Genette (1980) rechristens this *focalisation*. That is the perspective from which the narrative is told which is not always the narrator’s. Genette distinguishes among three types of focalisation. There is what he calls *zero focalisation* which is the same as the omniscient point of view where the narrator knows more than the characters and is all knowing. Then he differentiates between external and internal focalisation. In *external focalisation* the narrator knows less than the characters and what he knows he only does by following the actions of the characters and does not know their thoughts. In internal focalisation the narrator knows as much as the focal character and can only read that character’s thoughts and not any other character.

Depending on the perspective it is possible to identify the *voice* of the narrative. While perspective has to do with the point of view (the position taken by the narrator) the voice of the narrative (the person telling the story) is the presence or absence of the narrator in the narrative. It must be noted that the person telling the story does not always use his or her own point of view. If the narrator is external the voice is heterodiegetic, if internal it is homodiegetic and if he is the hero it is autodiegetic.

The time of narration is the time of the narration in relation to the story. This can be *subsequent* (telling a story which is past), *prior* (telling a story which will happen in the future), *simultaneous* (telling a story as it is unfolding) and *interpolated* (mixture of subsequent and simultaneous narration).

The fourth category of analysis is the narrative level. This has to do with whether the narrative is told from one level or more. A situation in which the narrator manipulates the narrative by adding shorter narratives in the narrative which are not only told by a different narrator but also from other perspectives is called embedding. The main plot is called the *extradiegetic* narrative (first level) while the embedded one is called *intradiegetic* (second level). If this one also has an embedded narrative it is also called *intradiegetic* (second level). In some cases these levels overlap and when they do this is called *metalepsis*. An example of embedding is Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*. The main plot is about Marlow and the others going to sea and then Marlow one of the crew starts telling a different story of his adventure to *Heart of Darkness*. The second story is embedded and therefore on the second level.

4.1.1 The Chosen Bud

First and foremost, John Luangala's *The Chosen Bud* is mainly made up of *analepses*. In fact the plot progresses in a series of flashbacks; first by Chinsamba whose memories are all external

for none take place within the extent of the narrative (His marriage to Nanzama and even Leria's birth have all taken place by the time the narrative starts). When Sicholo tells us about a problem his ancestors had, the flashback is also external because he remembers what happened long before the point at which the narrative starts. Even the memory of his visit to Kalimbambo's home and the events that follow are external. Kalimbambo's flashbacks are partly external and partly internal. As a matter of fact, they have a very long *reach* that is from his childhood to the present. Lastly, Luponda's flashback although external does not have a very long *reach* for it only goes as far back as when he married Leria.

There are fewer scenes representing the present and without anachrony, the events of the story would have been that Leria and her son, though dead, begin appearing to the living and because of this, her family have a meeting and decide to offer a sacrifice to the ancestors at the shrine in order to get answers over the issue. They are told that it is Kalimbambo their kinsman who has killed the two in order to win elections. Eventually, Leria starts appearing even to Kalimbambo and he goes back to the medicine man who gives him medicine for protection. The medicine includes soil from the grave of Leria and her son. To sort the problem out he decides to go to the village incognito but meets his death at the hands of his other relatives and his remains are destroyed.

Suffice to say then that the order is distorted by breaks in the narration through the use of flashbacks. When we are told that Leria is appearing to the villagers, we expect to move to the next point in the story but this does not happen. Instead of moving to the "family meeting", we are taken backwards through Chinsamba's flashback. This takes us to a time before Leria's birth to the time Chinsamba met her mother. This manipulation concerning the order ends up affecting the original story time by shortening it.

The only prolepsis present in the work is the epigraph at the beginning of the novel. By figuratively describing an actual bud being destroyed by a worm (Luangala, 1991), the narrator foreshadows what is going to happen later in the story when Kalimbambo destroys the chosen bud - Leria.

The *duration* (speed) of the narrative can only be measured by establishing an approximate but clear and coherent internal chronology of the narrative (Genette,1980). *The Chosen Bud* was divided into the following units which were given titles:

1. Leria's appearing to the villagers which may be referred to as *Leria's appearance*(1-4)
2. After a spatial break: Chinsamba fails to sleep and has a flashback as far back as when he and Nanzama got married, how they bore Leria all the way up to her death. This is named *Chinsamba's flash back* (5-31).
3. After a spatial break: Old Sicholo cannot sleep and he has his first flashback of a family dilemma during his childhood. This is called *Old Sicholo's first flashback* (32-45).
4. Ndande's visit to Sicholo to inform him about the impending family meeting. This is called *Ndande's visit* (46-48).
5. Old Sicholo's second flashback which is a continuation of the first one. This one is called *Old Sicholo's second flashback* (49-55).
6. Family meeting to chart the way forward over Leria's appearance to the living. This one is titled *Family meeting* (56-64).
7. Old Sicholo's thoughts concerning his grandson Kalimbambo and flashbacks of his visit to his grandson's home and also his sister's (Kalimbambo's mother) later visit to Kalimbambo's home and her reactions to the visit. This is *Old Sicholo's third flashback*.(65-101)

8. Spatial shift: Nanzama's flash back from her marriage to Chinsamba till Leria's death. This is called *Nanzama's flashback* (102-116).
9. Spatial and temporal shift: The family's trip to the shrine to get answers for their predicament. This is *Family trip to shrine* (117-135).
10. Temporal and spatial shift: a flashback of Kalimbambo's visit to the wizard in which he has another flashback. We are taken backwards and travel through time from his childhood till we are back on the road to the wizard's place. This one is named *Kalimbambo's flashback* (136-197).
11. Temporal and spatial shift: Luponda's flashback from as far as his engagement to Leria up to her death. This is called *Luponda's flashback* (198-235).
12. Kalimbambo's dream and visions of Leria, his visit to the wizard to get help for his weird experiences. This is called *Kalimbambo's dilemma* (236-243).
13. Kalimbambo's drive to the village to get one of the ingredients for the protective potion required. There is a flashback based on Kalimbambo's memories of how he met his second wife Daisy. This is called *Drive to the village* (244-250).
14. Killing of Kalimbambo by family members as vengeance. This is called *Killing of Kalimbambo* (251-255.)
15. After the death of Kalimbambo there are all sorts of speculations over his death and his wife is worried over his disappearance. This is called *Aftermath of Kalimbambo's death* (256-260).

Hence, variations of speed in the narrative may be roughly cited as:

1. Leria's appearance: 4 pages for not more than one hour.
2. Chinsamba's flashback: 26 pages for a few hours.

3. Old Sicholo's first flashback: 13 pages for a few hours.
4. Ndade's visit: 3 pages for not more than 30 minutes.
5. Old Sicholo's second flashback: 6 pages for a few hours.
6. Family meeting: 8 pages for a few hours.
7. Old Sicholo's third flashback: 36 pages for a few hours.
8. Nanzama's Flashback: 14 pages for a few hours.
9. Family visit to shrine: 18 pages for a few hours.
10. Kalimbambo's flashback: 61 pages for a few hours
11. Luponda's flashback: 37 pages for a few hours.
12. Kalimbambo's dilemma: 7 pages for a few days.
13. Drive to village: 6 pages for a few hours.
14. Killing of Kalimbambo: 4 pages for a few hours
15. Aftermath of Kalimbambo's death: 4 pages for months.

Looking at the rough sketch of the speed of the narrative, it can be concluded that John Luangala's novel shows a tremendous use of summary as a narrative technique of speeding up the narrative. His choice of the use of flashbacks to tell the story saves him a lot of space. Two comparisons may be picked from the novel. Firstly one may realise that in real time or story time the events of Nanzama's flashback would take over 20 years but in the narrative the 20 years are reduced to just a few pages down memory lane, that is only 14 pages. This we see is not far from the 18 pages occupied by the family's trip to the shrine which is also just for a few hours as would be the case in reality. Secondly, *Kalimbambo's dilemma* in story time would take a number of days but this is reduced to only seven pages on paper. The summary may be

seen accurately if one compares it to the six pages allocated to Kalimbambo's village trip which would normally be a few hours long.

Hence we may conclude that in many cases summary is used to quicken the narrating. A noticeable trend is how the technique is used more as the novel draws to a close with a reduction in the number of pages allocated to actions taking place over long periods of time. Reference may be made to the two units entitled *Kalimbambo's dilemma* and *Aftermath of Kalimbambo's death*.

Notwithstanding the fact that summary is the main technique used, the researcher considered how *pause* is used in the novel as well. The flow of the narrative is in some cases paused by the narrator to add his own comments. Although these interruptions will be dealt with in detail when dealing with the narrative instance, they play an important role in pausing the narrative. It is however not all interruptions but those that are descriptive in nature and as earlier mentioned are not seen from any character's eyes but those that the narrator gives for the reader's sake. When the narrator describes the pond at which Kalimbambo is killed (Kalimbambo's killing) the description covers about two and a half pages of the four allocated to this unit. This means that there is no pause in the narrative time but at the same time there is a pause in the story. In essence narrative time (NT) is greater than story time (ST). In terms of speed, the speed of the story is slowed down by the descriptive pause in the narrative. The same may be said of the unit in which the family visits the shrine, where there is a longer pause of three pages out of the 18 to describe the ancestral shrine.

On the other hand when it comes to ellipses, the prominence of analepses in *The Chosen Bud* makes them inevitable. One only has to look at most of the flashbacks. A good example is

Kalimbambo's flashback in which we notice that there is an *indefinite explicit ellipsis* between the time Kalimbambo starts work and the time he goes to get his wife from the village. This is evidenced by the statement; “a few months later he obtained permission to go home and get his wife Esneya” (Luangala, 1991: 183). This is clearly a sign that the events of the few months which have passed before the said time has been elided. Again when the narrator recounts that Kalimbambo had an affair with his boss’s wife, we only know how the relationship started. The next time we simply read that “when the time finally came” (Luangala, 1991: 180) for his boss to go back to Europe, his boss’s wife insisted they take Kalimbambo. This reveals a temporal gap which is an *indefinite explicit ellipsis*. As a result, what we know is that the relationship goes on for some time. We know neither the length nor breadth of the temporal gap.

In addition, we learn that Kalimbambo worked for three years at his first job only by the narrator telling us that “towards the beginning of the third year, Kalimbambo was taken to town on transfer in the same capacity” (Luangala, 1991: 172). The details of the three years which are left out are a clear *indefinite explicit ellipsis*. Similarly, towards the end of the novel when Kalimbambo is killed we learn that there is another *indefinite explicit ellipsis* because the section after this starts with, “several days went by” (Luangala, 1991: 256). This is a clear sign that information for some days or the number of days in question is missing.

In terms of narrative frequency, the researcher observed three ways in which the narrative is manipulated. To start with and taking into consideration the fact that the narrative is told from many perspectives, it also has many versions of the same incident. This being the case, the *repeating narrative* is by far the most common among the three categories of frequency. This can be said about the story of Leria appearing to the living. We find it being mentioned many times in the narrative. The first time it is the narrator who says that: “the wailing period had

long ended with the cutting of hair a few days after the burial and the brewing and drinking of beer a month later. You were now dealing with the spirits of those who have already departed for the world beyond” (Luangala, 1991: 3).

Secondly, when Chinsamba remembers the ordeal, he tells us that like the boys had been saying they also had “poured their own eyes into her and her son” (Luangala, 1991: 34). A third time we are told that Nanzama “has spent the whole night thinking about her child Leria who had come back to appear among the living (Luangala, 1991: 116). Another time Leria’s widower gives his own version and explains that the last part of the funeral rites were yet to come “when Leria and the child began to appear to the living in Malenga village” (Luangala, 1991: 234). Yet another event in which we see the *repeating* method is Chinsamba’s and Nanzama’s marriage which is told from Chinsamba’s perspective in Chapter Two and again from Nanzama’s view in Chapter Five (Luangala, 1991). This technique unlike the *iterative* mode has an effect opposite to that of analepsis and ellipsis.

The *iterative* method is also used several times in the novel for events in the story which happen many times but can easily be mentioned just once as a summary. The technique is for example used in Chinsamba’s flashback about his past. When he explains the preparations they would undertake before the inter village dance competition he does not keep on mentioning that on Monday they would rehearse, on Tuesday they would rehearse, on Wednesday...among other days. The narrator mentions these individual practice sessions only once by telling us that “for some time before the day of the first dance, the Mbakalungu team would meet every evening, moonshine or darkness, to polish up their styles” (Luangala, 1991: 6).

This method is used several other times like after Kalimbambo dies and we are told about his wife's search for him. According to the story, Daisy must have asked each of Kalimbambo's best friends one after another about his whereabouts but in the narrative these instances are narrated only once: "none of his best friends had seen him on this private business trip" (Luangala, 1991: 256). The *singulative* frequency is also used in other cases in *The Chosen Bud*. The trip to the shrine, Kalimbambo's visit to Bauleni, the family meeting and many other cases happen only once in the story and are mentioned only once in the narrative.

Moving to the category of narrative mood, although all the four variations of distance are present, the *narratised* mode is by far the most used in the novel. A look at the narrator's explanation of the relationship between Chinsamba and Nanzama is a clear example of this narrative function of the narrator. It is narrated thus: "Nanzama was his favourite wife. She was his first wife and it was with her that he first tasted the fruits of marriage life" (Luangala, 1991: 81). This makes the narrator seem very distant from the narrative because even if "the fruits of marriage" comprise actions (the sexual act) and even utterances (counsel) these are just generalised in the narratised version. Still in some cases the narrator is closer to the narrative like when he uses the *transposed indirect mode*. When we are told how Chinsamba and his friends prepared themselves for the dance we read that "a few days before the actual day, he called all his colleagues so that they could carry out some repairs to the drums" (Luangala, 1991: 7). This *iterative* statement could on the other hand have been in *reported mode* which could have drawn the narrator even closer to the narrative.

The novel actually uses the *reported* mode in a few cases but only when the point of view is a character's. For example when from Sicholo's point of view it is narrated how Nthimbiko went back to the village disappointed after her visit to her son. An excerpt from her conversation

with her mother goes as follows: “What is it Nthimbiko my last born child?” enquired Chikasi (Luangala, 1991: 89). The songs that appear more than five times in the novel (Luangala,1991:15,106,114,197,231,245) also fall into the category of the *reported narrative* because the narrator is closest to the narrative and even as a reader you cannot help but feel the closeness.

The narrator’s *ideological role* is yet another element which allows the narrator to be more involved. This is because sometimes he interrupts the narrative to add his own general wisdom. When he tells us about the dance competition in Chinsamba’s village, he adds some sociological detail or touches an aspect of the way of life: “In those days, it was said that no team in the whole area could beat the young women of Malenga village at Chim’tali...” (Luangala,1991: 6).

The third category of narrating instance was broken down into three aspects: *perspective*, *voice* and *time of narration*. With reference to *perspective* the novel has *internal focalisation* for the most part. Specifically, it has *variable focalisation* because the narrative is told from different character perspectives. These are Sicholo’s, Chinsamba’s, Luponda’s, Nanzama’s and Kalimbambo’s points of view (Luangala,1991).The whole narrative is a combination of their flashbacks but none of them can read the minds of the other characters and such is the case with the narrator. Sometimes the focalisation is *multiple* as is the case when the “Leria incident” is told from different points of view (Luponda’s, Sicholo’s, Chinsamba). Still a few other times the focalisation is *zero* as when the narrator is adding his own comments or making sociological remarks. For example when Leria is first said to be appearing to the living, it is not from the perspective of any of the characters but as told by the narrator. In terms of voice, the narrative is heterodiegetic. This is because the narrator is not one of the characters but a voice outside the action.

When the *time of narration* is considered, it is apparent that *The Chosen Bud* is a narrative done after the story has already taken place and is therefore subsequent. The past tense used testifies to this. The first page of the novel is only the beginning: “And there she was, Leria...” (Luangala,1991:1). In the final category of analysis which is the *narrative level* it is apparent that although the novel has multiple perspectives at no time does the narrator change; hence it is told from one narrative level which is the first extradiegetic level.

4.1.2 Bitterness

In the first instance of narrative time which is *order*, the plot is mostly chronological and has internal analepses about twice. The events of the narrative when the chronology of the story is considered are: Besa’s pre-university days, his university life and finally his post- university days. The order is interrupted twice. The first time is when we learn about what really happened to Musonda who is Besa’s first girlfriend. When the two become lovers, the narrator chooses to leave us in suspense at the climax of their relationship. The next time we see Besa is at university and he soon has a new love interest. We only learn about Musonda’s fate as he narrates it to his new girlfriend Shantiee and through a flashback what actually happened.

The second time is when we learn how Besa found himself living in Chawama compound after we have already been told he is living there. In the chapter before this, he is at university not even in his final year but the next one opens with him in Chawama compound. The flashback therefore covers the gap between his university years and after.

Furthermore, the prologue of the novel (Katulwende, 2005) may be a form of *prolepsis* because it foreshadows how Besa is later disowned and cursed by his father. In other terms it is a

Chekov's gun (flashforward). It must be noted that the prolepsis makes most of the novel a look into the past for we must now be told what happened to get to the prolepsis.

In terms of duration the narrative was broken down as follows:

1. Part where we meet Musunga Fyonse for the first time; the section is called *Introduction to Musunga Fyonse* (4-14).
2. Part where we meet our protagonist Besa for the first time; this unit is named *Introduction to Besa* (15-50).
3. Musunga's reflection on how life has changed from the way it used to be in the past: this is called *Musunga's reflection* (51-60).
4. After spatial and temporal shift Besa is now at University and everything he goes through while there is in this part. This is called *Besa at University* (61-196).
5. After spatial and temporal shift comes Besa's life in Chawama compound after University, his mother's death and reconciliation with Shantiee. This part is called *After university* (197-276).

Hence, variations of speed in the narrative are roughly as follows:

1. Introduction to Musunga Fyonse: 10 pages for a few hours
2. Introduction to Besa: 35 pages for weeks
3. Musunga's Reflection: 9 pages for a few hours
4. Besa at University: 135 pages for about three years
5. After University: 79 pages for months

In terms of narrative speed, the narrative is regular in its treatment of the story time. Earlier it was mentioned that narrative time is an elusive concept and as such measurement of narrative

time cannot be measured to scale with the story time. However, one will notice that in *Bitterness*, you do not find a situation where events which have a longer duration in the story are given a shorter duration in the narrative and vice versa. For example Besa stays about three years at University and this being the unit with the highest duration, has the highest allocation of pages in the narrative as well as time in the story. On the other hand, Musunga's reflection which probably takes the least time in the story is also given the least number of pages in the narrative.

In terms of *summary*, *pause*, *scene* and *ellipsis* a number of observations were made. As insinuated in the previous analysis, the novel does not have a lot of instances where the narrator either speeds up or slows down the narrative. One can however point to two instances in which *summary* speeds up the narrative. Firstly we are kept in the dark about Besa and Musonda's relationship after the Guest House incident (Katulwende, 2005:81) and the next time we see Besa he is at University. Only in an *analepsis* do we learn what happened to Besa's first girlfriend, Musonda. The version that Besa tells Shantiee and what he remembers are a summarised version in the narrative. In the story the actual ordeal would definitely cover a longer period such that the number of pages allocated to it would be more than the approximate two pages it covers in the narrative.

Summary is again used to cover the period of Besa's last years at University up to the time we meet him in Chawama compound. We are given this information in snippets and in this way the missing information is summarised. Information from the story which would have covered more pages in the narrative instead covers only about two pages as a whole. In *Bitterness* *pause* is not a common technique because most of the descriptions in the novel are not the narrator's own but the characters'.

On the other hand, *scene* is present in the novel and this makes the speed of the narrative equal to that of the story. This can be seen in the use of journals, dialogue, letters and poems (Katulwende, 2005). Whilst Besa is still in the village, he writes a poem for Musonda and when he goes to university the two lovers communicate using letters. In addition, when Besa's mother falls ill, his father informs him through a letter. In all these instances the narration is done while maintaining the story format of the letters and poem. Similarly Besa's journal during his university years is not summarised or manipulated in any other way in the narrative.

The dialogue is another example we see. In one of the Ferio pages (That is, the name given to the pages Besa writes under the pseudonym Ferio), Besa uses a dialogue to explain some information (Katulwende, 2005). One can conclude that these parts of the story have a speed equal to their narration. Story time (ST) is equal to narrative time (NT) therefore there is no speeding or slowing down effect of *scene* on the narrative.

In the novel the technique of *ellipsis* speeds up the narrative by eliding some story time but summarising it later. This results in the narrative time being less than the story time: Story time (ST) is greater than the narrative time (NT). In both instances which can be sighted the ellipsis is implicit. Firstly when the relationship between Musonda and Besa is left hanging, we next see Besa at university and this makes one conclude there is some information missing. This gap is implicit because although we are not told that time has passed by anything explicit, the jump in narration is clear. A similar *implicit ellipsis* is seen in the skip from Besa's university years to the aftermath.

In the novel *Bitterness* the technique mostly employed in terms of *frequency* is the *singulative* one. In terms of the story, most of the events happen once and are only narrated once in the

narrative. On the contrary the *iterative mode* is also used for events which happen more than once in the story but are narrated only once with the effect of summary. Besa and his girlfriend Musonda meet in the same way and at the same time more than once but this is only mentioned once in summary in the narrative (Katulwende, 2005). Even the letters the two lovers write to each other are mentioned only once even if they write to each other more than once according to the story. Manipulation of the *frequency* of events is not much in the novel such that even the *repeated narrative* is not common except in the case where the event mentioned in the prolepsis is again mentioned when it actually happens later in the narrative.

In the second category which is narrative mood, it is apparent that the novel is a mixture of three methods of distance manipulation. Most times the narrator seems very far from the narrative as is the case when the narrative is in *narratised mode*. When we are told that “a long time ago Besa led his beloved to a room at the rest house” (Katulwende, 2005: 81) neither here nor anywhere else are we informed of either actions or utterances which took place at that rest house. This makes the information very distant. The narrator sometimes uses the *transposed indirect method* as is the case when Besa returns from his mother’s funeral and we are told that his friend Washama told Shantiee about his mother’s death (Katulwende, 2005). This is closer to the narrative than narratising the situation.

Still, in other cases the narrator uses the *reported narrative mode*. Examples are Besa’s journal, the letters he and Musonda write to each other, dialogues and also the songs interspaced in the novel (Katulwende, 2005). The narrator tells us that as Besa passed by the ecumenical centre “voices billowed out as they broke into a hymnal...” (Katulwende, 2005: 105). This statement is

followed by a song. We again see the same closeness of the narrator in Besa and Shantiee's first real conversation:

"Can we have supper together and maybe share a drink in my place? I have a bottle of wine."

"That sounds great, but when?"

"Today! I'll come to your room at eighteen and we'll go to Makumbi"...

She smiled beautifully at him and whispered, "I'll see you later. Take care." (Katulwende, 2005:121)

There is however another method of manipulating distance which is actually the closest. This is the monologue which the narrator uses twice as a prologue and epilogue (Katulwende, 2005).

The monologue is not only the narrator's use of the actual words spoken by a character but the narrator is directly imploring the audience through a character speaking to himself.

Suffice to say that the narrator in our novel plays the *narrative role* like when he uses the *narratised mode* of narration and also a *communicative role* like in the *reported narrative* instances. He ends up alternating between being more involved and less involved.

In terms of the narrative instance category most of the narrative has *internal focalisation*. Besa's perspective is prominent especially since he is the protagonist. An example is Besa thinking of Musonda: "As Besa dried himself it suddenly occurred to him that he had made no plans for Musonda nor even considered the possibility that she might decide to be with him..." In the Ferio pages: "Youths as forces of change have generated considerable attention among scholars. Some of the pertinent questions are..." And lastly in his journal: "February 24, feeling much better after a week of illness, thanks to Shantiee and my roommate..." (Katulwende, 2005: 70,

151,160). This focus is only broken during the prologue and the epilogue which is an anonymous old man's perspective or Shantiee's when she reads Besa's work and also Musunga Fyonse during his reminiscence chapters. In all these cases the narrator only knows as much as the characters involved.

The *voice* of the narrative appears *heterodiegetic* because the narration is akin to a story teller telling a story he witnessed but was not necessarily a part of. The narrator is most likely an adult who knows the main character personally and has watched his life from start to finish. The evidence is in the epilogue which says: "My eyes are now closed, and my tongue has clung to the roof of my mouth. I have a beginning and an end" (Katulwende, 2005: 277). It is as though he had to tell the story before dying.

With regards to the time of narration, although the prologue is a *prior narration* the novel itself is a *subsequent narration*. The prologue is in present tense but narrates events which are yet to unfold. "Now I know my son that you have betrayed me..." (Katulwende, 2005: i). The rest of the novel is in past tense showing that the story is being told after it has taken place. For example the second chapter opens with, "In a mango shade where Musunga had been resting..." (Katulwende, 2005: 4). Lastly, the narrative has one level, the first level (*extradiegetic*). The prologue although prior is also on the same level since the same narrator is at work.

4.2 Similarities and Differences

Where order is concerned, although the two novels are similar in some ways they are also distinctively different. The similarity lies in the fact that they both use *analepses* in their work but these are not used in exactly the same way. The flashbacks differ in the role they play and in their execution. Specifically, *The Chosen Bud* has external analepses while *Bitterness* has

internal analepses. *The Chosen Bud* is mostly made up of flashbacks of varying *reach* and *extent* and every flashback is connected to the plot. This means that the memory does not come for its own sake but because it is significant to the work. The flashbacks not only have the role of giving background information about characters but also of explaining character relationships.

Further, *The Chosen Bud* has all its flashbacks (except Kalimbambo's) reaching far into the past and before the start of the story but ending at the temporal departure of the story. Some examples are Luponda, Nanzama, and Chinsamba's recollections which all end at the point where Leria is appearing to the living and this is the opening of the narrative. The different and longest flashback has a reach into the past which goes as far back as Kalimbambo's childhood, till it reaches the point where he is a government minister looking for a way to win an election. In so doing, the flashback goes backwards past the temporal point of departure of the novel. Its extent is also very long as seen by the number of pages allocated to the flashback. By being partly internal it is like the *internal analepses* used in *Bitterness*.

In *Bitterness*, the flashbacks are within the temporal confines of the story. When Besa narrates Musonda's ordeal to Shantiee, the events under narration happen when the narrative has already begun (Katulwende, 2005). Unlike the ones in *The Chosen Bud* the flashbacks here function only to fill up gaps left earlier in the novel. In addition they have no function with regards to characterisation.

Another similarity between *Bitterness* and *The Chosen Bud* is their use of *prolepses*. This is the use or presence of anything early in the novel which suggests or foreshadows something to come. It is the opposite of a flashback. In *The Chosen Bud* this is in the form of the highly figurative epigraph which appears at the beginning of the novel. This foreshadows the

unfortunate fate of Leria's family (Luangala, 1991). In *Bitterness* like in many other works, the *prolepsis* comes in the form of a prologue which makes the reader aware from the start that there is a child who will forsake his ways and be disowned (Katulwende, 2005). The difference is that where one uses an epigraph the other uses a prologue.

There is a close relationship among the narrative techniques discussed above. *The Chosen Bud* which makes extensive use of *analepses* ends up using summary because the flashbacks themselves are summaries. It is not surprising then to also find ellipsis being employed. This use of flashbacks to summarise and therefore maximise space is different from the way it is used in *Bitterness*. In *Bitterness* even if summary is present it serves the purpose of only filling a lapse more than significantly being a way of speeding up the narrative. The flashbacks themselves seem to function only as far as the definition of the term flashback goes. Further, even in summary form they do not convincingly speed up the narrative as poignantly as is the case with *The Chosen Bud*. This conclusion is reached owing to the fact that comparatively the flashbacks in *The Chosen Bud* if not told as such would easily be separate episodes, capable of being stories in themselves and thus requiring more space. This is not the case when in snippets we learn about Besa's university aftermath in *Bitterness*.

Similarly, ellipses, though present in both novels, they differ in execution. In *The Chosen Bud*, the time elided is usually implicit and as a result these jumps clearly speed up the narration. As in *The Chosen Bud*, in *Bitterness* the use of ellipsis is implicit; while in *The Chosen Bud* the result is always a speed up, in *Bitterness* this is not always the case. Take for example the case where we leave Besa's relationship hanging and jump to the university. Even if we are not told what the missing information is, later and through a flashback we still get the information. The speed up is only as a result of the summarised version of the missing information. This is

usually the case for *internal analepses* which have the role of filling up a gap which was as a result of an *ellipsis* earlier in the narrative.

Although *The Chosen Bud* is the novel which demonstrates the most use of speeding tactics, it is again the only novel between the two which uses *pause* as a technique. The narrator in this novel unlike the other describes some things from his or her perspective and not from that of any of the characters. An example is where the narrator gives sociological information about life in Malenga village. For instance we are not only told how well known Malenga village was for drum beating but in addition we are told: “A few days before the actual day, he [Chinsamba] called all his colleagues so that they could carry out some repairs to the drums. Chinsamba had a score of *opani* skins which he kept carefully in his grandmother’s barn... (Luangala,1991:7). This does not end here. We are told the actual process. “These were soaked in water where they spent a night. On the following day, the young men replaced the old skins with the new ones. The *opani* skin was reputed for its strength and for the loud sound it produced...” (Luangala,1991: 7). The second part sounds like a journalist’s report because the narrator moves from the role of narrator to that of commentator. The effect of this is a slowing down of the narrative time as compared to the story. However the effect of the *pause* technique is not as outstanding as the speed up caused by the opposite effect of *summary* or *analepsis* in the narrative.

Scene is also used in *The Chosen Bud* without any effect on the speed of the narrative with reference to the story. The songs which are narrated in exactly the same way as in the story act as *scene* and here the story time and the narrative time are ostensibly the same. This technique is in fact common in the two novels under study. In *Bitterness*, the journal, the emails, letters, poems and so on are examples (Katulwende, 2005). These examples are also indicators of the

use of the *reported speech style*. In terms of mood (specifically) this is the closest a narrator can be to the audience. Although the two texts apply this technique, *Bitterness* uses it more than *The Chosen Bud*. As such *Bitterness* ends up being the novel in which the narrator is closer to the reader (in terms of effect).

The Chosen Bud in fact has all three instances of distance but has the *narratised* speech more pronounced. This is also the case with *Bitterness* in which the other two modes seem to be spices which add to the aesthetics of the novel by bringing in other literary devices like the epistolary, monologue and literary devices are part of style.

The choice of what style to use concerning distance not only results in different moods but also different roles which the narrators play. For *The Chosen Bud* and *Bitterness* the roles which the narrator plays are similar. The narrator plays the narrative role most of the time and then only few times the ideological and communicative function.

In terms of the frequency of events *The Chosen Bud* employs all three means of exploiting frequency. That is the *singulative*, *repeating* and *iterative* methods. *Bitterness* shares this element but the exploitation of frequency in the two novels is different in as far as the execution and effect is concerned. In *Bitterness* most of what happens is only mentioned once unlike in *The Chosen Bud* which because of many perspectives has the *repeating* mode most common. When the *iterative* method is used in the two it is as a means to summarise and this speeds up the narratives in both cases. The repeating method in *Bitterness* is used only once therefore making the result of its use different from what obtains in *The Chosen Bud*.

Further, when *focalisation* was investigated (in the category of *narrative instance*) it was discovered that the two novels generally have *internal* and *zero focalisation*. Although internal

focalisation is used mostly in the two works, they have varying versions of the method. *The Chosen Bud* to begin with has internal focalisation but from the perspective or point of view of different characters. This is different from what we see in *Bitterness* whose focal point is Besa. This method functions in the same way as a camera following the action of these characters. No wonder even the point of view is mostly his. A good example is when we learn about Besa's mother's sickness and passing not from the village but only from Besa reading a letter from his father. *Bitterness* only breaks this trend to join *The Chosen Bud* in that the narrator's camera does change its focus in the prologue and epilogue and also when it follows Musunga Fyonse early in the novel.

Zero focalisation also traditionally called the omniscient point of view is found in *The Chosen Bud* but not in *Bitterness*. This kind of focalisation is sometimes the case in instances where the author knows more than just what the focal character knows. This is the case when the *pause* technique is used.

Even if the novels mostly have internal focalisation the narrators' voices sound heterodiegetic. The narrators both appear like story tellers telling the story from outside the novel. The two novels are similar in this regard and this is clearly concluded by the fact that none of the works has any of the characters narrating the story. Even the journal situation in Besa's case is just an instance of the reported narrative. That is to say the narrator quotes the journal although the case would have been different if the narration was a *simultaneous* one or was being narrated while the action was taking place.

Traditionally suggesting that the narrator is not a character would mean the narratives are told from a third person point of view. Bal (1997: 22) sensibly argues that in fact what is called third

person is “absurd: a narrator is not a ‘he’ or ‘she.’ At best the narrator can narrate about someone else, a ‘he’ or ‘she’ – who might, incidentally, happen to be a narrator as well.” This is to say that when a narrator says: “I am a man”, he is an “I” talking about himself but if a narrator says: “Peter is a man,” it is an “I” talking about a he or she. According to Bal (1997) as soon as language is uttered there is always a speaker who speaks. Hence it is always a “first person” either speaking about themselves or others. The issues of focalisation and voice have so much to do with what level of narration the narratives are at. Since it has been established that the two novels have single external narrators it follows that even the level of narration is one (extradiegetic).

In terms of the time of narration of the novels, both are *subsequent narrations*. They are told in the past tense which suggests events which have already taken place when the narration is being done. *Bitterness* distinguishes itself by having a prologue. The former is ostensibly a prior narration for it foreshadows things to come. However if this is the case one may then suggest that the narrator already knows everything that will happen such that even the time of narration is an elusive term because the narrator makes a choice on the most suitable way to tell the story. This observation qualifies the whole novel as subsequent. That is why especially in cases where the narrator is not one of the characters, he or she is also an actor, their sole duty being that of manipulating the telling of the story.

4.3 Significance of Similarities and Differences

The similarities and differences in narrative technique between *Bitterness* and *The Chosen Bud* are significant to the body of Zambian literature. They demonstrate that Zambian prose fiction is influenced not only by African oral literature but also Western literature. Further the

differences and similarities show that an author makes a choice of what techniques to employ with varying effects on the narrative produced.

The first aspect which significantly stands out in the analysis of the two novels is the influence of African oral literature. As stated in the general introduction of this dissertation, before the coming of literacy to Zambia the people relied on oral literature. After the onset of reading and writing, oral literature has co-existed with written literature. In many Zambian communities oral narratives have existed as instructors, entertainers and commentators of human existence. The art of telling these narratives has been mastered over the years with sessions ranging from adults telling adults, children telling other children or adults telling a mixed audience. It is therefore expected as hinted in the first part of this chapter to have influence from oral narrative techniques.

An example of borrowing from the oral tradition is the aspect of the story-teller kind of narrator. Oral narratives are usually told by a narrator who is external, very close to the narrative and very much engaged with the audience. As a result of the reporter role the narratives are usually subsequent narrations told in the third person and mostly employing narrated speech.

A narrator can be explicit or implicit. In a novel like Ngugi wa Thiongo's *Devil on the Cross* (1985) the narrator is explicit. From the very start the presence of the narrator is made known as we are introduced to the "Gicaandi Player," a traditional village musician who refers to himself as Prophet of Justice. His audience are the people of Ilmorrog, who beg and plead with him to tell them the story and "reveal all that is hidden" (1980:7).

The narrator in *Bitterness* and *The Chosen Bud* is implied for clearly there is an external narrator with a heterodiegetic voice. The external narrator is clearly not a part of the story but is telling one that he probably learnt about from others including the characters themselves. This is the

situation we see in the opening of *Bitterness*: “In a mango shade where Musunga had been resting the latter part of the afternoon...” (Katulwende, 2005: 4). Similarly in *The Chosen Bud*: “And then there she was; she, Leria, kneeling by the tranquil pond which the villagers used for drinking water” (Luangala, 1991: 1). Therefore as we read the works, it is as though someone is sitting right in front of us narrating the story to us. In *Poceza M’madzulo* we clearly see the similarity, particularly one of the stories in the collection entitled *The Unfortunate Emigrants* whose opening implies a speaker: “A very long time ago at a certain village called Chiwaya...” (Wendland, 2004: 48).

Further and as a result of the narration not being first hand, oral narratives have a narratised mode of narration with direct speech only when actual words spoken are quoted. Note: “Say Mekerani, did you see Jersey of this village here who came back from Nkana mine the day before yesterday?” That was Sinoya telling the news to his buddy Mekerani (Wendland, 2004: 48). The speech tag is never left out which confirms that the words are grammatically in direct speech. Further, and like the novels under analysis, this oral narrative is a subsequent narration as is evident from the use of the past tense.

However, even in this case where the narrator is not a character and sometimes even distanced from the story oral narratives have a way of bridging the distance. Firstly, the narrator is a performer or even an actor as earlier mentioned in the part dealing with the omniscient narrator. The oral narrator has zero focalisation and therefore is all knowing but must be entertaining. In the African traditional context story telling sessions are communal, they do not only involve the story teller but an active audience which acts as a stimulant and catalyst for the narrator.

The story teller acts as the mediator because in order for the audience to be engaged he must find strategies of engaging them. The story tellers purposely include songs some of which the audience are familiar with in order that they sing along. Not only that but Adewoye (1996; Booker, 1996: 387) in his analysis of the oral tradition in *Devil on the Cross* advises that songs are a “means of easing boredom and monotony as narration builds up.” The songs which appear more than five times in *The Chosen Bud* (Luangala, 1991) and are also interspaced in *Bitterness* (Katulwende, 2005) are a version of this kind of audience-narrator relationship.

Lastly, repetition is an element prominent in oral literature and also used mostly in *The Chosen Bud*. Kondala (2013: 93) says of oral literature: “Repetition of incidents promotes didacticism in works, creates harmony and contributes to the overall artistic effect of the work that enriches plot.” *The Chosen Bud* manipulates frequency by using the *repeating narrative* mode. The repetition in the novel is mostly for emphasis.

The influence from western literature is another feature of interest. One is indulged by the use of the flashback or analepsis technique. This technique, as earlier stated, is an interruption of a narrative to recount something that happened at an earlier point in the narrative or even before the temporal departure of the narrative. This technique, although with variations, is present in both novels under study. It is however an influence of the West for clearly African oral literature possesses no such technique. This technique can be traced as far back as classical Greek literature. It was made use of by renowned authors like Homer. In his epic *The Odyssey* (1996), Odysseus’ story is narrated mostly as a flashback and as a frame story. A frame story is a story within a story or an embedding. The main story of the poem is Telemachus looking for his father who was supposed to have returned from Troy. The narrator changes to Odysseus when he begins to narrate his adventures to the Phaeacians in Part Two making it a story within

another. The storytelling however returns to the narrator who takes it up when Odysseus returns to Ithaca from Troy.

The technique has over the years been used by some of the world's great authors. William Faulkner uses the technique in *Light in August* (1932) to provide background information on his characters. This is similar to the way the technique is employed in *The Chosen Bud* whereby the flashbacks are crucial to the development of the characters. In *Light in August* the flashbacks enable us to know the backstory of particular characters. Examples of such characters are the Reverend Hightower, Lena and the protagonist Joe Christmas. The same technique is used in George Eliot's *Silas Marner* (1861) to provide the much needed information about Marner's past before he became a loner.

The internal flashbacks used in *Bitterness* are similar to those in Theodore Dreiser's *An American Tragedy* (1925) in which the protagonist keeps remembering certain instances, some which we experience earlier in the novel with him but also others which fill up time earlier elided. For example it is through a flashback that we learn of Clyde's murder of Roberta, an act which keeps haunting him afterwards.

This type of flashback in which the memory is internal or where the flashback is external but random and isolated is less complex than the one which is external but connected to the plot. The complexity may even go further as with James Joyce's stream of consciousness which we are privy to in *A Portrait of an Artist as a Young Man* (2003) and *Ulysses* (1966). Virginia Woolf uses a similarly complex flashback technique in *A Room of One's Own* (1929; Abrams et al, 2000). These authors go further than organising memories logically but instead portray

memories as close as possible to the haphazard manner in which remembering takes place in the human mind.

The prolepsis technique, which is the opposite of analepsis is associated with western literature. A prolepsis can either be explicit or implicit. It can be explicit when it is in the form of a prophecy or vision but can also be implicit if in the form of a prologue or even an epigraph. The master of the first instance was Shakespeare. In most of Shakespeare's plays the flash forwards are explicit and may even be the motivation for a character's actions. In *Macbeth* (1623) prophecies are explicitly declared by the three witches and are the motivation for Macbeth's later actions. From the very beginning when the three witches prophesy that Macbeth shall be a Thane and eventually king he at first does not believe it but when King Duncan names him Thane he (even without knowing how) believes that he will be king. In his greed and impatience to become king he ends up (through influence of his wife) killing king Duncan to usurp power. We see the same clarity of technique in *Richard III* (1597) in which Richard begins to see visions and dreams of all the people he has killed telling him to despair and die. All this foreshadows his death in battle the following day. It is this vividness in Shakespeare's use of the foreshadowing technique which is by far incomparable to any author of his time.

Prolepses may also be implicit when used in the form of prologues and epigraphs. The prologue method was especially common in Greek plays and medieval plays. In most Greek plays like Sophocles' *Three Theban Plays* (1970) the Chorus was used as a prologue and later as the plays unfolded, to foreshadow events to come. In a medieval play like *Dr Faustus* (1606; Abrams et al, 2000) the use of the prologue is also evident. In the prologue it is already clear that a man who becomes too proud will be led to his demise. In *Bitterness* the prologue plays the same role

of telling the reader by implication what will befall some character. In such cases the readers and not the characters, as is the case in Shakespearean plays, are aware of the prolepsis.

In *The Chosen Bud* an epigraph by the author implies what is going to happen in the novel. This is the technique we observe in Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* (1993: 2) where the quote by Thomas Parke D'invilliers speaks volumes about the content of the novel.

Then wear the golden hat if that will move her,

If you can bounce high, bounce for her too,

Till she cry, 'lover, gold-hatted, high-bouncing lover,

I must have you!'

One may conclude that the story is about a man who will try or must try to do anything materially to get a girl's attention with the expectation that the girl will be wooed by the gestures. This technique is also used by veteran African author Chinua Achebe in *Things Fall Apart* (1958). He does not only borrow the technique and the epigraph but even the title from Yeats' poem *The Second Coming* (1920). The novel opens with words from the poem:

Turning and turning in the widening gyre

The falcon cannot hear the falconer,

Things fall Apart; the centre cannot hold,

Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world.

The Chosen Bud and *Bitterness* could also have been influenced by techniques of modernism. The writings of modernist authors are characterised by experimentation and freedom of

expression. T.S Eliot is an example of an author whose poem *The Wasteland* (1925) is a demonstration of modernism. The work is a mixture of different genres. Through the use of pastiche Eliot mixes myth (The Fisher King), song (A Game of Chess) and religious allusions (What the Thunder Said) (Abrams, 2000). This is the same element we see though to a lesser extent in the two novels under analysis. In *Bitterness* we have a combination of different literary genres. The letters used reflect the epistolary genre. The ones exchanged between Besa and Musonda echo the likes of Alice Walker's *The Color Purple* (1982) or Mariama Bâ's *So Long a Letter* (1981). The autobiographical style is also evident in the inclusion of Besa's journal. Furthermore dialogue is used in the Ferio pages and this is a style associated with authors of dramatic plays. Good examples are the captivating monologues which *Bitterness* uses twice. Katulwende uses the monologues to open and close his novel (Katulwende, 2005: i, 277).

4.4 Conclusion

The chapter has analysed the use and nature of narrative technique in both *The Chosen Bud* and *Bitterness* and the similarities and differences thereof. The chapter has also discussed the significance of the similarities and differences. The general discovery was that the novels employ similar techniques albeit in different ways and to varying degrees of execution and also with different roles. Whilst in some cases a technique would be present in both novels the execution varies. For example while both novels use anachronies the application is not exactly the same. *The Chosen Bud* has longer flashbacks very much needed for the progression of the plot while in *Bitterness* the flashbacks are shorter and only fill up ellipses created earlier in the novel. It is evident that the narrative technique in both texts is influenced by both western literature and African oral literature.

CHAPTER FIVE

Plot Structure in *The Chosen Bud* and *Bitterness*

5.0 Introduction

The chapter discusses the plot structure of *The Chosen Bud* and *Bitterness*. The discussion will refer to a modified Freytag plot structure and also Denise Paulme's seven type plot structure model. Apart from that, this chapter also examines the plot structures in terms of whether they are complex or simple. The plot structures in the two works will then be compared and consequently the significance of the similarities and differences will be addressed.

5.1 Plot Structure

The plot, concisely defined as the story as it is actually narrated or developed, employs the techniques discussed in the previous chapter. As it unfolds, it follows a scheme which constitutes the connected components of the story and it is this system that forms its structure. While the dramatic nature of a narrative itself may vary, the plot structure elements remain constant. That is, it must have the five parts which according to Freytag are the exposition (the start of the story, the way things are before the action starts), rising action (the series of conflicts and crises in the story that lead to the climax), the climax (the turning point which is also the most intense moment of the plot), the falling action (this is all the actions which follow the climax) and finally the resolution or dénouement (the conclusion).

Denise Paulme in her 1976 work on African narratives suggests seven possible plot structure models which may occur in narratives. The first she calls *ascendancy model* in which a character, mostly the protagonist moves from lack to eventual liquidation or elimination of the lack. This comes forth as a result of a narrative progression of improvement. Challenges will be present but will all lead to elimination of the lack. The second type is called *descendance* and on the contrary, a protagonist moves from a normal position to one of lack. In the third instance, aptly called *cyclical*, a character's actions are cyclical. That is to say that the character moves from one state to another and back to the first one. If they start with lack they move to a position of sufficiency and then back to lack but this reverse situation is a result of a character's failure to obey instructions. In other cases, this structural type may begin with a normal situation to lack and back to the normal situation. It combines both *ascendancy* and *descendance* structures. The one that follows next is the *spiral* type which has two rounds. In the first round beginning with lack, the improvement suffers or is cut short but is later improved in the second round. However, later on, usually due to the action of an enemy, lack threatens to return or does in fact return but the hero manages to not only overcome his adversary but also eliminates the lack altogether. The fifth type is the *mirror image*. This structural type involves two major characters taking the same sequence of tests but their actions are inversely related; one is good and the other bad. The positive character is rewarded while the negative one is punished. In addition, the two characters are usually friends.

Then there is the *hourglass* structure which is similar to the mirror image. While in the latter the actions of the two characters are parallel to each other, the actions of the two characters in the

former are in opposition to each other. The protagonist therefore moves from lack to a normal situation whereas the antagonist descends from a normal situation to deficiency.

The seventh type is the *complex* type. This type shares a similarity with the *hourglass* by having two characters opposing each other. However, its distinguishing characteristic is that, as opposed to the hourglass where the action of the two characters happens simultaneously, here, the action for the two characters occurs in a sequence. There is an alternation of the central characters where the narrator commences with the positive character in the first part of the narrative and then moves on to the negative character in the second part (Paulme, 1976).

While this is the case, depending on how the plot is executed, the plot may be simple or complex. It is said to be simple or linear if it closely follows the chronology of the story and follows the action of one character, usually the protagonist. Kondala (2013:24) states that a complex plot refers to types of plot: “first where plots follow more than one major character or have more than one major storyline, second to experimental plots in which the main story has been interrupted by subplots; moving back and forth in time or merging fact and fiction.”

5.1.1 The Chosen Bud

The novel conforms to the modified Freytag plot structure and can be broken down into the five constituent parts. Instead of starting with the exposition as would normally be the case, the narrative begins with the inciting incident (start of the rising action). For clarity’s sake, the “beginning” referred to is the beginning of the work which is different from the story’s beginning. Gray (1975: 359) clarifies that the beginning of a work refers to “first moment-by-moment account wherever it may appear.” In *The Chosen Bud*, the delay of the exposition results in the novel opening with Leria’s appearance to the inhabitants of Malenga village.

Although she is dead, Leria and her son Nsangu begin appearing to the living. This incident is also the inciting incident because it sparks off the conflict of the novel. In literature a conflict may also be explained as a tug-of-war between the protagonist/s and antagonist/s. “The story is launched when the protagonist pushes to achieve his goal. The story is shaped when the antagonist pushes to achieve his goal. The back-and-forth cause-and-effect pushing and blocking of goals is the fuel for the story. For the story to have a tight structure and focused central conflict, the actions of both the protagonist and antagonist must directly block their opponent’s pursuit of their goals.” ([www.orglink.com/the basics of fiction/](http://www.orglink.com/the_basics_of_fiction/) accessed on 02/10/2014).

In *The Chosen Bud*, the protagonist is Leria and her family on one end and the antagonist, though only discovered later in the novel is Kalimbambo. Leria’s family expects and has hope in Leria’s ability to continue its family line but this is in direct opposition to Kalimbambo’s political ambition which is dependent on Leria’s death. The conflict must be resolved by the end of the novel. In the rest of the rising action, we see how the family gathers and finally decides to seek advice from the ancestors.

While this is taking place, we also learn more about Leria and the family members from flashbacks. The background information we gather from the flashbacks is the exposition which does not only come in titbits but continues further into the plot. For example we only get information about who Kalimbambo is after the climax. As the plot progresses, the family eventually goes to the shrine and the climax is reached when they are informed that actually their relative, the minister Kalimbambo is responsible for the death of their relative Leria and her son.

He killed them for his political advancement. From here the action begins to fall. In the falling action the family members decide with the endorsement of the ancestors that Kalimbambo must be punished. As luck is on their side, the minister soon comes to the village where they kill him and hide traces of his remains.

In the resolution the family line is restored when Nanzama gives birth to twins in her old age and the bud can once again continue to blossom. The conflict, which is both external and between the family and Kalimbambo, is resolved in the end.

In terms of the Denise Paulme structural models, the novel demonstrates five out of the seven. To start with, the story of Leria and her family is that of ascendancy. This is because there is clearly a movement from lack to liquidation of the lack. In the course of the novel, lack is dealt with and by the end of the novel is eliminated. At the beginning of the novel, the lack is evident in the fact that Leria is appearing to the living. She cannot rest in peace seeing that her murderer is still at large. In the family, her appearance raises turmoil and there is lack of peace. As the plot unfolds, through consultation and finally elimination of Kalimbambo who has robbed the family of their peace, peace is restored. The family can finally move on with their lives and the dead also find their rest.

Kalimbambo's story is one of descendance. At the beginning of the plot, all is well for Kalimbambo. Leria is dead and he has acquired his votes. However, in a reversal of fortune, when the family discover that he is the cause of Leria's death, they kill him and the result is a fall from glory to permanent lack. We actually learn from Kalimbambo's flashback that his fate can

also fall in the cyclical model. He had lack when he was searching for a way to get the votes he needed to win his election. He manages to ascend through black magic but this is his downfall in disguise. It is this mistake which causes a turn around which is this time permanent.

If this scenario is taken into further consideration, the spiral structure is also at play. The first time round, Kalimbambo has won at the beginning of the novel, the family is clearly on the downside. He has managed to curb the hope which had been created in Leria and her son. His joy is short lived because in the second time round, he is overcome when the family find out through the ancestors that it is he that is behind the family woe. Seeing that the actions of Leria's family and Kalimbambo are in opposition to one another (one party ascends while the other descends) the plot also qualifies to form an hourglass structure.

In terms of simple and complex plots, *The Chosen Bud* has a complex plot. Initially, the plot begins in *medias res* or in the middle of things therefore not chronologically aligned to the storyline. Furthermore, it does not follow the action of only one major character but through flashbacks, different characters. As the plot unfolds, it moves back and forth from the storyline to digressions. The different parts are however so linked to each other that every part of the whole is needed to understand the story. For example, one cannot understand the story if he or she starts reading it from the third chapter. The parts cannot stand on their own because a complex plot like *The Chosen Bud* "can't be content with a simple, one-way progression into the future. It needs to come back on itself, and finish what was left unfinished, tell us the mystery which has been hidden all through the story." (<http://www.signosemio.com/genette/narratology.asp>visited

on 20/4/2015). This is different from a simple plot in which the different episodes are independent of each other.

Another complexity arises from the fact that although the author uses fictional characters, the settings actually exist in reality. Setting here may be taken to include not only the time and place of the action but also the social environment. Time is not restricted to duration but also a period in history. The question which arises for example is, does the story have a place in our time line or is it in a time dimension of its own?

The place of the action is the location of the drama which may either be created by the author or may be a place that exists in reality. Furthermore, “Social environment simply means the political and cultural conditions of a story” (<http://study.com/academy/lesson/setting-in-literature-definition-importance-examples.html> accessed on 20/03/15)

If the plot is designed in such a way that it stays on either side of fiction or reality, there is no complexity. However, if there is a mixture of both, this makes the plot complex. In *The Chosen Bud*, there is a mixture of exactly this nature. When the author speaks about the Eastern province of Zambia, anyone who knows Zambia is aware of the province. In addition, it is as if the author simply places fictional characters into a world which already exists because even their behaviour points to this conclusion. Kalimbambo’s political life gives the impression that the author, through the narrator, was commenting on the way of life of politicians in the new independent Zambia. This can be seen by the way he brings in reality by using UNIP (United National Independence Party), a real political party. This lifts the fiction aspect and gives it a real life touch. Kalimbambo is said to have been a prominent member of UNIP in the 1960s. Even the hut

tax system is straight from the history books. It is like telling a true story but with a Mr X. It is as if the suggestion here is that this person exists or existed but we are not aware of this. What Luangala has done with Kalimbambo is to place a fictitious character in a real government scenario. The creation is not an imagined real world somewhere but one that already exists. This mixture of fact and fiction is in effect a complexity of the plot.

5.1.2 Bitterness

The plot in this novel can be divided into the exposition, rising action, climax, the falling action and finally the resolution. In the exposition we are introduced to the protagonist Besa and his father. We learn about Besa's relationship with his family. The conflict of the novel is established here. Besa's character analysis acts as an inciting incident because the internal conflict which he has is established here. His struggle is with himself in that he has not yet found his identity. This is clearly seen in his dealings with his family in which he rarely stands up for himself but allows others to make decisions for him (Katulwende, 2005).

In the rising action, he goes to the University of Zambia where he goes through initiation or a process of learning. Whilst there, he expresses himself freely in a university publication but under a pseudonym Ferio. He is still not confident enough to expose his true self. He graduates still very complacent and unable to express his true self as we see when he stays at the school where he is working even when he has not been paid for three months. We see the same complacency in him that we saw when we first met him. Apart from his relationship with Shantiee, he does not act on any other problems in his life but moves on with his life taking everything as it comes. Eventually his mother dies and he must come out of his shell. After the funeral, it is the first time he speaks out to stand for himself. When his family wants to start

negotiations over the proposed marriage between him and a girl from the same village he hails from, he refuses. Even after his uncle and his father try to convince him, he strongly opposes the idea telling them he wants to marry Shantiee. At this stage he is denounced by his father.

In the falling action, he is a different person. When he goes back to Lusaka, he links up with Shantiee and this time when she and his friend Washama talk to him about his life, he can see things differently. In the resolution we see him decide to move out of the country for a while and finally decide to resign from his non-paying job. The conflict within him is finally resolved and he can make his own decisions. It is the typical heroes' journey from innocence, initiation and finally recognition.

According to Denise Paulme's models, the protagonist's story is that of ascendancy. It only qualifies for this kind of model because Besa's conflict is an internal one. There are no other opponents to contend with directly except himself. At first there is lack in the sense that Besa has no identity of his own but through education in his experiences, he grows psychologically and can no longer be termed a child as far as making his own decision goes.

The plot is almost a simple one and follows the chronology of the story. It follows the growth of a boy. As he is growing, the story is also moving along and it follows him from one stage of his life to another. The action of the protagonist is what is followed most of the time with a few exceptions. For example when he is no longer at the village, at no time does the narrator tell us about the village except through him. Even his mother's illness is only told from his perspective or through his father's letter but again in his presence.

The plot is also episodic. It is in stages; one time Besa is in the village then he moves to university and then has a life after that. These episodes can exist independent of each other and may even be complete stories each on their own. Even if you leave out the first episode of the village, the story would still be meaningful. In agreement, in his book *Poetics* (1970: 54) Aristotle calls a plot episodic if “the episodes or acts succeed one another without probable or necessary sequence.”

Nevertheless the plot is complex because of firstly the prologue which foreshadows events to come and therefore plays a significant role in breaking the chronology. The leap into the future makes most of the novel (up to the disownment) a huge flashback. Even more so, the complexity is clear from the mixture of genre and style. The novel is packed with poem, letter, journal, song, dialogue all in one book.

Furthermore, like *The Chosen Bud*, the novel mixes fact and fiction. Although the characters are fictional, the settings are real places which a reader may recognise when reading. The University of Zambia for example is a factual place. One may further realise that the timing of the novel in terms of duration is realistic. For example the time Besa spends at the university is believable. Further, the plot is believable because it fits into the real world’s dimension and even gives the impression that such a story has happened before in the real world. While this technique of blending fact and fiction helps to make the story believable, it raises complexity in that one can no longer differentiate fact from fiction.

5.2 Similarities and Differences

The plot structures of the two works show some similarities and differences. Like the techniques in the previous chapter, where there are similarities the execution is different. *The Chosen Bud* and *Bitterness* are similar because they both have complex plots. *Bitterness* has almost a simple plot if one considers the fact that the narrator follows the action of only one major character, Besa, for most of the narrative and only breaks this trend by having a prologue and epilogue and at times focusing on Musunga Fyonse. The prologue by foreshadowing events to come creates a complexity. As one reads they are not only suspicious about the future but also await revelation of the past. This is unlike the simple plot in which the suspense is only about the future. The complexity is similar to the one which arises from the analepses in *The Chosen Bud*.

The similarity ends here for *The Chosen Bud* has a complex plot not only because it does not follow the chronology of the story but moves back and forth till its conclusion. Furthermore, while *Bitterness* follows the action of Besa most of the time, in *The Chosen Bud* the focus is on multiple characters.

Furthermore, the two novels are similar in that they blend fact and fiction which contributes to their complexity. In both cases this is not restricted to setting but goes as far as the names used which denote the villages or parts of Zambia characters hail from. It must be noted that the two plots are different in that while *Bitterness's* complexity lies more in it being a mixture of genre and style for *The Chosen Bud* its more because of the many back and forth movements.

The two novels both subscribe to the advanced Freytag structure but again with different execution. The protagonist in *Bitterness* has an internal conflict which has to do with identity. He undergoes a process of growth or initiation to finally deal with his conflict. On the contrary, in *The Chosen Bud* the conflict is external and unlike *Bitterness* where only one character is involved it involves many characters. The conflict which must be resolved is between the family on one end and Kalimbambo on the other.

The two works have their rising action, climax, falling action and the resolution but these are implemented differently. To begin with, in *Bitterness* the plot is structured in such a way that the exposition is followed by the rising action and then the climax, falling action and finally the resolution. This is different from *The Chosen Bud* which begins with an inciting incident (in *medias res*) and the reader only gets the exposition through the flashbacks which offer background information to Leria's family.

Bitterness and *The Chosen Bud* are similar in that they both delay their climax and this creates suspense on the part of the reader. In *The Chosen Bud* this delay is executed through diversions from the main story by flashbacks such that by the time we finally reach the climax we have been back and forth so many times to lose count. In *Bitterness* the delay is different and as a result of the initiation which Besa goes through which should be convincing enough for his transition to make sense. We therefore notice a difference in the effect of the delay on both novels. In *Bitterness* the delay is very much a part or as a result of the story itself while in *The Chosen Bud* the delay is an aesthetic element which the narrator could have avoided if they chose to. One may then conclude that delay may be a part of the story or something that the narrator creates for suspense or even beauty. In both cases, having revealed the climax the falling actions are quick and the resolution quickly follows.

Denise Paulme's models are especially realised in *The Chosen Bud* which demonstrates five out of the seven models. We see ascendancy, descendancy, cyclical, spiral and the hourglass models. In *Bitterness* this is not the case and we only see the ascendancy model which is similar to *The Chosen Bud*.

5.3 Significance of Similarities and Differences

The similarities and differences that emerged concerning plot structure have a connotation similar to that of the narrative techniques discussed in Chapter Four. The analysis reveals overtones of African oral literature and Western literature. The findings are therefore important.

From the findings of this study, the two novels are influenced by the linear or traditional plot from the African oral tradition. In oral narratives the plot is usually chronological, following the action of the protagonist. Good examples of such are the narratives on Julius Chongo's Poceza M'madzulo radio programme which entertained Zambians in the 1960's and 70's. The narratives were a retelling of many Zambian oral narratives (Wendland, 2004). It is clear even from the written versions that the stories are narrated chronologically. The very first story in Wendland's (2004) adaptation entitled, *The Greedy Hyena* follows a logically arranged series of events; from the time Kalulu is introduced to the reader as a cunning thief up to the time he tricks the greedy hyena into being caught for Kalulu's crimes. This kind of plot is highly predictable for the reader can easily conclude the plot even before reading it all. The simple plot is common and has been used often in African literature. Authors like Chinua Achebe have used it in such works as *Things Fall Apart* (1958). For even without reading far into the novel, Okonkwo's obstinacy spells trouble.

The study has shown that the plot in most of *Bitterness* (after the prologue) is chronological. Unlike the plot of *The Chosen Bud* the plot of *Bitterness* does not introduce characters who propel the plot into an entirely different direction. The main characters are known from the outset and the storyline closely followed. This is not the case in *The Chosen Bud* where apart from a zigzag kind of plot we only get to know a very important character like Kalimbambo far into the narrative.

One of the influences from Western influence is Joseph Campbell's monomyth or the *hero's journey*. The term was coined by him and described in his book *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (1949). The thesis is that many narratives worldwide follow an archetypal pattern in which the hero undergoes recognisable stages. Campbell divides these into seventeen stages which are further grouped into three main categories of *departure, initiation* and *return*. During the departure stage the hero is in a mundane situation of normality in which some information or something happens which propels him or her to head off into the unknown. During initiation, the hero goes through a series of tests, tasks, or ordeals that the person must undergo in order to be transformed. During the return or recognition, the hero must retain the wisdom and lessons learnt during initiation but must figure out how to integrate that wisdom into society.

Although this is the prototype of the journey, some narratives may skip some stage or even add some more. Of the two novels under study, *Bitterness* demonstrates a difference in plot progression from the other novel which draws attention to the hero's journey. Earlier when looking at the similarities and differences of the novels it was noted that *Bitterness* has a delay in climaxing and it was discovered that unlike the 'suspense' reason in *The Chosen Bud*, it was for the purpose of fulfilling the stages of the hero's journey which was underway.

The protagonist Besa is first just an ordinary young man going about his everyday life until he receives his call to adventure which is his acceptance letter to the University of Zambia. We may regard this as his departure into unknown territory.

It is at university where he undergoes initiation through trials and temptations. He begins to write for a university publication under a pseudonym but eventually uncovers his identity when he becomes actively involved in a protest against the government's ban of all university publications. By the time he returns from jail he is clearly a new version of himself. The last thread in his initiation is when he goes back to the village for his mother's funeral. He stands up for himself to his father and family and when he returns to the city he is a new creature ready to make his contribution to society. In fact his return to the village where his change is pronounced symbolises the end of his initiation. He started his journey in the village and his initiation ends there (Katulwende, 2005). Back in Lusaka he is clearly in the return stage ready to impact society as a new Besa.

Besa's journey is very similar to the Biblical story of Moses. After Moses discovers he is not an Egyptian and after killing an Egyptian soldier, he flees. While away he is initiated by God as the one who will lead the redemption of his people from Pharaoh. When he returns to Egypt he is a new creation and manages to stand up against Pharaoh until the Israelites are free (Exodus 1-14). The same pattern is seen as early as the middle ages in *Beowulf* (2000; Abrams et al, 2000). Beowulf is only fit to be king of the Danes after his adventure in which he helps king Hrothgar of Denmark get rid of Grendel and his mother. He emerges a hero and because of this initiation manages to rule with all the noble and heroic attributes he has gained from his journey. He ends up dying a hero as deemed fit by the heroic age he lived in.

In Africa the same plot structure (using the hero's journey) is used in Ngugi wa Thiongo's novel *Devil on the Cross* (1980). Although the author does not support the use of the English language as a medium for writing, it is difficult not to notice some Western techniques in his work. He however justifies this by saying that although not using English "I would use any and everything I had learnt about the craft of fiction-allegory, parable, satire, narrative description, reminiscence, flashback, interior monologue, stream of consciousness, dialogue, drama, provided that it came naturally in the development of character, theme and story. (Ngugi,1981:164). Therefore it does not come as a surprise when one of the protagonists Wariinga goes through a journey of self discovery similar to that of Besa in *Bitterness*. After going through abuse at the hand of an old man at her home village and eventually her boss in the city, she decides to take a break back to her home village. It is after this *departure* that she meets other people on the bus to the village and learns one or two things from their stories. Through the journey motif she is initiated into self discovery and later announced at her home village. The first sign of her psychological growth is her ability to stand up to the old man who abused her as an innocent and ignorant youth. When he tries to make a move on her after all the years that have passed, she shoots him dead. The gun which she uses itself is a phallic symbol and demonstrates how the man's authority has been transferred to her. The man's emasculation is clearer when we see Wariinga back in the city not as a secretary but an auto mechanic engineer.

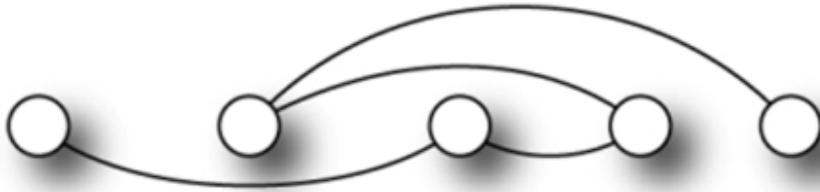
This is not the only significance of *Bitterness*' dissimilarity. The novel is a Bildungsroman which is clearly western. A bildungsroman which hails from German folklore is a novel of education. It is a novel in which a character "goes out into the world seeking adventure and learns wisdom the hard way...The bildungsroman traditionally ends on a positive note...if the

grandiose dreams of the hero's youth are over, so are many foolish mistakes and painful disappointments, and a life of usefulness lies ahead" (Brittanica, 2009). In *Besa* we see a growth similar only to the likes of Pip in Charles Dickens' *Great Expectations* (1861). Pip who has a wrong perception of being a gentleman has to undergo a process of psychological growth before he finally understands that he has had it wrong all along. He has not only grown psychologically but also physically from the teenager he is when we first meet him to the young man he is at the end of the novel.

Non linear plots are also influenced by Western Literature. The complexity in *The Chosen Bud* for example is as a result of the flashback technique mentioned earlier. The resulting back and forth movement of the plot makes it difficult to even plot the structure after Freytag's or Aristotle's plot structure pyramids. The non-linear plot tells events out of linear order for dramatic impact. The juxtaposition of out-of-order scenes and sequences can help the reader to create plot connections, expand character depth, or elaborate on theme. Backwards structures draw attention to causal connections, like forward-moving linear structures, but become causal mysteries, where the narrative's fuel is the search for the first cause of known effects. Scrambled-sequence structures don't do away with the cause-and-effect chain, but merely suspend it for a time, eventually to be ordered by the competent spectator (Berg , 2006).

Some scholars have gone further and concluded that there should be provision for non-linear plots. Most plot structure diagrams are based on earlier plots which were either linear or could be adapted to the same structure. In recent years alternative plot structures have been unveiled. According to Ingrid notes (<https://ingridnotes.wordpress.com/plot-structure> accessed on 03/10/2014), a plot structure can be plotted according to its nature. If the plot has many digressions it may be called a branching plot structure with a diagram hereafter. *The*

ChosenBud plot structure would fall in the category of the non-linear plot also known as the backwards or scrambled Sequence Structure. The structure would be as shown in the diagram below:



<https://ingridnotes.wordpress.com/plot-structure> visited on 03/10/2014

However, in the light of the fact that one can still modify the structure to suit their plotting, modifications of the structure above can be done to accommodate even the two complex novels in this study.

Another contribution coming from Western Literature is realism. Literary realism came from the mother art form of realism which is believed to have started in the mid nineteenth century and was associated with French Literature. Realism as the word itself connotes simply means “real”. In literature it means representing reality as close as possible. It was for this reason that authors like Mark Twain were hailed as realists. Twain was applauded for novels like *Huckleberry Finn* (1991) which was not only realist in setting but the language used by the characters was a depiction of reality. We again see the realist characteristics in authors like George Eliot with her novels like *Middlemarch: A Study of Provincial Life* (1871-2), which actually depicts the times. Theodore Dreiser is yet another author who used realism to the extent that some of his novels like *An American Tragedy* (1925) have even been termed full of verbosity by some scholars

because of the attempt to represent reality as close as possible. Reference here can be made to the 'letters' which are read so many times in the novel that a reader feels it is enough for them to be shown in full the first time they are mentioned instead of them being read in full each time they are mentioned.

In the novels under study, realism is seen in the blending of fact and fiction. The characters are fictional but some aspects such as places where the action occurs are real. Even the names used in each novel are the ones prominent in the areas used. In *The Chosen Bud* it is believable to find names such as Sicholo in the Eastern part of Zambia and the same can be said about names like Besa from the Luapula province. By making the novels faithful to reality, one is tempted to think the stories themselves are true, they have happened before in reality but the identities of the people are the only ones that are changed.

5.3 Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter has revealed what comprises the novels in terms of plot structure. Both novels have modified Freytag plot elements and some Denise Paulme plot structure models. Furthermore, both plots are complex. It may be noted that the complexity of a plot is not only a relative term but may also arise from different aspects of the plotting process. Like the techniques in the previous chapter, the similarities and differences clearly show influence from both African oral and Western Literature.

CHAPTER SIX

Summary of Findings and Recommendations

6.0 Introduction

This chapter concludes the dissertation by offering a bridge between the aims of the study and the findings. It also includes comments of the researcher on the findings. Lastly some recommendations are made.

6.1 Findings

The study set out to address four objectives which were: (i) to evaluate the narrative technique employed in *The Chosen Bud* and *Bitterness*; (ii) to analyse the plot structure of the two novels; (iii) to determine the areas of convergence and divergence in the narrative technique and plot structure of the two fictional works; (iv) to evaluate the significance of the similarities and differences of the narration technique and plot structure of the two texts.

In order to evaluate the narrative technique employed in the two novels, the researcher used four categories which encompass a wide range of methods. The categories which were inspired by Genette's (1980) Narratological theories are: narrative time, narrative mood, narrative instance and narrative level.

The research made the following discoveries in terms of narrative technique. *The Chosen Bud* mostly uses analepses but also has one instance of prolepsis. When it comes to duration, summary and ellipsis are prominent with pause also present here and there. Frequency was manipulated by using the repeating narrative mode sparingly with touches of the iterative and singulative modes. With reference to narrative mood, the work is mostly narrated but that is not to say the transposed indirect method and reported modes are not present. Apart from this,

the narrator plays an ideological role and is conclusively not as involved in the narrative if distance is considered.

Narrative Instance was looked at and it was found that the perspective of the work is one of internal focalisation. Specifically, the multiple and variable focal points are common with zero focalisation also at play. In addition the voice of the narrator is a heterodiegetic one. The narrative is a subsequent one and the story is only told at one level, the extradiegetic level.

Bitterness displays the use of analepses and prolepses. In the area of duration the study discovered a limited presence of both summary and ellipsis with scene in some cases. The singulative mode is the most common form of frequency with traces of the iterative and repeating method. The narrative mood is an alternation between distant and non-distant. Also evident is the presence of the three instances of distance which are narratised, transposed indirect and reported methods. In the narrative instance category, there is internal focalisation with a heterodiegetic voice. The time of narration is subsequent but in the prologue prior. The narrative only has one level which is the extradiegetic level.

It must be noted that the narrative techniques discussed demonstrate a dependency on each other. That is, there are some whose presence means the presence of others which are related to it and vice versa. For example, if one takes the element of analepses, one discovers that if these are common in a novel as is the case with *The Chosen Bud*, it is not possible for summary or ellipsis to be absent or for the narrative mood (distance) to be a close one or even for the reported narrative method to be common. A good example is Chinsamba's flashback just after Leria appears to the villagers (Luangala,1991). His flashback fills the information gap about Leria

which would not be necessary if the information about Leria had been given. Therefore, the ellipsis concerning who Leria is facilitates Chinsamba's analepsis.

With regard to the plot structure of the two novels under study, the research used three methods of analysis. The novels were subjected to a modified Freytag plot structure (it is not strictly Freytag's structure), Denise Paulme's plot structure models and a scrutiny of whether they are simple or complex. Complexity or simplicity depended on whether the plot follows strict chronology, focuses on the protagonist all the time and does not mix fact and fiction, genre and style for the simple plot. On the other hand a plot was considered complex if there is to strict adherence to chronology, if the narrator focuses on more than one character or mixes fact and fiction, genre and style.

In terms of the modified Freytag structure, the findings were that *The Chosen Bud* has the five elements of exposition, rising action, climax, falling action and the resolution. The interesting thing about the plot however is that the parts are in a jumbled order. The plot opens *in medias res* and so the exposition is revealed as the plot unfolds. This happens in a peculiar way through the many flashbacks which give more and more background information as the plot progresses. Leria appearing to the villagers is the inciting incident and therefore the beginning of the rising action. The rest of the parts occur as they should.

When subjected to Denise Paulme's models, the plot reveals five out of the seven models. These are: ascendancy, descendancy, cyclical, hourglass and spiral models. The plot is further complex because it is a novel of flashbacks and this breaks the chronology of the story at every turn. Not

only that, the novel has no one focal character but multiple and variable focal characters. The novel further blends fact and fiction.

Bitterness' plot also reveals the five plot elements of exposition, rising action, climax, falling action and resolution. They occur in this exact order. Of Denise Paulme's models the plot exhibits only ascendancy. As earlier indicated this could be an issue of the conflict of the plot being an internal one with the protagonist having no external antagonist. The plot is complex because it does not stick strictly to chronology, it blends fact and fiction and also genre and style.

The researcher also examined the areas of convergence and divergence in the narrative technique and plot structure of the two fictional works, and this was done in Chapter Four and Five. In Chapter Four the two novels are compared in terms of narrative technique to seek similarities and differences. The general finding is that the novels show more similarities in their use of technique than differences. They both employ most of the techniques concerned albeit with different ways and degrees of execution and also with different roles. Whilst in some cases a technique would be present in both novels the execution varies. For example while both novels use anachronies they are not exactly the same. *The Chosen Bud* has longer flashbacks very much needed for the progression of the plot while in *Bitterness* the flashbacks are shorter and only fill up ellipses earlier in the novel. In terms of frequency, *The Chosen Bud* makes the most use of this technique.

In Chapter Five the two works are compared in terms of plot structure. Here again the plot structures have more similarities than differences but again, where there are similarities the execution is different. If one takes the modified Freytag structure for example, both plots have the five elements of exposition, rising action, climax, falling action and resolution but these are

not executed in exactly the same way. The two novels both have delayed climaxes but for different reasons. Further the order of these elements is not the same. When one moves to the Denise Paulme models, *The Chosen Bud* demonstrates five out of the seven models while *Bitterness* only has one model. This is probably as a result of differences in the conflicts of the two novels. *Bitterness* has an internal conflict while *The Chosen Bud* has an external one. The Denise Paulme models seem to do well when the conflict is external with external antagonists. When one looks at the issue of complexity they find that both novels are complex but in different ways and to different degrees.

If plots can both be complex and yet in different ways, then the idea of complexity or simplicity of a plot is relative depending on the criteria you use. Secondly, the similarities and differences in narrative and plot structure show that a novel may use techniques or have certain plot structure elements to a certain degree which may not be the same for every novel. In short a novel can make use of techniques to a certain extent. The use of a technique in one novel may be higher than in another while for another technique the situation might be the reverse. This is concluded because even if we say both *The Chosen Bud* and *Bitterness* use analepses, the extent or degree is not the same because *The Chosen Bud* uses this technique more than *Bitterness*. It is the same with plot structure, we may say both novels are complex but they both seem to lean more on different aspects of complexity.

Last but not the least, the researcher's goal was to evaluate the significance of the similarities and differences of the narration technique and plot structure of the two texts. This was addressed in Chapter Four and Five. The similarities and differences reveal areas which are significant not only to literature scholars but the body of literature as a whole. It was firstly discovered that the similarities and differences show that choices had to be made concerning the techniques and plot

structure employed. Further that a pool of these techniques exists and was at the disposal of the novels' authors. This is concluded because there is clearly influence from both western literature and African oral literature.

When technique is considered, influence from African oral tradition is seen in the form of the story-teller kind of narrator. Western influence is evident in the analepsis and prolepsis technique as well as aspects of modernism. The plot structure is influenced by the linear plot from the African oral tradition. From Western literature they borrow the archetypal *hero's journey*, the Bildungsroman, the non-linear plot and realism.

6.2 Recommendations

Zambian Researchers should engage themselves in more studies in Zambian prose fiction in English specifically, narrative technique and plot structure of other Zambian novels. Zambian literature has not been readily available to the outside world including the rest of Africa. Whatever reasons may be given, one of them is because the Zambian researcher has not done enough. It is important for scholars to do more research on Zambian novels specifically in the area of plot structure and narration technique.

This study also recommends that Zambian universities and colleges consider introducing Literature courses covering Zambian Literature. Most of the universities and colleges I know and the information I am privy to point to the fact that Zambian prose fiction in English is only a component in Literature courses offered.

The study lastly recommends that Zambian authors expose themselves more to narrative technique and plot structure studies. Writing a book is not merely about one having an idea but they need the knowhow as well.

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