

**LANGUAGE CODES AND SOCIOLINGUISTIC VARIABLES: A STUDY OF  
ACHEBE'S *ANTHILLS OF THE SAVANNAH***

**BY**

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**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH AND  
LITERARY STUDIES IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR  
THE AWARD OF DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE**

## **DECLARATION**

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

Signature: ..... Date: .....

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## **CERTIFICATION**

This is to certify that the research work for this Dissertation and the subsequent write up were carried under my supervision.

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## **APPROVAL PAGE**

This Dissertation has been examined and approved for the award of Master degree in English language

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Date and Signature.....

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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

First of all, I express my profound gratitude to Almighty God for giving me the knowledge and ability to carry out this hectic task. I also thank my supervisor: Dr Aishat Umar of the Department of English and Literary Studies, Bayero University Kano (BUK) for her enormous contributions to this study. I thank you for your patience and for enduring the pressure I put on you. I also thank you for the encouragement you gave me for your constructive criticisms. I humbly wish to express my profound appreciation to my internal examiner, Dr. Amina Adamu for the great help and humble guidance as well as her general critical supervision of the entire Dissertation. Thank you Ma. My appreciation also goes to Dr. Rabi Adulsalam Ibrahim: the PG coordinator who willingly accepted the hectic task of going through my work to make sure that everything is in order before the submission for external defence. I am grateful Ma. I also appreciate the effort of Dr. Paulette I. Ezurike who without hesitation accepted the task of making sure that all the corrections made by the external examiner are effected before the final binding is done. My gratitude also goes to all my colleagues in the M.A English Language class (2014/2015 academic session) for their cooperation and assistance during our course work. I give special thanks to Professor Aliyu Kamal and Dr Bala Danyaro of the same Department as well as Mr. Teryila Orhembega of Intercontinental College Kano for the innumerable assistance they have given me for they guided me in the course of this study. My special appreciation goes to Muhammad Malam Modu who greatly assisted me in the course of this Dissertation. I thank Mr. Emmanuel Terver Chaga and Mr. Jacob Terhemba Luga for their concern over my work as

they kept encouraging me in the course of this study. I thank them for their frequent enquiries on my progress which made me more determined to finish this work in time. In fact, it was Mr Luga that advised and persuaded me to pursue this programme.

Finally, I thank my parents: Mr Tse Gbuushi and Mrs Akpenzaan Tse as well as my wife: Mrs Florence Hembadoon Terhemba, my uncles/aunts, brothers and sisters for their encouragements, love, spiritual backing and financial assistance. I say a sincere thank you to all other people who helped me in one way or the other in the course of this study.

## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to my beloved wife: Mrs. Florence Terhemba and to my lovely children: Silas Senenge Terhemba and Barnabas Mfamer Terhemba as well as the entire family of Tse Gbuushi.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

TITLE PAGE	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	i
DECLARATION	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	ii
CERTIFICATION	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	iii
APPROVAL PAGE	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	v
DEDICATION	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	vii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	viii
ABSTRACT	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	xi
CAPTER ONE										
1.1 Introduction	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
1.2 Background to the Study	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
1.3 Statement of the Problem	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
1.4 Aim and Objectives of the Study	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
1.5 Research Questions	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
1.6 Significance of the Study	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
1.7 Scope and Delimitation of the Study	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
1.8 plot summary of <i>Anthills of the savannah</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATUREREVIEW										
2.1 INTRODUCTION	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6
2.2 What is Language?	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6



2.3 Language codes	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8
2.4 Sociolinguistics:	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12
2.5 Sociolinguistic Variables	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	16
2.6 Social Class				-		-		-	-	19
2.7 Education	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	22
2.8 Religion	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	23
2.9 Ethnicity	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	24
2.10 Sex/Gender	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	27
2.11 Age	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	29
2.12 Review of Literature on <i>Anthills of the Savannah</i> :"	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	31
2.13 Theoretical Framework	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	45
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY										
3.1 INTRODUCTION	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	49
3.2 Research Design	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	49
3.3 Procedure for Data Collection-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	50
3.4 Sampling Procedure	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	51
3.5 Procedure of Analysis-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	51
CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION OF DATA AND ANALYSIS										
4.1 Introduction	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	52
4.2 Restricted and Elaborated Codes in <i>Anthills of the Savannah</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	52
4.3 The use of Restricted Codes in the Text	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	52
4.4 The use of Elaborated Codes in the Text	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	54
4.5 The Inclusion Restricted Code into Elaborated One	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	59

4.6 Sociolinguistic Variables as Observed in <i>Anthills of the Savannah</i> .	-	-	63
4.7.1 Social Class-	-	-	63
4.7.2 Education-	-	-	66
4.7.3 Religion-	-	-	69
4.7.4 Ethnicity-	-	-	71
4.7.5 Sex/Gender-	-	-	72
4.7.6 Age-	-	-	74
4.8 Disussion	-	-	75
4.8.1Restricted and Ellaborated codes-	-	-	75
4.8.2 Sociolinguistic Variable of: Social class-	-	-	77
4.9 Findings-	-	-	77
CHAPTER FIVE : SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION			
5.1 Introduction	-	-	79
5.2 Summary	-	-	79
5.3 Conclusion	-	-	80
REFERENCES	-	-	81

## **ABSTRACT**

This research work conducts a study on the language codes and sociolinguistic variables present in Achebe's *Anthills of the Savannah*. To study the language codes and sociolinguistic variables present in the text, the conversation/utterances of some of the characters such as Ikem, Chris, Beatrice and Sam in the novel were selected for analysis in order to check for the presence of these features using insights from Basil Bernstein's Deficit Hypothesis. In addition to this, the analysis involve a consideration of sociolinguistic variables of sex/gender, age, social class, education, religion and ethnicity. The analyses reveal that the elaborated and restricted codes are the major language codes used in the novel and that the aforementioned sociolinguistic variables are responsible for the variations noticed in the characters' language choices.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **GENERAL INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter covers background to the study, statement of the problem, aim and objectives, research questions, significance of the study, scope and delimitation of the study as well as the plot summary of *Anthills of the Savannah*.

#### **1.2 Background to the Study**

There are various definitions of language given by many linguists. (Robins 1985 cited in Jindal, 2007:3) defines language as a symbol system based on pure or arbitrary conventions infinitely extendable and modifiable according to the changing needs and conditions of the speakers. Hall, (1969) cited in Jindal ( 2007) defines language as institutions where by humans communicate and interact with each other by means of habitually used oral-auditory arbitrary symbols. Language, being a potent vehicle of transmitting cultures, values, norms and beliefs from generation to generation remains a central factor in determining the status of any nation. Language is a crucial element in the making of a nation. This informs the submission of Isayev (1997) that “language is a nation’s most obvious and most important attribute. There is no such thing as a nation without a common linguistic basis. Language is a social institution which is basic and central to all human interactions.

As observed by Thomas and Nicol (1998), language is a social institution that involves shaping the society at large or in particular the ‘cultural niches’ in which it plays an important role hence the need to study language in relation to the society. Sociolinguistics as a branch of Linguistics is

the study of language in relation to society. Hudson (1996) further states that Sociolinguistics throws light on the nature of language generally or on the characteristics of some particular languages.

What we can be sure of is that speakers do use linguistic characteristics to achieve group identity with and group differentiation from other speakers but they use other characteristics as well: social, cultural, political and ethnic, to name a few, referring to what they call "speech markers" Giles, Scherer and Taylor (1979)

Through speech markers, functionally important social categorizations are discriminated and . . . these have important implications for social organization. For humans, speech markers have clear parallels . . . (SIC)

It is evident that social categories of age: sex, ethnicity, social class and situation can be clearly marked on the basis of speech and that such categorisation is fundamental to social organisation even though many of the categories are also easily discriminated on other bases. Wardhaugh (2006:121). The discussion of language codes and sociolinguistic variables implies that there are certain factors that divide the society into different classes and influence individuals' choice of language or linguistic codes. In addition, a study of language codes and sociolinguistic variables is an indication of the fact that every society has linguistic codes acceptable for communication and interaction at any point in time and that language by its nature is totally a social phenomenon. This has led to the establishment of the fact that there is variation in the use of language among users in the same society and that language fulfils different functions in social institutions and the organisation of societies. These observable features have been reflected in numerous literary texts. Consequently, this study examines language codes and sociolinguistic variables in Achebe's *Anthills of the Savannah* (1987).

### **1.3 Statement of the Problem**

Achebe is an African expressing himself in English . In *Anthills of the Savannah*, his language is a mixture of both the standard and substandard forms of the English. The readers, diverse as they may be are faced with the issue of comprehension. This problem of whether Achebe communicates explicitly with his audience is what the researcher sets out to unravel.

### **1.4 Aim and Objectives of the Study**

The aim of this study is to examine language codes and sociolinguistic variables in the *Anthills of the Savannah*. The objectives of the study are to:

- 1) examine the use of various sociolinguistics variables in the novel,
- 2) investigate the use of different language codes by some characters in the novel and
- 3) examine how the language codes used by the characters indicate their social status.

### **1.5 Research Questions**

In order to achieve the objectives of the study, this research will address the following questions:

- 1) What are the sociolinguistics variables in the novel?
- 2) Why characters in the novel use different codes?
- 3) How do the language codes used by the characters indicate their social status?

### **1.6 Significance of the Study**

A substantial number of researches on the selected text have been conducted from different perspectives. For example, Reddy (1994) Udumukwu (1996) Greenwald (2002) have investigated characterisation in *Anthills of the Savannah*. Again, the study of characterisations in the novel has focused on using the characters to illustrate a thematic interpretation of the novel. Other studies on *Anthills of the Savannah* are primarily limited to the themes of the novel

e.g (Diamond 1989), Achebe's use of multiple narrative techniques e.g (Innes,1990), as well as Achebe's exploitation of African oral literary forms e.g, (Asempasah 2006).However, there are very few that focused on the linguistic study of the text e.g. Mwinlaaru, (2012) investigates the role of characters and point of view in Achebe's *Anthills of the Savannah* using a functional-semantic perspective. It is in the light of this, that the researcher intends to conduct a study on the language codes and sociolinguistic variables in Achebe's *Anthills of the Savannah* as the study will enable the readers identify the various codes and the predominant sociolinguistic variables employed in the text.

In addition, the study may encourage writers to adopt Achebe's style of writing in their writings.

It will provide material for researchers in the field of Linguistics.

### **1.7 Scope and Delimitation of the Study**

The concepts of language and Sociolinguistics are wide fields of researches that no researcher can ever exhaust because of the multiplicity of the aspects that can be discussed under them. Therefore, this study will only focus on the study of language codes (elaborated and restricted codes) and sociolinguistic variables of social class, education, religion, ethnicity, sex/gender and age in Achebe's *Anthills of the Savannah*. Secondly, the list of Achebe's publications can be said to be numerous, it will be impossible to study all his works within the time frame of this research. Therefore, this study will be limited to only one of his novels: *Anthills of the Savannah*.

The analysis primarily focuses on six characters, namely: General Sam, Christopher Oriko, Beatrice Okoh, Ikem Osodi, Elewa and Agatha. However, references may be given to other characters in the course of the analysis where necessary.

### **1.8. Plot Summary of *Anthills of the Savannah***

*Anthills of the Savannah* is set in fictitious West African country Kangan. Three childhood friends, having grown into influential men assume important positions in the new regime, which overthrows the former civilian rule through coup. Sam is the President, Chris Oriko is the Commissioner of Information and Ikem Osodi is the editor of the government controlled newspaper, the *National Gazette*. The three friends attended Lord Lugard College; a prestigious school in Kangan. Ikem is an intellectual, a very good poet who takes it upon himself to raise alarms calling the attention of the government towards the needs for reforms in its policies through radical editorials, thus kicking against the ways of the president (Sam). Chris tries to stop the quarrel to avoid Sam's reaction by advising Ikem not to provoke the dictator to act but Ikem turns a deaf ear to this, the disagreement between Ikem and Sam results in enmity. Sam has become a leader without the care for his people at heart; he acquires more power for himself by any means. Chris and Ikem who help Sam gets appointed into his present position and even advise him (Sam) on certain issues, watch him changes rapidly into a dictator. Chris and Ikem regret their previous support to Sam and seek to control him in their own ways. In the end, both Sam and Ikem are killed by the orders from their friend's (Sam) government meanwhile Sam is also killed and overthrown by another coup.



## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter contains literature review relevant to the study. It also contains a survey of some relevant studies on the select text. The chapter also provides a theoretical framework that guides this study.

#### **2.2 What is Language?**

Lyons (1970) cited in Jindal (2007) defines language as: “the principal system of communication used by particular groups of human beings within a particular society (linguistic community) of which they are members”. Language is a system of communication; a medium for thoughts, a vehicle for literary expression, a social institution, a matter for political controversy and a catalyst for nation building. All human beings normally speak at least one language and it is hard to imagine much significant social, intellectual or artistic activity taking place in its absence. (Grady, O. *et al* 2011) .Carnie (2013) defines language as a psychological or cognitive property of humans. This definition affirms the claim by Grady, O. *et al* (2011) that all human languages have grammars that are equal in their expressive capacity and all speakers of a language have (conscious) knowledge of its grammar and that the existence of such linguistic systems in humans is the product of unique anatomical and cognitive specialisation. When linguists talk about language, they are generally talking about the ability of humans to speak any (particular) language. According to Carnie (2013:5), Noam Chomsky refers to the ability of humans to speak any language as “Human Language Capacity” .

Similarly, Llamas C. *et al* (2007) define language as the means by which groups of people articulate themselves, and delineate themselves from others. This assertion has concurred with the view of Adegbija (1992) cited in Nguigba and Hendah (2007) that language is the skin in skin of thought and the flesh of the mind. It is a double edged sword, capable of keeping people together as well as tearing them apart.

Furthermore, Bahktin (1981) cited in Bayley and Lucas (2007) states that language represents the co-existence of socio-ideological contradictions between the present and the past, between differing epochs of the past, between different socio-ideological groups in the present, between tendencies, schools, circles and so forth, all given a bodily form. Denham and Lobeck (2013) believe that in an attempt to know about language, one has to bear in mind that human language has numerous features that distinguish it from other communication systems. People have conscious knowledge and use this knowledge to speak and understand language. All languages have grammar, a system of phonological, morphological, syntactic and semantic rules, a language is really a continuum of language varieties that change over space and time, children are hardwired to acquire a linguistic rule system and they do so while very young without direct teaching and that all languages have the same basic framework: Universal grammar. Language can be learnt informally at home or acquired formally at school ( Tondo (2004:1). Language plays an important role in how we think about abstract notions or at the very least, language appeared to be structured in such a way that it allows us to express abstract notions ( Carnie (2007:5).

### **2.3 Language codes**

According to Wardhaugh (2006: 88), it is possible to refer to a language or a variety of a language as a code. The term is neutral and the neutral term code, taken from information theory can be used to refer to any kind of system that two or more people employ for communication.

Bernstein (1962) postulated that there are two varieties of language codes available to speakers. Bernstein (1962) called the two varieties of language codes as 'elaborated code' and 'restricted code' respectively. Bernstein (2003:228) argues that the two codes are generated by a particular form of social relation and they are likely to be a realization of different social structures. Bernstein further states that the users of restricted code would pause less frequently and spend less time pausing, than the elaborated code speakers. An elaborated code is associated with higher levels of structural organisation and lexical selection and with the preparation and delivery of relatively explicit meaning and will therefore entail more verbal planning, and hence longer and more frequent pauses (Bernstein (1962) cited in Bernstein (2003:209)). The elaborated code is equated with standard language and restricted code with non-standard. It has been suggested that the use of elaborated codes renders the implicit explicit whereas the use of restricted codes reduces the possibility of such explicitness (Bernstein 2003:37). However, it is assumed that the language which constitutes the verbal realization of the restricted code of behaviour will display certain semantic features which are expected to be reflected at the formal levels of syntax, lexis and most probably phonology. The justification of these assumptions is that meanings are social and are therefore affected by the characteristics of a social structure. In the description of languages, components of meanings are said to form units of the semantic level; the formal patterns which occur in any verbal inter-action are activated by the semantic

components underlying them. Thus, if any crucial characteristic of meaning can be predicted by reference to the nature of codes then it follows that prediction regarding the possible crucial formal patterns can also be made (Hassan 1971 cited in Bernstein 2003:230).

According to Bernstein 2003:100 in restricted speech code, the speech is here refracted through a common cultural identity which reduces the need to verbalise intent so that it becomes explicit, with the consequence that the structure of the speech is simplified and the lexicon will be drawn from a narrow range. The extra-verbal component of the communication will become a major channel for transmitting individual qualifications and so individual difference. The speech tends to be impersonal in that it will not be specially prepared to fit a given referent; how things are said when they are said rather than what is said becomes important. The intent of the listener is likely to be taken for granted. The meanings are likely to be concrete, descriptive or narrative rather than analytical or abstract. In certain situations, meanings will be highly condensed. The speech in the social relations according to Bernstein (2003) is likely to be fast and fluent, articulatory clues are reduced and some meanings are likely to be dislocated, condensed and local; there will be a low level of vocabulary and syntactic selection as the unique meaning of the individual is likely to be implicit.

Wardhaugh (2006:337) also points out that restricted code employs short sentences, grammatically simple and often unfinished sentences of poor type in the sense of nonstandard-syntactic form; uses a few conjunctions simply and repetitively; employs little subordination; tends towards a dislocated presentation of information and that it is a language of implicit meaning.

An elaborated code where prediction is much less possible at the syntactic level is likely to arise in a social relationship which raises the tension in its members to select from their linguistic resources a verbal arrangement which closely fits specific referents. This situation arises where the intent of the other person cannot be taken for granted with the consequence that meanings have to be expanded and raised to the level of verbal explicitness. The verbal planning here, unlike the case of a restricted code promotes a higher level of syntactic organisation and lexical selection. The preparation and delivery of relatively explicit meaning is the major function of this code. The code facilitates the verbal transmission and elaboration of the individual's unique experience (Bernstein 2003:101). The condition of the listener unlike that in the case of restricted code will not be taken for granted, as the speaker is likely to modify his speech in the light of the special conditions and attributes of the listener. If a restricted code facilitates the construction and exchange of communalised symbols then an elaborated code facilitates the verbal construction and exchange of individualised or personal symbols. An elaborated code, through its regulation, induces in its speakers' sensitivity to the implications of separateness and differences and points to the possibilities inherent in a complex conceptual hierarchy for the organisation of experiences.

The speech or sociolinguistic codes says Dittmar (1976) in Hussein (2012:552) are presumably to be taught of as existing on a level between competence and performance. Taking Houston (1970) in Hussein (2012:552)'s term, this could be called 'systematic performance'. The speech codes become manifest in elaborated and restricted speech forms. The conceptual unity of the speech codes can be grasped by the term 'range of relatives' which is relatively large for the middle class and small for the lower class. In this sense, the middle class tends to realise more alternatives than the lower class (Hussein, 2012:552).

Much of the criticism of Bernstein's early work in (1962) revolved round issues of deficit and difference. Bernstein (1990 cited in Sadovnik 2007) rejected the view that his work was based on either a deficit or a difference approach. Rather, he argues that his code theory attempts to connect the macro levels of family and educational structures and processes and to provide an explanation for unequal educational performance. Thus,

The code theory asserts that there is a social class regulated unequal distribution of privileging principles of communication...and that social class indirectly effects the classification and framing of elaborated code transmitted by the school so as to facilitate and perpetuate its unequal acquisition. Thus the code theory accepts neither a deficit nor deference position but draws attention to the relations between macro power relations and macro practices of transmission, acquisition and evaluation and the positioning and positioning to which these practices give rise.(pp.7)

Bernstein (1972) is of the view that every speaker of the language has access to the restricted code because all employ this code on certain occasions; e.g. it is the language of intimacy between familiars. However, not all social classes have equal access to the elaborated code, particularly lower working-class people and their children, who are likely to have little experience with it. According to Bernstein (1972:173) the consequences of this unequal distribution are considerable. In particular, children from the lower working class are likely to find themselves at a disadvantage when they attend school in which extensive use is made of the elaborated code. Bernstein (1972) states:

The different focusing of experience through a restricted code creates a major problem of educability only where the school produces discontinuity between its symbolic orders and those of the child. Our schools are not made for these children; why should the children respond? To ask the child to switch to an elaborated code which presupposes different role relationships and systems of meaning without a sensitive understanding of the required contexts must create for the child a bewildering and potentially damaging experience.

According to Bernstein (1972) therefore there are serious consequences for the children of the lower working class when they come to school because elaborated code is the medium of instruction in schooling. When schools attempt to develop in children the ability to manipulate elaborated code, they are really involved in trying to change cultural patterns and such involvement may have profound social and psychological consequences for all engaged in the task. Educational failure is likely to be the result.

## **2.4 Sociolinguistics**

Sociolinguistics has become a recognised part of most courses at University level on Linguistics or language( Hudson; (2001:1) hence it is important to start by clarifying what Sociolinguistics is. There are various definitions of Sociolinguistics as given below. Sociolinguistics is;

1. a branch of Anthropological Linguistics that examines how language and culture are related and how language is used in different social contexts (Bell 1976).
2. a study of the relationship between language and social factors such as class, age, gender and ethnicity (Hudson 1996).
3. the study of stylistic and social variation of language. (Wardhaugh 2010).
4. the study of the effect of any and all aspects of society, including cultural norms, expectations, and context on the way language is used (Trudgill 2000).

All the definitions above make it clear that Sociolinguistics is a discipline that links sociology with linguistics. As a concept it is concerned with how language use is a determinant of a given society's linguistic requirements. Sociolinguistics focuses on language use that is on what can be said in a particular language by whom, to whom, in whose presence, when and where, in what

manner and under what social circumstances. The following views/opinions by various sociolinguists also help in better understanding of the nature of sociolinguistics.

Gumperz (1971) has stated that “Sociolinguistics is an attempt to find correlations between social structure and linguistic structure and to observe any changes that occur.”

Holmes (1992) on the other hand, defines Sociolinguistics as” the study of the relationship between language and society.”

Trudgill (2000) emphasises that the sociolinguistic research helps in getting a better understanding of the nature of human language by studying language in its social context. It also provides a better understanding of the nature of the relationship between language and society.

Trudgill (2000;25) defines Sociolinguistics:

Sociolinguistics... is that part of linguistics which is concerned with language as a social and cultural phenomenon. It investigates the field of language and society and has close connections with the social sciences especially Social Psychology, Anthropology, Human Geography and Sociology.

Fishman (2001) argues that “Sociolinguistic perspective has enabled researchers to document and to measure a hereto overlooked type of variation in language use and language behavior.”

Furthermore, Chambers (2002;22) argues

Sociolinguistics is the study of the social uses of language, and the most productive studies in the four decades of sociolinguistic research have emanated from determining the social evaluation of linguistic variants. These are also areas most susceptible to scientific methods such as hypothesis-formation, logical inference and statistical testing.



While Hudson (2001) defines sociolinguistics as “a study of language in relation to society”. The definitions by the expert sociolinguists indicate that Sociolinguistics is known as a branch of study that assumes that human society is made up of many related patterns and behaviours. Grady, O. *et al* (1996) defines sociolinguistics as the sub discipline of linguistics that treats the social aspects of language. Sociolinguistics is the study of language use within or among groups of speakers ( Wardhaugh (2006:119).

Schmitt (2010) in his own view states that most obvious definition of “Sociolinguistics” is that it is the study of language in society. Schmitt (2010) further defines sociolinguistics as the study of linguistic indicators of culture and power. Even though Sociolinguistics wears many caps, one thing linking all the practitioners in the field is that they are all interested in how people use language and what they use it for (Meyerhoff 2006:2). Sociolinguistics at its core is concerned with the observable facts of language variation and principled thinking about the reasons and consequences of this variation and change (Llamas *et al*, 2007: xv). What seems to be central to the Sociolinguistic studies is not that linguistic techniques are employed: it is rather that the structure of language is related at various levels of abstraction to social structure (Bernstein, 2003:224).

In Sociolinguistic study, one has to do with the interaction of language and society. In other words, it studies how all aspects of society have an effect on language, and how language has an effect on society. The field of Sociolinguistics can be described as a mixture of Sociology and Linguistics, or of Anthropology and Linguistics. The human society will be lifeless without language and so will be the language without its users. This means that language and society are inseparable from each other. This idea was developed by Ferdinand De Saussure in his work *The Course in General Linguistics* published posthumously in 1916 where he stated that ‘language is

primarily a social activity' and 'language is socialised at every level from the production of phonemes to the interpretation of complex meaning.

Chaika (1989) states that "Language and society are so intertwined that it is impossible to understand the one without the other. There is no human society that does not depend upon, is not shaped by and does not itself shape language." The use of language is not only linguistic behaviour but also a social activity. Without a language understandable to all the members of a group of people, the community could by no means exist and not to speak of its development. Therefore, language is indispensable to the existence and development of a society. On the other hand, language would never have come into existence without society which is the essential conditions on which language relies for its existence. It is clear that neither language nor society could exist without each other.

Sociolinguistics is introduced by Trudgill (1995:25) as "a relatively new sub-discipline within linguistics." It may be considered as a new discipline because it deals with a relationship that has been neglected in the past linguistic studies i.e. the relationship between language and society. Since the emergence of the discipline of Sociolinguistics, the debate between linguists has centred on whether language should be studied as a closed or as an open system. On the one hand, theoretical linguists perceive language as a closed system that should be studied for its own sake and emphasis should be put on studying the underlying structure of the linguistic system. On the other hand, "the concern of the theoretical linguist is to devise a theory of grammar." (Trudgill (1995). In order to achieve this goal, differences between speakers have to be overlooked. In this sense, Chomsky (1965:62) states that:

Linguistic theory is concerned primarily with an ideal speaker-listener in a completely homogeneous speech community who

knows its language perfectly and is unaffected by such grammatically irrelevant conditions as memory limitations, distractions, shifts of attention, interest and errors.

Sociolinguists approach language as an open system interacting with a variety of factors. According to Hudson (1996) “Since speech is (obviously) social behaviour, to study it without reference to society would be like studying courtship behaviour without relating the behaviour of one partner to that of another”. Hudson (1996) believes that there is a close connection between language and society because one cannot segregate language from society. ”. Hudson (1996) is of the view that language should be studied in the cultural context. The users of language come from various social classes. Therefore, their language is influenced by the social norms and cultural patterns.

## **2.5 Sociolinguistic Variables**

In all human languages, spoken and signed, we can find examples of cases in which speakers have multiple ways of saying the same thing. Some variations are accidental and transitory; it may arise from the mechanical limitations of the speech organs for instance and may not be fully under the speaker’s control. Others more systematic variations represent options speakers may consciously or unconsciously choose (Coulmas 2005, cited in Llamas *et al* 2007:3).

Variations in how people use language is often attributed to the following motivations:

- i. a desire to show how you fit in with some people and are different from others.
- ii. a desire to do things that have value in the community and associate yourself with that value.
- iii. a desire not to do things that are looked down on in the community and have others look down on you (Meyerhoff(2006:23-24). (Meyerhoff(2006) further states that when one is

studying variation whether it is from a quantitative or qualitative perspective. It is important to define as precisely as possible what the object of the investigation is ,which she refers to the object as the' variable and defines variable as an abstract representation of the source of variation.

A sociolinguistic variable is a linguistic feature which varies in its use by different social groups. Certain sociolinguistic variables are treated consciously or unconsciously as *socially diagnostic* meaning that members of society make an association (conscious or unconscious) between the use of such a variable by a speaker and the social group to which the speaker using that variable belongs. It is not an overstatement to call the sociolinguistic variable one of the milestones of sociolinguistics. Using the linguistic variable as a structural unit and correlating it with social parameters is the core of the Labovian approach which defined the discipline's first steps (Chambers 1995: 12-25). In general terms, a linguistic variable is a set of alternative ways of saying the same thing, to repeat Labov's famous statement (Labov 1972, 94.). A sociolinguistic variable simply is a socially significant linguistic variable, in other words: a set of alternative linguistic realizations (variants) with social significance (Dittmar 1997: 57). A set of two or more realizations of an abstract linguistic unit such as a phoneme, a grammatical function or a semantic unit, make up a linguistic variable. If these alternative realizations also carry different social meanings each of them evoking a certain social or situational prototype, we are dealing with a sociolinguistic variable.

According to Llamas *et al* (2007;5) the history of sociolinguistic variable is as old as language study itself but became more popular when it was first systematically used for quantification of language variation in a study by Labov on Martha's Vineyard (1963). Llamas *et al* (2007) define sociolinguistic variable as a relatively new addition to the toolkit used by linguists for describing,

analysing and modelling language structure and use. Llamas (2007;3) argue that variables are found at all levels of linguistic structure (Labov 2001 cited in Llamas *et al* 2007:6) states that much of the value of sociolinguistic variable in language research lies in its potential for quantifying patterns of variation and that one can count how often a particular form occurs and express that frequency as a proportion of total number of the occasion on which the form could have occurred even if it did not. The sociolinguistic variable thus allows us to observe changes in a progress in a way that was once thought impossible Labov (2001). Sociolinguistic variables can be referred to as important factors that influence or affect individuals' linguistic expression in any setting or context. It is a relatively new addition to the toolkit used by linguists for describing, analysing and modelling language structure and use. In fact, the notion of the sociolinguistic variable is as old as language study itself. Coulmas (1998) succinctly submits that: At the core of Sociolinguistics is the fact that 'human societies are internally differentiated whether by sex, age, class. These differentiations and there are others, including education, religion and ethnicity) are all at a 'macro' level that is broad groups into which people can be categorised'.

The importance of these variables were also stated by Kerswill (2007) as he stressed the fact that at the core of Sociolinguistics is the fact that human societies are internally differentiated whether by gender, age or class. He adds that these differentiations could include ethnicity at a 'macro' level which is, the broad groups into which people can be categorized. As Sociolinguistics is the study of the relationship between language use and the structure of society, it considers factors such as the social background of both the addresser and the addressee; their age, gender, social class, ethnic background and the context and manner of the communication. Sociolinguistics being a quickly developing branch of Linguistics, explores the

individual and social difference of language. Just as regional variation of language can provide a lot of information about the place of the speaker, social variation represents the roles fulfilled by a given speaker within one speech community.

The social background of both the speaker and the listener; their social class, education, geographic origin, ethnic background, gender and age are necessary factors to be studied in order to understand the language. These factors influence the language of the speakers. In view of this, an attempt is made to throw light on the study of these factors below for the purpose of this study.

## **2.6 Social class**

The position of the speaker in the society is often measured by the level of education, parental background, profession and their effect on syntax and lexis used by the speaker (Trudgill, 2000). An important factor influencing the way of formulating sentences is, according to many sociolinguists, the social class of the speaker. Thus, there has been a division of social classes suggested in order to make the description accurate (ibid.). Two main groups of language users, mainly those performing non-manual work and those with more years of education are the ‘middle class’ while those who perform some kind of manual work are ‘working class’ (ibid.). The additional terms ‘lower’ and ‘upper’ are frequently used in order to subdivide the social classes (ibid.). Therefore, differences between upper middle classes can be compared with lower working classes (ibid.).

Theories of class have evolved over the last 150 years, starting with that of Karl Marx (1818–83). Marx relates social class to the position of individuals in relation to their means of production. Karl Marx (1818) defines capitalists as those who own the means of production

while those who must sell their labour to the capitalists are the proletariat (Giddens 2001). The most distinctive feature of the concept of class elaborated within Marxism is to contribute to the idea of exploitation. Marx shares with Weber the central idea that classes should be defined in terms of the social relations that link people to the central resources that are economically relevant to production. Just as Weber, Marx sees these relations as having a systematic impact on the material well being of people -- both “exploitation” and “life chances” identify inequalities in material well-being that are generated by inequalities in access to resources of various sorts. Thus both of these concepts point to conflicts of interest over the distribution of the assets themselves. What exploitation adds to this is a claim that conflicts of interest between classes are generated not simply by what people have but also by what people do with what they have. The concept of exploitation, therefore, points our attention to conflicts within production, not simply conflicts in the market (Wright, 2003:7). Discussions of class place different emphases broadly on economic factors. The implication of this is that social class emanates from economic factors such as the means of production and distribution thereby resulting into two broad groupings in the society; the proletariat and the bourgeoisie (in the English society) which in a more familiar term is described as the High and middle/ low class. Language is an outcome of class situations in a given society. In most countries of the world, language use in society is distinguishable based on certain sociological parameters; the key issue among which is the class. Most varieties of any language are an outcome of certain social situations which resulted in language types. This makes a given class to use language to create linguistic boundaries that isolate them from the general linguistic forms used by the society. Ash (2002;55) says:

Social class is a central concept in sociolinguistic research.... It is ironic, then, that social class is often defined in an ad hoc way in studies of linguistic variation and change ... and individuals are placed in a social hierarchy despite the lack of a

consensus as to what concrete, quantifiable independent variables contribute to determining social class. ... Thus, this variable is universally used and extremely productive although linguists can lay little claim to understanding it.

As Ash (2002) suggests, sociolinguists fail to understand social class as an important variable. Moreover, no measures to categorize speakers on social class dimensions are available to determine its correlation with language variation. In this regard, Rickford (2001) recommends:

“To adequately account for the quantitative distributions by social class that we observe in local surveys of language use, we need to turn to sociological and anthropological models of social stratification and life mode, but these are quite unfamiliar to the average sociolinguists”.

Rickford (2001) also remarks at sociolinguists’ unawareness about referring to sociological and anthropological models of social stratification to explain the factors of social class. Generally, an individual’s social class or structure determines his or her position in the society. It is measured by the level of education, parental background, profession and the structure of the syntax and lexis used by the speaker. It should be noted that Basil Bernstein’s Deficit Hypothesis is very important in describing the sociolinguistic variable of social class.



## 2.7 Education

Etymologically speaking, the word education is derived from the Latin word ‘educare’ meaning ‘to raise’ and ‘to bring up’. According to few others, the word ‘education’ has originated from another Latin term ‘Educere’ which means ‘to lead forth’ or ‘to come out’. These meanings indicate that education seeks to nourish the good qualities and draw out the best in every individual. Education seeks to develop the innate or the inner potentialities of humans. Some other educationists believe that the word ‘education’ has been derived from the Latin term ‘Educatum’, which means the act of teaching or training. The meanings of these root words lead us to believe that education aims to provide a nourishing environment that would facilitate or bring out and develop the potentialities in an individual.

If you refer to *Dictionary of Education* (edited by C.V. Good 1973), you will find that education is defined as “the aggregate of all the processes by which a person develops abilities, attitudes and other forms of behaviour of practical values in the society in which she/he lives; the social process by which people are subjected to the influence of selected and controlled environment (especially that of the school), so that they may obtain social competence and optimum individual development”. The concept of education has been used in a variety of contexts with different meanings. To give a precise definition of education, just as we define certain concepts in science or other technical subjects, is difficult, as there is no one meaning of education held in common by people NCERT(2014:3-4)

According to John Dewey (1916 in NCERT 214:19), “Education is reconstruction or reorganisation of experience which adds to the meaning of experience and which increases the ability to direct the course of subsequent experiences.” Many people have a strong belief that

somehow spending time in school will make a person educated. This is one of the biggest misnomers that prevails throughout our society. Certainly, there are many wonderful, authentic, relevant learning experiences that take place in school at all levels but that is not the only source of education. The process of education takes place in all personal and social situations (NCERT (2014:3). Maybin (2007) observes that education in some way expresses the speakers' sense of which group they belong to as a person through the feelings and emotions being expressed, the value position they are taking up, or the language variety they choose to use. Since education is embedded in language, standard forms of language (including accent) tend to be perceived as the only appropriate vehicles for education and literacy while non-standard forms thrive among those who have little or no formal education. Education therefore ensures the use of formal language in formal meetings and informal language during meetings with friends.

## **2.8 Religion**

Religion has so many definitions. All that attempted the definition of religion tended to be so much influenced by their respective socio-cultural backgrounds. Individual values affected their perceptions and failure of communication may have been responsible for this Anyacho (2005:28). Bergar (1966 in Anyacho 2005) defines religion as the human enterprise by which a sacred cosmos is established...a cosmisation in a sacred mode. By sacred is meant here a quality of mysterious and awesome power rather than man and not related to him, which is believed to reside in certain objects of experience. Karl Marx (1957 in Anyacho 2005) defines religion as the opium of the masses created and dominated by the ruling class of the society with the aim of providing moral pressure and psychological outlets which preserve the class structure. Iwe (1977 in Anyacho (2005) also defines religion in his own perspective as a spiritual pilgrimage characterized by the quest for and recognition of some superhuman power, the acknowledgement

of man's limitations and self insufficiency and the adoption and formation of a path doctrinal and practical moral in life in explanation and answer to the fundamental issues and problems of human existence. Mbiti (1979) in Anyacho( 2005) notes that one of the functions of religion in the society is that of legitimization of some social actions. As such religion was a normative and referral institution that gave credence to many social actions. It largely determined who held political power and the process of transferring power from one generation to the other. It also determined the exercise of power in relation to punishment and reward. To some extent it combined the spiritual and temporal in the exercise of power. Therefore, religion plays a vital role in stabilizing and reinforcing the social structure (Anyacho 2005:73).

Religious beliefs are present in every known society but their variety seems to be endless. Observation has shown that the linguistic properties of an individual (or a group of people) may be found to contain certain coloration traceable to their religious beliefs. For example, Christians in social conversation or normal daily interaction such as greetings use phrases such as *thank God, O God, God bless you and it is well* while among the Muslims, there is a recurrent use of the word *wallahi*.

## **2.9 Ethnicity**

There are differences between the use of a given language by its native speakers and other ethnic groups (Bell, 1976). There are numerous factors influencing idiolect. For instance, in the case of jargon and slang, (Hudson, 1996) argues that jargon is specific technical vocabulary related with a particular field of interest or topic (ibid.). For example, words such as convergence, dialect and social class are a sociolinguistic jargon whereas, slang is a type of language used most frequently by people from outside of high-status groups, characterized by the use of unusual words and

phrases instead of conventional forms (Spolsky, 2010). For example, a sociolinguist might determine, through study of social attitudes, that a particular vernacular would not be considered appropriate language use in a business or professional setting; s/he might also study the grammar, phonetics, vocabulary and other aspects of this sociolect (Hudson, 1996).

It should be noted that ethnicity is defined by social practice rather than personal attributes as Llamas rightly puts that it is often difficult to separate ethnicity from other social factors such as historical background, religion, social class, and other socio-cultural variables (Llamas *et al*, 2007:77). This is due to the fact that ethnicity interacts with a wide array of other social, historical, and socio-psychological factors embedded within an intricate set of socio-cultural relationships, processes, and identities. It is not about what one is but what one does, that is the primary basis for establishing ethnicity (Fought 2002:445, in Llamas 2007:78). Ethnicity is something given, ascribed at birth, deriving from the kin-and-clan-structure of human society, and hence something more or less fixed and permanent (Geertz, 1963; Isaacs, 1975; Stack, 1986 in Isajiw 1993). There are anthropological theories of ethnicity which can be grouped into three basic categories: Primordialist theories, Instrumentalist theories and Constructivist theories (see Table 1). These theories broadly reflect changes of approach in Anthropology over the past 20 years i.e. the shift from cultural evolution theories to structural-functional theories to conflict theories and finally to postmodern theories.

Perspective	Descriptive
<b>Primordialist Theories</b>	Ethnicity is fixed at birth. Ethnic identification is based on deep ‘primordial’ attachments to a group or culture.
<b>Instrumental Theories</b>	Ethnicity, based on people’s “historical” and “symbolic” memory is something created and used and exploited by leaders and others in the pragmatic pursuit of their own interests
<b>Constructivist Theories</b>	Ethnic identity is not something people “possess” but something they “construct” in specific social and historical contexts to further their own interests. It is therefore fluid and subjective.

**Table 1 : Three Basic Approaches to Understanding Ethnicity**

**Adapted from Wan and Vanderwerf (2009:7)**

Giles (1979) defines ethnic group as those who perceive themselves to belong to the same ethnic category. To him, ethnicity takes cognizance of the fact that there are differences between the use of a given language by its native speakers and other ethnic groups. It also takes note of the fact that ethno-linguistic distinctiveness may extend from significant typological language differences to minute details of prosody or restricted lexical differences. In the case of different languages, speakers may make symbolic choices in their language use or manage code switching to signal ethnic identity as observed by Zentella (1997). Also, in the case of intralanguage

variation the manipulation of particular phonological, morph-syntactic or discourse variables may be used to signal ethnic affiliation of women in terms of quantity of speech and the intonation patterns (Trudgill, 2000).

## **2.10 Sex/Gender**

*Sex* describes the biological differences between men and women, which are universal and determined at birth UNESCO (2003:1) A person's sex according to Reeves and Baden (2000) is biologically determined as female or male according to certain identifiable physical features which are fixed. Women's marginalisation has often been seen as 'natural' and a fact of their biology. However, these biological differences cannot explain why women have less access to power and lower status than men. To understand and challenge the cultural value placed on someone's biological sex and unequal power hierarchies, we need the relational concept of 'gender'.

Gender refers to the roles and responsibilities of men and women that are created in our families, our societies and our cultures. The concept of gender also includes the expectations held about the characteristics, aptitudes and likely behaviours of both women and men (femininity and masculinity). Gender roles and expectations are learned. They can change over time and they vary within and between cultures. Systems of social differentiation such as political status, class, ethnicity, physical and mental disability, age and more, modify gender roles. The concept of gender is vital because, applied to social analysis, it reveals how women's subordination (or men's domination) is socially constructed. As such, the subordination can be changed or ended. It is not biologically predetermined nor is it fixed forever (.UNESCO(2003)

‘Gender’ is how a person’s biology is culturally valued and interpreted into locally accepted ideas of what it is to be a woman or man. ‘Gender’ and the hierarchical power relations between women and men based on this are socially constructed and not derived directly from biology. Gender identities and associated expectations of roles and responsibilities are therefore changeable between and within cultures. Gendered power relations permeate social institutions so that gender is never absent. The term “gender” is used to indicate that men’s and women’s different behavior is to be seen as “socially acquired rather than biologically innate” (Bing/Bergvall 1998, 496). The use of this term does not imply that socially acquired gender related behaviors are seen as totally independent from its roots in sex differences as Butler (1993) for instance claims since all constructions of gender refer to mortality and natality as quality of the human body and its sex (Landweer 1994).

The value of the distinction between the terms ‘sex’ and ‘gender’ has been challenged more recently as ‘sex’ has also been seen to be socially constructed (Baden and Goetz, 1998 in Reeves and Baden 2000:30). The typical basis for differentiating sex and gender is that sex is a biological category and gender is a social and cultural category (Meyerhoff, 2006:202). Labov(1972) was the first to notice the important role of sex/gender as a sociolinguistics variable. As a method of collecting a reliable, authentic data needed for his sociolinguistics research, Labov (1966) introduced a sociolinguistics interview, carefully designed to elicit different speech styles within a single interview. His studies show a stratification of phonological variables according to sex/gender, age, socioeconomic status (SES) and situational context. In line with this, many research works in sociolinguistics have suggested that in many societies, the speech of men and women are different though such differences sometimes may not be generally noticed and so probably be taken for granted.

Men and women use language to achieve certain purposes, and so long as differences in gender are equated with differences in access to power and influence in society, we may expect linguistic differences too (Wardhaugh, 2006:329). For instance, (Tannen (1990) in Hudson 2001:141) states that for men, conversations are negotiations in which people try to achieve and maintain the upper hand if they can, and protect themselves from others' attempts to put them down and push them around. Life, then, is a contest, a struggle to preserve independence and avoid failure while for women, conversations are negotiations for closeness in which people try to seek and give confirmation and support, and to reach consensus. They try to protect themselves from others' attempts to push them away. Life, then, is a community, a struggle to preserve intimacy and avoid isolation.

## **2.11 Age**

The age of the speaker influences the use of vocabularies and grammar complexity (Bell, 1976) but what are the main reasons behind a social study of language? Saussure (1916: 98) posed the question: “ what does a language look like? What is it like at a particular moment?” We know languages change from one moment to another but what their characteristics are if we could hold them still freeze them at one moment in time (Bell, 1976). Ideas of such significance do not occur in isolation, even if we can identify one individual as the seeming originator of them – they are 'about' at the time however subtly that may be (ibid.) As observed by Llamas (2007), of all global categories employed in the investigations of language variation, age is perhaps the least examined and the least understood in sociolinguistic terms. Eckert (1998), in addition to this notes that inasmuch as social and biological developments do not move in lock step with chronological age or with each other, chronological age can only provide an approximate measure of the speaker's age-related place in society. Age is a factor both in the ingredients of



any accent and in the evaluation it evokes. It is central to human experience. Our age determines whether we can vote, marry; whether we go to school, go to work...it can influence what types of clothes we wear, places we go and importantly ways we speak (Llamas 2007:69). It is the achievement of physical and social capacities and skills together with a continual unfolding of the individual's participation in the world, construction of personal history and movement through the history of the community and the society. Age is a person's place at a given time in relation to social order. Age and aging are experienced both individually and as part of a cohort of people who share a life stage and or an experience of history. The study of age in relation to language, particularly the study of sociolinguistic variation, lies at the intersection of life stage and history. The individual speaker or age cohort of speakers at any given moment represents, simultaneously, a place in history and a life stage.

Age stratification of sociolinguistic variables then can reflect change in the speech of the community as it moves through time (historical change) and change in the speech of the individual as he or she moves through life. It is observed that when interlocutors of different age groups are into a conversation, their use of language is often different from what obtains when the two of them belong to the same age group. In a situation of the former pair, language appears to be formal while it is more conversational when it comes to the latter. So sensitive are we to the connection between language and age that in the absence of visual clues, as speakers and hearers we are able to hazard a reasonably close estimate at someone's age from their voice quality and their linguistic behaviour (Hollien 1987).

## **2.12 Review of Literature on *Anthills of the Savannah*:**

This section continues the review of previous studies that are relevant to this study by discussing the critical reception of Achebe's *Anthills of the Savannah*. Admittedly, given that there is an overwhelming critical literature on the novel, this study presents only a few representative studies. The first study to consider is Reddy (1994), who examines the political struggle in *Anthills of the Savannah* as well as the role of the African writer. To Reddy (1994), *Anthills of the Savannah* dramatises power. Reddy's (1994) argument is that the very villain in the story is power itself. *Anthills of the Savannah* is a critique of the power apparatus of neo-colonial Africa. The power equations in the novel are played out by three major characters, namely: Chris, Ikem, and Sam. Reddy (1994) draws on Ikem's metaphor of the circus to emphasise the negative effects of power. In ridiculing the power relations in which they (Sam, Chris and Ikem) are entangled, Ikem observes that following a leader who follows his leader is quite a circus.

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

power that has undone him ultimately. Hence, it is power that “stands out as the real villain, culprit and criminal in the context of the novel” (ibid, p. 121-122).

Reddy (1994) considers the malicious role played by sycophancy and hypocrisy in facilitating power abuse. Reddy(1994) places this within the broader spectrum of institutional power. In every hierarchical organisation, those who surround the boss keep singing praises to him rather than letting him have reality. Thus, the boss is always denied access to the truth “which always gets distorted and biased to suit the immediate and long-range needs of the boot lickers” (ibid, p. 111). As Reddy (1994) observes in *Anthills of the savannah*, Professor Okong represents this malicious bunch of boot-lickers. Chris and Ikem can stand neither hypocrisy nor boot-licking and Ikem tries to prevail on Chris to save Sam from the incessant bootlicking in the Cabinet. Okong sustains and nurses Sam’s suspicion of Chris and Ikem, an attitude which significantly contributes to Sam’s deterioration into a tyrant.

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

Reddy (1994) links the positive image of the woman to the role Beatrice plays in providing an antidote to the ugly march of power. Achebe uses the myth of the sun to symbolise corruption prone and “monstrous masculine power” (Reddy, 1994, p. 117). Achebe portrays this legend of male-power which is sought to be neutralised through female resistance. Beatrice acts as a catalyst to motivate both Ikem and Chris emboldening them to offer resistance to the naked dance of power. Reddy (1994) states that the unrestrained naked dance of power is sought to be countered by means of struggle motif in the novel. Achebe does not prescribe any solution. Neither does he offer any “alternative modes of governance, but only struggle and vigil to checkmate the onslaughts of power on human dignity and liberty” (ibid, p.122). He emphasises the need for incessant struggles, the forms which are embodied in the indigenous myths and legends.

Reddy (1994) notes that in this struggle, the regeneration of history is very vital. The white bearded delegate from Abazon stresses that the story is the escort and a lesson to be learnt from the past experiences. The story, in other words, is the history of a people’s past, their glorious moments and sufferings and the record of their heroic resistance to all forms of oppression and exploitation. Reddy (1994) notes that the principal characters in the novel are detached from their culture, their people and their history. Towards the end of the novel, Ikem, Beatrice and Chris discover this fact and begin to look into their culture and the people for new ways to build their nation. In echoing his thesis, Reddy (1994) concludes that the lead role played by Beatrice, the path shown by Ikem and the heroic death invited by Chris should go a long way to appease an embittered history of a people. The motif of struggle is the hall-mark of the novel with story as the escort and guide. The narrator of the story in this process can become a powerful force in

shaping the way a people think about their social and political order and the nature, desirability and direction of change.

Onunkwo (2016) examines depth semantics of metaphors in *Anthills of the Savannah* by simultaneously applying the two concepts of explanation and interpretation in a view to arriving at a coherent analysis and understanding of the entire text and thereby 'explicate the type of being-in-the-world unfolded in front of the text. However, the study focuses more on interpretation rather than explanation which deals more with the structure of metaphors and texts. For instance, One of the most pronounced of all the metaphors in *Anthills of the Savannah* mentioned by Onunkwo is that of "the Sun" which Onunkwo often regarded as the solar metaphor in the text. According to Onunkwo (2016), the metaphor is first encountered in the report of the first witness – Christopher Oriko. The first witness is an account of a meeting Christopher Oriko has with His Excellency General Sam and other members of the cabinet in *Anthills of the Savannah* (p. 3) where the 'fiery sun' in the quotation obviously refers to General Sam and the conceited manner with which he treats the members of his cabinet on the one hand and the macabre and sometimes absurdly lucid way with which he vents up power, distributes and manages it throughout the entire enclave designated as Kangan. Onunkwo therefore refers to General Sam in the text as the sun himself. The analysis of the study shows that those metaphoric statements are not to be trivialized at all since they are the pillars on which the entire text is built. As such pillars, their influence is disseminated throughout the text so that the interpretation of the whole text can be comfortably pursued through them.

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

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

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

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

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

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

One significant difference between Reddy (1994) and Erritouni (2006) lies in their conception of the villain in the novel. Erritouni (2006) blames the failure of the nation state to fulfill the aspirations of the masses on the hierarchical gap that the government officials establish between themselves and the people. Erritouni sees Sam as a symbol of the "vicious elitism of the post-

colonial nation-state and that his main goal is not to ameliorate the deplorable conditions of the people but rather to profit from the power that control of the state affords” (p. 55). Thus, to Erritouni (2006) the national leaders, more particularly Sam are villains. While Podis and Saaka (1991) agree to this fact that the government officials are mainly the villains, Reddy (1994) is sympathetic of them. Reddy argues that the real villain in the novel is power and that even Sam is an innocent victim of its grip. Kortenaar (1993) also shares this view of power corrupting the innocent Sam

Larsson (2007) studies code-switching in Achebe’s four novels with *Anthills of the Savannah* inclusive. Larsson examines how Achebe uses elements of both semantic and syntactic code-switching. The study provides background information and examples of code-switching, and explained what a proverb is. Larsson (2007) further, provides an overview of Pidgin Languages and more specifically of Nigerian Pidgin English and the verb tense constructions of the language. Larsson’s analysis is based on two categories, semantic and syntactic, where the semantic analysis is based on Igbo vocabulary and proverbs and syntactic analysis is based on the present, the past and the future tenses of the verb respectively.

For the semantic aspect, Larsson (2007) argues that the use of Igbo vocabulary is fairly common but that most of the words and/or phrases can be understood to at least some degree and that proverbs are very common even in everyday speech and that they can be translated in different ways, giving them slightly different semantic meaning Larsson (2007) states that the proverbs used in Achebe’s *Anthills of the Savannah* give a vivid picture of how the Igbo people experience the world around them especially when compared to English proverbs having approximately the same meaning, Larsson’s syntactic analysis shows that the use of Nigerian Pidgin English constructions in *Anthills of the Savannah* is not consistent for all tenses. In the



present tense, Larsson's study reveals that only eighteen percent is of the NPE construction and a total of thirty-five percent is non-standard English. For the past tense, Larsson states that twenty-two percent of the verb constructions are in the NPE form and as much as fifty-three percent more are in a non-standard English form. According to Larsson, the past tense constructions on the whole are much less common than present tense constructions and that the past tense constructions which really differ from Standard English, portraying a different language and culture.

Udumukwu (1996) studies four characters: two each from the novels of Achebe and Iyayi. These characters include Achebe's Odili in *A Man of the People*, Ikem in *Anthills of the Savannah* and Iyayi's Idemudia in *Violence* and Osime Iyere in *Heroes*. His analysis is premised on the thesis that "what a character does is the product of an underlying belief that exists before the action" (Udumukwu, 1996: 34). In other words, he examines the interplay between ideology and action from a sociological perspective. He demonstrates how the individuality and political choices of these characters are circumscribed within their social matrix. Udumukwu observes that the source of Ikem's political activism is 'populism', a term he defines as "a belief in the welfare of the ordinary people, and also a faith in their good qualities" (Udumukwu 1996: 40). To Udumukwu (1996), Ikem arrives at this political orientation through a deep and reflective re-examination of what has become of the ideals of independence. An instance of the manifestation of this realisation is Ikem's contribution to the abolition of capital punishment. The public execution of convicted criminals is a public celebration which serves to entertain the ordinary people and deter potential criminals. Ikem challenges his countrymen to understand that what they apprehend as the truth is a wrong foundation.

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

Udumukwu (1996) notes that Ikem is used by Achebe as a tool in advancing his own political orientation. Through Ikem, Achebe observes that the real problem of the Nigerian political administration is its failure to establish vital links with the poor as they are deprived of involving in the affairs of the country. This is a call to foster unity and convergence in a multi-ethnic society. Apart from Udumukwu (1996), many other critics (for example, Greenwald, 2002; Kortenaar, 1993; Diamond, 1989) have observed that Ikem is the mouthpiece of Achebe and that he is Achebe's conception of the ideal intellectual and citizen in African politics. Udumukwu (1996) proceeds to consider how Ikem's political ideology is translated into action. He identifies three incidents in which Ikem translates his orientation into action. The first is his role as an editor. He convinces the government to abolish the public execution of criminals and he refuses to encourage the people of Abazon to vote for Sam to be president for life. The second is his encounter with the delegation from Abazon and the third is the lecture he delivers at the University of Bassa. The significance of the lecture is that Ikem insists on the imperative of hard work and struggle in order to change the world.

Udumukwu (1996) notes that unlike Odili, Ikem's political activism lies in his objective but vehement critique of his setting. For instance, his criticism is not based on any personal

motivation for some political advantage as it is in the case of Odili but on the welfare of the ordinary people who are too complacent to recognise the limitations imposed by their milieu. Another distinction Udumukwu (1996) makes between Odili and Ikem is that Ikem stretches his action beyond recognition of the problem with the system. He stood up to strongly criticise and condemn the system while Odili gets himself entangled with the corruption in the system. Thus, according to Udumukwu (1996), criticism and bold condemnation become the inviolable missiles of Ikem's political action. He notes that Ikem's demise emanates, first, from the fact that his political activity is rather individualistic: he acts 'for', instead of 'with', the people (p. 43). Second, his activities are too constrained by the limitations of the socio-Political system in which he acts. Udumukwu (1996) concludes that the characters analysed acquire their identities in the light of the writers' ideological convictions.

In discussing *Anthills of the Savannah* from a socio-political perspective, Diamond (1989) bases his exploration on the thesis that the novel is an agent of political change and the novelist a political philosopher and teacher. He perceives *Anthills of the Savannah* as Achebe's political philosophy of Nigerian politics. First, Diamond (1989) states that *Anthills of the Savannah* is a portrait of the devastating effect and ugliness of African military dictatorship. With regards to this theme, he says *Anthills of the Savannah* takes off from where *A Man of the People* stops. Just as *A Man of the People* criticises the corruption and frivolities of the civilian government, so does *Anthills of the Savannah* criticises the venality, irresponsibility and oppression of military rule. Diamond (1989) observes that many of the things *Anthills of the Savannah* talks about have antecedents in Nigerian politics. He notes two popular occurrences: the vicious police riot against the protesting students of the University of Bassa, which has a striking resemblance to events at Ahmadu Bello University in May, 1986 and the murder of *New swatch* editor Dele

Giwa in October, 1986 just like the murder of Ikem. What is fascinating about *Anthills of the Savannah* is that towards the end of the novel, these real life incidents occurred. Diamond (1989) adds that *Anthills of the Savannah* is not merely a portrayal of military dictatorship but a valid caution of the increasingly repressive nature of the expanding state security network in Nigeria. Diamond further states that the novel attacks the corruption of the Nigerian political system both in the past civilian government of Kangan and the present military government. The Presidential Retreat, Diamond's study is a metaphor of this corruption and extravagance of Nigerian political leaders. The Retreat symbolises the aloofness and arrogance of the ruling class who have detached themselves from the people and the reality in which they live. Achebe spares no group of people in his criticism: the intellectuals who manipulate tribalism to their own advantage and worship power, rather than standing up against tyranny and misrule; the petty aristocracies of university students and organised workers; and the ordinary people who are complacent to act.

Diamond (1989) asserts that through Ikem, Achebe articulates his political philosophy of Nigeria. That is, Achebe calls for a reform as "both a noble and pragmatic strategy of change" (p. 441). Central to this reform are the need for responsibility and patience. People should begin to take responsibility of the things around them. He further argues that, the patience Achebe calls for is not borne of resignation and inaction, "but of experience and calculated strategy" (p. 443). Reddy (1994) likewise identifies Achebe's emphasis on the imperative of struggle. However, Diamond (1989) in particular observes that Achebe calls on those who see the wrong in society to speak against it and to stand up against those who will silence criticism. Those who are articulate and well-positioned, Diamond (1989) further studies have a special obligation to do so

for two reasons: first, because in the struggle against opposition, words and ideas are important and second, because of the power of example.

At the end, Diamond (1989) identifies the place of women, represented by Elewa and Beatrice, in this struggle: they are the surviving anthills who would tell the story about the previous year's bush fires to the new generation of grass. Arguably, the role Diamond (1989) assigns women is rather passive. He does not consider the central role Beatrice played in inciting Ikem and, especially, Chris into action, as noted by Reddy (1994).

Furthermore, Adogpa (2017) examines a stylistic defence of ideology through language use in *Anthills of the Savannah* where the research work revealed that to fulfill the dream of African literature written in African language and at the same time get publication and receive wide readership, Achebe has adopted these levels of language in his *Anthills of the Savannah*. The conventional English spoken by the educated elites, pidgin perceived to be used by the down-trodden and transliteration used by the rural folk aim at preserving the culture of Africa. The rural folk see no other way of expressing their experiences if translation is to be used.

According to Adogpa (2017), it is evidently clear that the impeccable English used by the cabinet and the educated elites portrays that Achebe is in control of the language and this goes a long way to defend any misconception about Achebe's knowledge of the language. Adogpa argues that language forms used in the novel include Standard English, pidgin and proverbs and that these three forms are stylistic presentations of the complex multilingual situations of the African creative writer who is expected to meet the needs of his/her audience whose levels of education vary. Adogpa (2017) finally argues that the stylistic use of the language as portrayed in the three forms by Achebe in *Anthills of the Savannah* is a clear demonstration of a defence of ideology.

Koussouhon and Amoussou (2014) examine functions and contexts of reference deviation in *Anthills of the Savannah*. According to them, one of the outstanding features of *Anthills of the Savannah* is andocentric pronominalisation of indefinite antecedents. Their research revealed that the use of politically incorrect pronominal reference, consciously or not, suggests some sexual discrimination as this entails complete elimination of women from the residents of the Government Reserved Area where Beatrice, one of the major female character in the text lives. However, Koussouhon and Amoussou (2014) state that the preferential use of “*he*” and its derivatives in the novel may not be conscious as its roots can be traced back to traditional prescriptive grammar and its corollary, the andocentric pronominalisation and that the ‘male-superior-to-female’ idea has been the precursor of the sex-indefinite use of “*he*” rule which has for long proscribed the use of “*they*” or “*he/she*” where the sex of the antecedent is unknown which is opposed by feminists who insist on political correctness. Koussouhon and Amoussou (2014) also argue that the pronominalisation of animals, concepts and some humans in the novel departs from the ‘male-female-neuter’ classification and prescription of traditional grammar. For instance, the reference to the crowned bird that has come to sing in Beatrice’s courtyard suggests that the use of “*he*” and “*she*” and their derivatives do not relate to human-animal distinction but to gender distinction for both as it is seen in the novel where the singing bird is referred to with the pronouns “*he, he, him, his, He, he, He, his, his*” where “*it*” and its derivatives are expected, especially in this context where the use of ‘*it*’ would not blur the male-female distinction; only the male bird being pronominalised. This leads to some personification of animals as is in the case of traditional African folktales but looked at closely, it may be the narrator’s way of implying that when it comes to matters of sex, all males, whether human or animal behave similarly and so do females. According to Koussouhon and Amoussou the eighth chapter of the

novel depicts four scenes of sex struggles: two by humans and two by animals. Koussouhon and Amoussou (2014) therefore argue that reference to indefinite noun phrases in the novel is influenced by the “Andocentric Rule” of traditional grammar.

It has been observed that the previous studies on *Anthills of the Savannah* by Diamond (1989), Reddy (1994) and Errinoun (2006) are based on political struggle and the role of writers in African post-colonial nations. However other studies by Larsson (2007), Udumukwu (1996), Onunkwo (2016) to mention but just a few are based on linguistic perspective yet the aforementioned studies ignore or fail to acknowledge the fact that writers make systematic choices from the systematic organization of language to realized preferred meanings. In order to fill the gap and in contrast to the previous studies, what this research has done is to illustrate how Achebe has constructed his vision of a post-colonial African nation through the systematic use of language to convey his meaning. The study also dwells on the fact that the choice of certain linguistic expressions by characters in the select text are influenced by certain factors such as social class, education, religion, ethnicity, sex/gender and age. Moreover, most of the discussions of the previous studies considered on *Anthills of the Savannah* mainly focused on three main characters: namely Ikem, Chris and Sam whereas this study also considers the three major female characters: namely Beatrice, Elewa and Agatha in the text as they greatly contribute to the analysis of this study and to the development of the story as far as Linguistics is concerned. This study shows that Beatrice enters into power with the other characters like: Ikem, Chris and Sam because of her social status. Beatrice speaks both Standard English and Pidgin English because of her level of education while Elewa and Agatha on the other hand represent those uneducated citizens who are entangled with the elite in modern African nations, unable to comprehend their discourse and they are cast in such a way that reflects their cognitive limitation

whenever they are with the elite: namely Ikem, Chris, Sam, Beatrice, and Mad Medico. Elewa and Agatha represent the ordinary citizens who by virtue of their low social status are being neglected to take part in public activities of their country except for their association with social or religious institutions that give them solace.

### **2.13 Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework for this study is drawn from Basil Bernstein's Deficit Hypothesis. The Deficit Hypothesis popularized by Bernstein (1971) was first formulated by Schwartzman and Strauss (1955). It was developed as a theory of restricted linguistic ability to examine the correlation between speech and socialisation. According to Dittmar (1976), the central idea of the Deficit Hypothesis is that;

The social success of members of a society and their access to social privileges are directly dependent on the degree of organisation of their linguistic messages.

This indicates that the proficient use of language determines the social success of an individual. The hypothesis came into being via the efforts of Schwartzman and Strauss after having series of interviews with the middle and lower classes, they observed that the lower class speakers lack the linguistic ability to express themselves and that led Bernstein in 1958 to distinguish between a 'public' language of the lower class and a 'formal' language of the middle class. From 1962 onwards, Bernstein applied the terms 'restricted' and 'elaborated' speech codes for 'public' language and a 'formal' language respectively.

As observed by Bernstein, the speech habits of the lower class are syntactically and semantically different from that of the middle class. As a result of this difference, he refers to the language of the lower class as *restricted speech code* (public language) and that of the middle class as



*elaborated speech code* (formal language). He explains further that the restricted speech code of the lower class is inferior and simple while the elaborated speech code of the middle class is superior and complex. Dittmar (1976) defines restricted speech code as a limited range of lingual expression and the elaborated speech code as a language that has the capability of complex and expressive linguistic organisation. Bernstein concludes that the differences in the speech of members of the lower class and the middle class are the direct cause of social inequality of opportunities. He submits that the middle class has an adequate linguistic code while the lower class possesses inadequate linguistic code which makes it difficult for them to express themselves.

According to Atherton (2002), the essence of the distinction between the two codes is in what language is suited for. The restricted code works better than the elaborated code in situations where there is a great deal of shared and taken for- granted knowledge in the group of speakers. This code is economical and rich conveying a vast amount of meaning with few words, each of which has a complex set of connotations and acts like an index, pointing the hearer to a lot more information which remains unsaid. On the contrary, the elaborated code spells everything out, not because it is better but because it is necessary so that everyone (can) understand it. It has to be elaborate because the circumstances do not allow the speaker to condense. The elaborated code works well in situations where there is no prior or shared understanding and knowledge, where more thorough explanation is required. If one is saying something new to someone he or she has never met before, s/he would most certainly communicate it in the elaborated code. Spring (2002). The Deficit Hypothesis therefore accounts for the deficiency in the speech of the lower class members in contrast with the middle class.

Similarly, Wardhaugh (1992) also states that Bernstein's (1971) theory can be explained in terms of three basic concepts of language codes, class and control. Wardhaugh (1992) reformulated restricted and Elaborated codes. Wardhaugh (1992) states:

The restricted code "employs short, grammatically simple and often unfinished sentences of poor syntactic form; uses few conjunctions simply and repetitively; employs little subordination tends toward a dislocated presentation of information is rigid and limited in the use of adjectives and adverb makes infrequent use of impersonal subject pronouns; confounds reasons and conclusions; uses idioms frequently and makes frequent appeals to "sympathetic circularity. In contrast, the elaborated code "makes use of accurate grammatical order and syntax to regulate what is said uses complex sentences that employ a range of devices for conjunction and subordination; employs prepositions to show relationships of both a temporal and logical nature; shows frequent use of the pronoun I; uses with care a wide range of adjectives and adverbs; is likely to arise in a social relationship which raises the tension in its members to select from their linguistic resources a verbal arrangement which closely fits specific referents. Control' refers to the role of families and their social control, the way of decision making in families and the relationship among the members (pp 317).

Bernstein (1972) made a distinction between position-oriented and person-oriented families. In the former, language use is closely related to such matters as close physical contact among the members, a set of shared assumptions and a preference for implicit rather than explicit meaning in communication. In person oriented families on the other hand, language use depends on these factors less and communication is more explicit and context-free. That is, it is less dependent for interpretation on such matters as physical surroundings. According to Bernstein, position orientation leads to a strong sense of social identity with some loss of personal autonomy whereas person orientation fosters personal autonomy (Wardhaugh 1992: 360)

Finally, Bernstein used Brandis's (1970) Social Class Index through which he analyzed the working-class and the middle-class by considering the frequencies of use of grammatical

categories. The present study also uses this framework in its investigation of the relationship between language use and one's social class among the selected characters in the text. As earlier stated, this theory was formulated to investigate the correlation between speech and socialisation but it is applicable to literary texts as Llamas. *et al* (2007:19) put:

To the casual observer, sociolinguistic variation can appear chaotic. It seems that some people use some forms more than other people and that some forms may be more common in certain words or contexts than in others but firm generalisations are hard to deduce without a systematic analysis. That analysis is essentially a process of translating natural speech into data that allow comparison across speakers and linguistic contexts.

It is on this assertion that the researcher adopts the theory as it will best suit the analysis of the study.

## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1. Introduction

This chapter identifies the methodology used by the researcher to collect the data and the research design.

#### 3.2. Research Design

The qualitative research design is used in this study. The focus of qualitative research, according to Merriam as cited in Creswell (1994: 145) is on meaning. This means that qualitative researchers investigate” how people make sense of their lives, experiences and their structures of the world” (Creswell, 1994:145). Qualitative research is also descriptive in that the interest of the researcher is in making meaning of a phenomenon and understanding a process of analysing words or pictures. Therefore, the study deals with the identification and description of the language codes and the sociolinguistic variables used in *Anthills of the Savannah*. As earlier stated, the method that is employed to investigate this research work is a qualitative that deals with close reading and picking out those items that stand out from others. The researcher identifies the two major codes used in the text which are elaborated and restricted codes respectively. The analyses showed how restricted code is a subset of elaborated code.

The study also revealed the sociolinguistic variables used in the novel such as sociolinguistic variables: of social class, education, religion, ethnicity, sex/gender and age .Since this research is mainly empirical, questionnaires and interviews are not used; all the analyses of the study are based on the select extracts on conversations among the characters in Achebe’s *Anthills of the*

*Savannah*. The language codes used in the select utterances by some characters are analysed. In addition to that, instances where characters' utterances are influenced by sociolinguistic variables are also analysed.

### **3.3. PROCEDURE FOR DATA COLLECTION**

The main source of data for this research is exclusively drawn from Achebe's *Anthills of the Savannah*. There are 39 extracts in all across the 18 chapters of the select text. The 39 extracts constitute the sample for this study out a universe considered analysis. In particular, 4 extracts are selected from chapters: Four, Seven and Eight to check the presence of 'restricted code' in the select text while five extracts are selected from chapters: Four, Seven, Eleven and Twelve to check the presence of 'elaborated code'. Moreover, 8 extracts are selected from chapters: Six, Ten, Eleven, Thirteen, Fifteen and Eighteen to check the inclusion of the 'restricted code' into 'elaborated' one. In addition, 5 extracts are selected from chapters: Two, Four, Eight and Eleven , 7 extracts from chapters: Seven, Nine, Ten, Eleven, Twelve and Fifteen , 4 extracts from chapters: Seven, Eight, Nine, Twelve and Eighteen , 1 extract from chapters: Seven, Seventeen and Eighteen , 2 extracts from chapters: Eight and Eleven and 3 extracts from chapters: Eight , Nine, Twelve, Thirteen, Seventeen and Eighteen for the analysis of sociolinguistic variables of : social class, education, religion, ethnicity, sex/gender and age present in the select text. The data is mainly to check the presence of the two major codes (restricted and elaborated codes) as well as to check the presence of the aforementioned sociolinguistic variables in Achebe's *Anthills of the Savannah*.

### **3.4. SAMPLING PROCEDURE**

The data for the research was carefully selected having read through the select text during which the 39 extracts by the five major characters of the text selected for the analysis: namely Ikem, Chris, Beatrice, Elewa and Agatha were examined in line with the topic of the study. For the purpose of this study, it was appropriate that only the extracts which are applied to the subject of this study were considered then the researcher purposively copied out those extracts which he found relevant.

### **3.5. PROCEDURE OF ANALYSIS**

The researcher in the course of this study appointed and worked with two research assistants using the coding categories earlier hinted in this study. Samples of the analysis were given to the two research assistants for verification. In the course of sorting through the select 39 Extracts which were given to the two research assistants, there was a significant tally of about 95% agreement.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### PRESENTATION OF DATA AND ANALYSIS

#### 4.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the data and the analysis on language codes and sociolinguistic variables used in *Anthills of the Savannah*, the discussion as well as the major findings of the research.

#### 4.2. Restricted and Elaborated Codes in *Anthills of the Savannah*

In *Anthills of the Savannah*, the restricted and elaborated codes are the major language codes used. The range of expression varies from the Standard English (elaborated code) used by the literate characters like Ikem, Beatrice, Chris and other literate characters in the story while pidgin (restricted code) is used by semi-literate characters like: Elewa, Agatha and other semi-literate characters in the story. The use of elaborated and restricted codes by characters in the story shows the social status of these characters.

#### 4.3. The Use of Restricted code in the Text.

Elewa's speech can be referred to as the restricted code because she speaks Pidgin English, a Non-standard English which has small vocabularies, restricted structures and lacks expressive potential. For instance, this is seen in the story where Ikem sends Elewa by taxi to her home at midnight because he cannot bear to keep a lower-class woman in his house through the night but the half-literate, Elewa realises that she is exploited by Ikem as a mere sexual object. Elewa says to Ikem;

Extract 1.

...woman done chop sand for dis world-o...but  
na we de causam; na we own fault. If I no kuku

bring my stupid nyarsh come dump for your bedroom you for de kick me about like I be football? I no blame you. (*Anthills of the Savannah* p. 34).

Similarly, in the story, Elewa on another day visits Ikem and the taxi driver who is accompanied by his friend who is also a taxi driver come to Ikem's house to tender their apology for the road contest which they had with Ikem in the traffic jam and at the same time thank him for his inspiration as editor of the *National Gazette*. As Elewa sights the visitors they both begin to communicate in Pidgin English because of their level of education. Elewa speaks to the taxi drivers, and all of them use non-standard forms as it is indicated the extract below;

Extract 2.

Ah madam, you **de** here. Ah **no be** you carry me go home from here that night? **Na** me madam. You remember me. Very good. I **no** think **say** you **fit** remember..When I see you smiling like **person wey win raffle I say: who be this** again? Then my brain just make **krim** and I remember...**Who your friend be** ? My friend **de** drive taxi like myself and he **be** member for Central Committee of Taxi Driver Union (*Anthills of the Savannah* p. 135).

The use of restricted code is also reflected in Agatha's speech as even Beatrice, Agatha's mistress in the story clearly states;

Extract 3.

Agatha remained blissfully impervious to the peril of armed robbers surrounding us. She simply says **yesmah** and **nosemah** to everything you tell her and goes right ahead doing whatever she was doing before (*Anthills of the Savannah* p. 93).

The Extract 3 above about Agatha in the story is confirmed when Chris, Beatrice's boyfriend visits her and she presents salad to Chris but he cannot finish eating the salad then Beatrice calls Agatha and asks her to put the dessert back in the fridge and bring them coffee things. Without answering Agatha begins to clear the table. Then Beatrice calls her,



Extract 4.

Agatha!  
Madam!  
Leave the table alone and get us coffee, please. After that you can clear the table.  
**Yes, madam** ( *Anthills of the Savannah* p. 116).

This clearly shows that Agatha lacks vocabularies and expressive potential because of her social status. It should be noted that lack of linguistic competence makes Agatha a powerless character that is at a disadvantage before a powerful mistress: Beatrice and must submit to her. Her resistance to Beatrice's domination over her thus tends to be feeble and inarticulate. On the whole, Agatha is a stereotype of those women who by virtue of their low social status and level of education are confined to their domestic services, taking no part in the public life of their society. Moreover, it has also confirmed the assertion by ( Dittmar 1976) that speakers who use restricted code lack the verbal repertoire that guarantees their success in the society. As a result, according to Bernstein(1971) cited in Hussein B.A 2012:552) speakers of the restricted speech code can only bring about inadequate mental operations and then can be identified as belonging to the lower class.

#### **4.4. The Use of Elaborated Code in the Text**

Ikem, Chris and Beatrice on the other hand are portrayed as the intellectuals in the story. They are bourgeois in their mentalities. Their utterances contain the standard variety of English. They use Standard English to describe their contempt or to express their personal emotions or intentions. In the story, Ikem as the editor of the government controlled newspaper: the *National Gazette* is silenced by the government for speaking out against corruption but Ikem uses his eloquent speech to describe the social scale descending from the elite to the common people. Ikem attacks the establishment and the people as a means to drive the people into action. He

attacks the system for letting the corruption perpetuate and blames the people for not acting against the system:

Extract 5.

The sweeping, majestic visions of people rising victorious like a tidal wave against their oppressors and transforming their world with theories and slogans into a new heaven and a new earth of brotherhood, justice and freedom are at best grand illusions. The rising, conquering tide, yes; but the millennium afterwards, no! New oppressors will have been reading themselves secretly in the undertow long before the tidal wave got really going....Reform may be a dirty word then but it begins to look more and more promising route to succeed in the real world. Society is an extension of the individual. The most we can hope to do with a problematic individual psyche is to re-form it (*Anthills of the Savannah* P. 99).

This means that speakers of elaborated speech code are able to express complex relations with their environment to solve conflicts and problems and to pass on personal emotions and intentions (Bernstein( 1967:57) cited in Hussein, B.A,( 2012:552) . This is observed in Ikem's ability to use the language resources at his disposal to display his knowledge in different fields, express his dissatisfaction about the corrupt government in Kangan. For instance, poetry has become part of Ikem's every expression in the story. Ikem employs poetic skills in his speech. His use of poetic language and imagery helps him express complex reality by using concise expressions. His linguistic competence helps him relates his thoughts in poetry. For example in Chapter Three, he expresses his thoughts in form of a poem titled "Hymn to the Sun" (p.30-33). Similarly in Chapter Four when the Public Executions Decree was made by the government, Ikem expresses his contempt by writing a crusading, editorial calling on the president to promulgate forthwith a decree abrogating the law that permits that outrageous and revolting performance in form of a one stanza poem which he entitles: "Lord Thy Word Abideth." as shown in the extract below:

Extract 6.

The worst threat from men of hell  
May not be their actions cruel  
Far worse that we learn their way  
And behave more fierce than they. (*Anthills of the Savannah* p.43).

With the expressive potential, Ikem instills a sense of hope in his people and in doing so he unifies himself to their cause.

Elaborated code according to Wardhaugh( 2006: 337) makes use of accuracy in the sense of standard grammatical order and syntax to regulate what is said; uses complex sentences that employ a range of devices for conjunction and subordination; employs prepositions to show relationships of both a temporal and logical nature; shows frequent use of the pronoun I; uses with care a wide range of adjectives and adverbs; allows for the remarks to be qualified. These features of elaborated code noted by (Wardhaugh, 2006) are observed in Ikem's speech in Chapter Eleven as these features are written in bold as demonstrated below:

Extract 7.

The **prime** failure of **this** government began also to take on a **clearer** meaning for him. It can't be the **massive** corruption though its scale and pervasiveness are **truly intolerable**; it isn't the subservience to **foreign** manipulation, **degrading** as it is , isn't **this second-class, hand-me-down** capitalism, **ludicrous** and **doomed**; nor it is the **damnable** shooting of the **striking** railway-workers and **demonstrating** students...with the **bruised** heart that throbs **painfully** at the core of the nation's being (*Anthills of the Savannah*141)

What about renouncing my experience, needs and knowledge? But could **I**? And should **I**? **I** could renounce needs perhaps, but experience and knowledge, how? There seems no way **I** can become like the poor except by faking. What **I** know, **I** know for good or ill. So for good or ill **I** shall

remain myself; but with this **deliberate** readiness now to help, and be helped. Like **those complex, multivalent** atoms in Biochemistry books **I** have arms that reach out in all directions-**a helping** hand, a hand signaling for help. With one I shall touch the earth and leave another free to wave to the skies. Aha! Come to think of it, that might explain the insistence of the oppressed that the oppressor must not be allowed to camouflage his appearance or confuse the poor by stealing and masquerading in their clothes. Perhaps it is the demand of the **primitive** integrity of the earth...Or, who knows, it might also be something **less innocent** (*Anthills of the Savannah* 142).

The Extracts 7 by Ikem in the text are full of first person pronoun “I” as well as adjectives and adverbs as indicated by bolding the features which confirms the assertion of Wardhaugh (2006:337) about elaborated code.

In fact because of Ikem’s level of education and his social status in Kangan, he speaks Standard English and always impresses people with his eloquent and elaborated speech and they find it entertaining. This is shown in Chapter Twelve where he delivers a lecture at the University of Bassa titled: “The Tortoise and the Leopard” which attracts large crowds in the two-thousand-capacity Main Auditorium. He explicitly criticises the administration of the Kangan government:

Extract 8.

a. They do not realise that revolutions are betrayed just as much by stupidity, incompetence, impatience and precipitate action as by doing nothing at all(*Anthills of the Savannah*158)

b. Let’s take the Electricity Corporation of Kangan as one example out of many. What do we see? Chaotic billing procedures deliberately done to cover their massive fraud; illegal connections carried out or condoned by their own staff; theft of meters and host of other petty and serious crimes including, if you please, the readiness at the end of the day to burn down the entire Accounts and Audit Departments if an inquiry should ever be mooted...”(*Anthills of the Savannah*159)

c.I will say simply that these people are not workers by any stretch of the imagination. They are parasites, I tell you. And I

will not agree to hand over my affairs to a democratic dictatorship of parasites. Never! (*Anthills of the Savannah* 160).

The Extract 8 by Ikem has affirmed what Bernstein (2003) argues about elaborated code as stated in the literature review that elaborated code promotes a higher level of syntactic organisation and lexical selection. The preparation and delivery of relatively explicit meaning is the major function of this code and that the code facilitates the verbal transmission and elaboration of the individual's unique experience.

The use of elaborated code is also observed in the speech of Beatrice Okoh. As a result of her level of education and her social status in Kangan society, she speaks Standard English and uses her linguistic competence to express her feeling about what happens around her. For instance, *Anthills of the Savannah* depicts the male chauvinism of : Sam, Chris and Ikem because they are considered as the most influential figures as the whole story revolves around them but when Ikem raises the question of oppression of women saying that women are inferior to men, Beatrice explicitly challenges male chauvinism thus:

Extract 9.

That's when you hear all kinds of nonsense talk from girls: Better to marry a rascal than grow a moustache in your father's compound; better an unhappy marriage than unhappy spinsterhood; better marry Mr. Wrong in his world than wait for Mr. Right in heaven; all marriage is *how-for-do*; all men are the same; and a whole baggage of other foolishness like that. I was determined from the very beginning to put my career first, and if need be, last. That every woman wants a man to complete her is a piece of male chauvinist bullshit I had completely rejected before I knew there was anything like Woman's Lib...Absolute rubbish! There was enough male chauvinism in my father's house to last me seven reincarnations! (*Anthills of the Savannah* P. 88)

In the Extract 9 Beatrice uses a wide range of vocabulary to express her contempt about male chauvinism.

#### **4.5. The Inclusion of Restricted code into elaborated One**

According to Dittmar (1976) cited in Hussein (2012:553) in order to specify the relationship between the speech codes, 'We can imagine elaborated and restricted speech forms as two sets of communicative symbols such that the elaborated incorporates the restricted as a subset'. This means that everything which is expressed in the restricted room can also be realised in the elaborated form; the reverse however is not possible. In other words, elaborated speakers can also express themselves in the restricted form while the restricted speakers cannot do so in the elaborated form.

With close reading of the text as earlier stated, it is observed that Pidgin English (non-standard English) is the legitimate language of semi-literate characters : such as Agatha, Elewa and other semi-literate characters while Standard English is the language used by educated characters like Ikem, Beatrice and Chris but characters: like Ikem, Beatrice and Chris who are educated speak both pidgin and Standard English. This is seen in Chapter Six where Beatrice is invited to a small private dinner by the President (Sam). Then the President sends soldier to go and convey her to the venue. When the soldier arrives to Beatrice's house and she is in the bathroom taking her bath then Agatha hurriedly comes to inform her that a soldier is looking for her, Beatrice responds Agatha in Pidgin English:

Extract 10.

Tellam make he siddon; I de nearly ready(*Anthills of the Savannah*P. 71).

And when Beatrice finally gets ready, she asks the soldier about the venue for the party in pidgin English. Below is the conversation between Beatrice and the soldier:

Extract 11.

What? Na where we de go?  
You mean say dem no tell you?  
Wonderful!  
Na for President Guest House for  
Abichi Lake na there dem say  
make I take you (*Anthills of the  
Savannah* p. 72).

Also in Chapter Thirteen, it is revealed that when Elewa, Ikem's girlfriend hears the news about the sudden death of Ikem, everything around her suddenly becomes unreal and she cries bitterly then Beatrice consoles her in Pidgin:

Extract 12.

You no fit carry on like this at all.  
If you no want save yourself then make you save the  
pickin inside you belle.  
You hear me? I done tell you this no be time for cry.  
The one wey done go done go. The only thing we fit  
do now is to be strong so that when the fight come we  
fit fight am proper.  
Wipe your eye. No worry. God dey (*Anthills of the  
Savannah* pp. 174 & 175).

At the naming ceremony of Elewa's child, Aina: a devotee Muslim gets excited at a certain point and raises herself from her seat and joins Agatha: a devotee of Christian in her holy seductive dance, it baffles Beatrice and then she asks Elewa in pidgin. Below is their conversation:

Extract 13.

Abi Aina no be Moslem?  
Na proper grade one Moslem, Dem  
talk say make Moslem no dance  
when Christian de sing? (*Anthills of the Savannah* P. 224).

Also in Chapter Eleven, when Elewa gets the news that Ikem has been suspended as from his office as the editor of the *National Gazette*, she bursts into tears and then Beatrice uses Pidgin English as a medium of communication to console her and both of them speak in Pidgin:

Extract 14.

My sister, make you no worry yourself. As we dey alive so, na that one better pass all...I no know say your mama no well. Sorry. You done take am go hospital? Hospital? Who get money for hospital? And even if you find money, the wahala wey de there (*Anthills of the Savannah* p. 150).

The use of Pidgin English is also observed in Ikem's utterances. For instance in Chapter Ten when a taxi driver offends Ikem in a traffic jam, he later comes to Ikem's house to apologise and Ikem answers him in pidgin as both communicate in Pidgin English:

Extract 15.

I just think this I-go-drive- myself na some jagajaga person wey no fit bring money to pay driver, and come block road for everybody. Never mind, that wahala for road no be such bad thing as he come make us friends now for house. That na true, Oga. Wonderful!" (*Anthills of the Savannah* p. 138).

Again, when Elewa hears the news about Ikem's suspension from his office, Elewa engages Ikem in a conversation regarding the issue and he communicates with her in pidgin:

Extract 16.

Everybody de talk am for our yard. Even my mama wey de sick hear am small for six o' clock news from our neighbor him radio. But me I go chemist for buy medicine for am.'  
Never mind, my dear. You see I still de alive and well.  
I thank God for that.  
How mama be today?  
E de better small...You say no be sack dem sack you na...weting you call am?



Na suspend they suspend me (*Anthills of the Savannah* p. 150).

The incorporation of restricted speech into elaborated speech as a subset as stated by Dittmar, (1976) is also observed in the utterances of Chris in Chapter Fifteen. Specifically, this is seen where Chris is on his travel to the northern part of Abazon and he is involved in a conversation with his companions and the security operatives who mount road blocks. They expound:

Extract 17.

What work you de do?

He de sell motor part.

Na you I ask? Or na you be in mouth?

I de sell motor parts, said Chris... (*Anthills of the Savannah* p.193).

Oga you see now, to be big man no hard but to be poor man no be small thing. Na proper wahala. No be so?

'Na so I see-o. I no know before today say to pass for small man you need to go special college.

Na true you talk oga. Special College. Poor Man Elementary certificate! (*Anthills of the Savannah* p.194).

This means that the inclusion relation makes it clear that restricted speech is limited compared to elaborated speech. It should be noted that the western educated characters such as Ikem, Chris and Beatrice understand this pidgin English which is the language of semi-literate characters as earlier mentioned but they do not use it when they communicate with one another officially. Standard English is even used as an official language in governmental administrative affairs in Kangan. In addition, these different varieties of English and its uses demarcate the stratification of Kangan in linguistic and social milieu. With restricted and elaborated codes, Bernstein principally equates social privileges with greater self-expression, and social disadvantage with poorer speech. In fact, the social inequality between classes is due to economic-political dominance (Hussein, 2012:552) as observed in the novel.

## 4.6 Sociolinguistic Variables as Observed in *Anthills of the Savannah*

This section contains the sociolinguistic variables observed in the text which are social class, education, religion, ethnicity, sex/gender and age.

### 4.7.1 Social Class

With a close reference to the text, social class in Kangan is defined by the degree of education that one has received. The major bourgeoisie characters, Sam, Ikem, Chris, Mad Medico, and Beatrice are educated in Britain. They keep some distance with the common people, they feel that they are superior to the ordinary mass. The western educated native bourgeoisie and the ordinary people differ in language use, class, philosophy of life and even in the inter-personal relationship. For instance, characters like Elewa, Agatha, Abdul, taxi drivers and other semi-literate characters speak Pidgin English while educated characters such as Ikem, Chris, Sam, Beatrice and other educated characters speak both pidgin and standard English. This has clearly shown the social status the characters.

Also in the text, Ikem sends his girl friend, Elewa home at midnight because he cannot bear to keep a lower class woman in his house through the night as he tactically gives his reason:

Extract 18.

I simply detest the very notion of waking up and finding beside you somebody naked and unappetizing(*Anthills of the Savannah* p.37).

From the Extract 18, it seems Ikem does not want to be identified with a woman who belongs to a lower class in Kangan society as the addressee is from less privileged family.

Ikem also talks to the driver in a manner that shows the hierarchies of power, the intimidation of Ikem expresses his upper class attitude to the taxi driver who is a member of the ordinary class people of Kangan as he threatens him:

Extract 19.

Do you know it is an offence to operate a vehicle without interior lights according to the Criminal Code chapter forty-eight section sixteen subsection one hundred and six?(*Anthills of the Savannah* p. 37)

In the above extract, it can be observed that Ikem uses his position as one of the elite because he is neither a security agent nor an officer of Law Safety Corps but because of his social status, he intimidates an ordinary person who does not belong to his class.

Similarly Beatrice looks down on Agatha: her maid and shows rudeness towards Agatha:

Extract 20.

- a. Agatha was so free with leaflets dripping with the saving blood of Jesus and yet had no single drop of charity in her own anaemic blood (*Anthills of the Savannah* p. 183).
- b. .Agatha, you are a very stupid girl and a very wicked girl...  
Get out of my way! (*Anthills of the Savannah* p.182).
- c. But I made it clear to her from the start that I wasn't ready yet to wash and wipe the feet of my paid help. It is quite enough that I have to do the weekly grocery at the Gelegele market while she is clapping hands and rolling eyes and hips at some hairy- chested prophet in white robes and shower cap(*Anthills of the Savannah* p. 83).
- d. Look, Chris, this salad is not Agatha's. I made it specially for you(*Anthills of the Savannah* p. 116)

From the Extracts 20a -d, it seems that Beatrice, a highly educated woman because of her social status in Kangan looks down on Agatha who is just an ordinary maid as she even embarrasses and abuses her.

Elewa also reveals her social status in Chapter Eleven when her mother falls sick and Beatrice enquires whether she has taken her mother to the hospital then Elewa answers Beatrice thus:

Extract 21.

“Hospital? Who get money for hospital? And even if you find money, the wahala wey de there...

My sister, na chemist we small people de go (*Anthills of the Savannah* p. 150)

Social status is also shown in the extracts below:

Extract 22.

- a. As for those like me, Your Excellency, poor dullards who went to bush grammar schools, we know our place; we know those better than ourselves. We have no problem worshiping a man like you. Honestly I don't. You went to Lord Lugard College where half of your teachers were Englishmen (*Anthills of the Savannah* p.24).
- b. The only room not taken yet was on the raised platform with numbered seats for VIPs and at the four stakes backed by their own little sea-wall of sandbags. The sun's heat honed with salt and vapour came down so brutally on the forehead that we all made visors with our hands to save our eyes. (*Anthills of the Savannah* p.39)

Extract (22a), is an utterance by Attorney-General who addresses Sam: The President. By social stratification, the Attorney-General belongs to the same class with the President but yet his speech clearly shows that he marks the President above him which indicates social status. Also in the Extract (22b), the distinction of social class prevails as observed in Ikem's speech Extract 22b that the VIP members of the privileged social class have numbered seats on the raised platform whereas ordinary people suffer from hot weather.

It should be noted that these instances in the novel lead to the creation of gap between the elite class and the ordinary people in Kangan.

#### 4.7.2 Education

In the text, the use of language by characters like: Ikem, Chris, Beatrice and other literate characters is distinct from that of other semi-literate characters like: Elewa, Agatha, Aina etc. This difference is as a result of their level of education. Thus they do not belong to the same linguistic class with any other character as a result of their educational status. As a result of this, they use learned words to express their views. An instance is shown in Chapter Twelve where Ikem speaks at the University of Bassa which his speech attracts a large crowd:

Extract 23.

- a. August used to be a dry mouth. August Break we called it. The geography textbooks explained it, the farmer in the village expected it .The August Break never failed in those days.The charge of elitism never fails to amaze me because the same people who make it will also criticise you for not prescribing their brand of revolution to the masses (*Anthills of the Savannah* p.157).
- b. You know it was the same old cry heard by Jesus Christ from his lazy-minded, soft-brained, bread-hungry hangers-on in Galilee or Gadarene or whatever it was (*Anthills of the Savannah* p.158).
- c. They are parasites, I tell you. And I will not agree to hand over my affairs to a democratic dictatorship of parasites (*Anthills of the Savannah* p.160).
- d. You must develop the habit of skepticism, not swallow every piece of superstition you are told by witch doctors and professors. I see too much parroting, too much regurgitating of half –digested radical rhetoric... (*Anthills of the Savannah* p.161).

Ikem's language is poetic and has much intrusion of hyperbole and extensive verbosity which marks him off among other members of the community. In addition to this, he has the linguistic

resource and information which he draws from different fields ranging from politics, religion, general science to psychology and relationships in order to describe virtually all he has to say as seen in extracts 23a - d.

Beatrice also because of her level of education uses language resource at her disposal to condemn male chauvinism in Kangan society:

Extract 24.

.  
That every woman wants a man to complete her is a piece of male chauvinist bullshit I had compl ” That’s when you hear all kinds of nonsense talk from girls: Better to marry a rascal than grow a moustache in your father’s compound; better an unhappy marriage than unhappy spinsterhood; better marry Mr. Wrong in his world than wait for Mr. Right in heaven; all marriage is *how-for-do*; all men are the same; and a whole baggage of other foolishness like that. I was determined from the very beginning to put my career first, and if need be, last etely rejected before I knew there was anything like Woman’s Lib...Absolute rubbish! There was enough male chauvinism in my father’s house to last me seven reincarnations! (*Anthills of the Savannah* p. 88)

A close reading of the novel also shows that characters like: Elewa, Agatha, the taxi drivers: Abdul to mention but just a few are uneducated. This is shown in Chapter Eleven when the government suspends Ikem as from being the editor of the *NationalGazette*, Ikem tells Elewa that he has been suspended but Elewa being in illiterate cannot understand what suspension means then asks Beatrice thus:

Extract 25.

Weting be suspend?...  
I beg, BB weting be suspend? (*Anthills of the Savannah* p.150)

The Extract from Elewa shows that she does not acquire formal education as she does not even know the meaning of suspension.

Also in Chapter Ten, the taxi driver confirms his illiteracy as he talks to Elewa:

Extract 26.

I no sabi book but I sabi say na for we this oga de fight, not for himself (*Anthills of the Savannah* p.136).

In the course of the the taxi driver's discussion with Elewa, Elewa reminds the taxi driver of his illiteracy:

Extract 27.

Illiteracy de read paper for your country? (*Anthills of the Savannah* p.137).

At the Harmony Hotel where the Abazon delegation has a meeting with Ikem, one of the elders also affirms his illiteracy:

Extract 28.

I have never read what they say he writes because I do not know ABC.  
But I have heard of all the fight he has fought for poor people in this  
land(*Anthills of the Savannah* p.122-23)

The extract above shows that the speaker is cannot read and write which indicates that the speaker is illiterate.

The use of non-standard variety of English is also seen in Chapter Fifteen where Chris is travelling to the northern part of Kangan and as he discusses with his companions, one of them cannot even pronounce the word certificate correctly because of his level of education:

Extract 29.

Na true you talk, oga. Special College.  
Poor Man Elementary **Cerffticate**! (*Anthills of the Savannah* p.194).

The deficiency in these characters' use of English can be attributed to their inability to acquire a formal education and the unavailability of those vocabularies in their lexicon.

### 4.7.3 Religion

In the story, the bearded old man's speech at the Harmony Hotel shows that he worships African Traditional religion as his speech is full of references to the deities or gods (**Agwu** and **chi**) in Ibo land:

Extract 30.

Then one day **Agwu** comes along and knocks it out of our mouth...**Agwu** does not call a meeting to choose his seers and diviners and artists; Agwu, the god of healers; Agwu, the brother to Madness! But though born from the same womb he and Madness were not created by the same **chi**. **Agwu** is the right hand a man extends to his fellows; Madness, the forbidden hand...**Agwu** picks his disciples, rings his eye with white chalk and dips his tongue, willing or not, in the brew of prophecy... (*Anthills of the Savannah* p.125).

Characters such as Ikem, Chris, Agatha, Beatrice and Elewa because of their Christian religious background make utterances with references to their faith. For instance, Ikem's speech is full of biblical allusions as shown below:

Extract 31.

- a. You know it was the same old cry heard by Jesus Christ from his lazy-minded, soft-brained, bread-hungry hangers-on in Galilee or Gadarene or whatever it was(*Anthills of the Savannah* p.158)
- b. But as the Bible says, it is better to give than to receive(*Anthills of the Savannah* 154).
- c. I wouldn't put myself under the democratic dictatorship even of angels and archangels(*Anthills of the Savannah* p.155).
- d. The original oppression of Woman was based on crude denigration. She caused Man to fall. So she became a scapegoat. No, not a scapegoat which might be blameless but a culprit richly deserving of whatever suffering of Man chose thereafter to heap on her. That is Woman in the Book of Genesis. Out here, our ancestors, without the benefit of hearing about the Old Testament...The New Testament required a more enlightened, more refined, more loving even, strategy... (*Anthills of the Savannah* p.97-98).

All the extracts above by Ikem are biblical allusions. For instance, in Extract d Ikem mentions the two major parts of the Bible which are Old Testament and New Testament respectively.



Also in Chapter Eight, the biblical allusion is noticed in a conversation between Chris and Beatrice. Below is their conversation:

Extract 32.

priestesses don't sleep  
'You called me a priestess. No, a prophetess'...I mind only the Cherubim and Seraphim part of it. As a matter of fact I do sometimes feel like Chielo in the novel, the priestess and prophetess of the Hills of the Caves (*Anthills of the Savannah* p.114).

At the naming ceremony of Elewa's child: Beatrice also makes reference to the Bible thus:

Extract 33.

There was an Old Testament prophet who named his son *The-remnant-shall-return*(*Anthills of the Savannah* p. 222).

It should be noted that names of the characters in the story also reveal or portray their religious affiliations as names such as: *Chris* , *Agatha*, *Emmanuel*, *Sam* and *Beatrice* are for Christian religious names while names such as: *Adama*, and *Alhaji Abdul Mahmoud* and *Ahmed* are for Islamic names respectively.

What occasioned the differences in the utterances quoted in Extract 30 is that the first speaker (the bearded man) belongs to the class of traditional worshipers hence the lexis

of such religious belief influence his language choices and codes. Beatrice, Chris and Ikem on the other hand are Christians. Hence their language code is shaped by the vocabulary of the religion. All these are indications that religion has an influence on an individual's language code.

#### 4.7.4 Ethnicity

In the story, ethnicity sociolinguistic variable is made manifest in the use of Igbo names such as: *Ikem, Nwanyibuife (Beatrice), Okeke, Oriko, Mgbafo, Amaechina, Nneka* and *Mgbafo*. Also the bearded old man's constant reference to Igbo deities like *Chi* and *Agwu* in Chapter Nine shows this variable. The ethnicity sociolinguistic variable is also observed in the use of Igbo word 'Ise' which means "Amen" by the audience and whosoever stands up to speak at the naming ceremony of Elewa's Child (*Anthills of the Savannah* p.228-229). Also, the breaking of kola nut at the ceremony as the performing of this kola nut ritual at the naming ceremony looks strange to people from other ethnic groups who also attend the ceremony.

The narrator also makes reference to this as shown in extract (a) below:

Extract 34.

- a. Abdul, a relative stranger to the kola nut ritual, was carried away beyond the accustomed limits of choral support right into exuberant hand-clapping (*Anthills of the Savannah* p.228-229).
- b. The same reason I think that our people sometimes will give the name Nkolika to their daughters-Recalling-Is-Greatest (*Anthills of the Savannah* p.124)
- c. In our traditional society the father named the child (*Anthills of the Savannah* p.222)
- d. Nneka, they said. Mother is supreme (*Anthills of the Savannah* p.98)
- e. Agatha is roasting corn and ube (*Anthills of the Savannah* p.94)
- f. Ife onye metalu (*Anthills of the Savannah* p.202-203)

From extract 33 a-f as seen above, there are elements of code-switching to signal ethnic identity which means that ethnicity is defined by social practice rather than attributes and this assertion is confirmed by Llamas (2007) as mentioned in the literature review that it is often difficult to separate ethnicity from other social factors such as: historical background, religion, social class

and other variables. The extracts 33a-f also affirm what Zentella (1997) states that in the case of different languages, speakers may make symbolic choices in their language use or manage code-switching to signal ethnic identity. This informs readers of the story that *Anthills of the Savannah* is a pure Igbo literary text.

#### **4.7.5 Sex/Gender**

As stated in the literature review of this study, Tannen (1990) cited in Hudson 2001:141) states that for men, conversations are negotiations in which people try to achieve and maintain the upper hand if they can and protect themselves from others' attempts to put them down and push them around. Life then is a contest: a struggle to preserve independence and avoid failure while for women. Conversations are negotiations for closeness in which people try to seek and give confirmation and support and to reach consensus. They try to protect themselves from others' attempts to push them away. Life then is a community: a struggle to preserve intimacy and avoid isolation. This is observed in a conversation between Chris and his girl friend, Beatrice in Chapter Eight as shown below:

Extract 35.

Then why are you behaving so strange. I am not behaving strange. You are! Chris, you are behaving very strange indeed. Listen, let me ask you a simple question, Chris. I am you say you want to marry. Right? OK, I am taken away in strange, very strange circumstances last night. I call you beforehand and tell you. You come over here and all you say to is: don't worry, it is all right. I never say anything of that sort to you. Chris, you asked me, the girl you want to marry, to travel forty miles at night to Abichi...To Abichi? You didn't say it was Abichi, did you remember that? That's not the point. You asked the girl you want to marry to go along and keep all options open. Do you remember that? ...'please don't interrupt. I go off forty miles to this weird party BB, you never told me it was to Abichi. (*Anthills of the Savannah* p.112).

In the Extract 34, Chris does not want to accept the fact that he is guilty of what he does to his girl friend because he wants to protect himself from Beatrice's attempt to control him and he also wants to lead in the argument. Beatrice on the hand wants to remind Chris of their closeness and intimate relationship and wants to establish solidarity rather than being isolated. The Extract 34 also coincides with the claim by Holmes (1998) in Wardhaugh (2006:322) who states that women tend to use linguistic devices that stress solidarity more often than men do. According to Holmes, men tend to interact in ways which will maintain and increase their power and status.

Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (1992: 90) state that men's language is heard as evincing their toughness, lack of effect, competitiveness, independence, competence, hierarchy and control.

In the text, this variable is observed in the utterances of two of the leading characters: Sam and Chris when Sam wants to use his power as the President to suspend Ikem from the *National Gazette*:

Extract 36.

I want you as a Commissioner for Information to issue a formal letter suspending him with immediate effect.

Hold it, Your Excellency. I don't understand.

Well, let's not waste time by getting into who knows what, now...

But first of all I want him suspended from duty and barred completely from the premises of the *Gazette*. Is that clear?

No it is not. I am sorry Your Excellency but I will not write a letter suspending the Editor of the *National Gazette* simply because some zealous security officer has come with a story...'

Listen. The way I see it this matter is not likely to end with mere suspension for conspiring with thugs to invade the Presidential Palace(*Anthills of the Savannah* p.143-144).

From Extract 35, it is observed that both Chris and Sam's utterances are characterised by the use of imperative sentences. It is also observed that the two characters: Chris and Sam are blunt and authoritative in their utterances.

#### 4.7.6 Age

Extract 37.

- a. Young men are not what they used to be... (*Anthills of the Savannah* p.210)
- b. ...the young men gave them the slip. (*Anthills of the Savannah* p.173)
- c. Well, young man... (*Anthills of the Savannah* p.172)
- d. The story was told me by an old man. As I stand before you now that old man who told me that incredible story is being held in solitary confinement at the Bassa Maximum Security Prison (*Anthills of the Savannah* p.153).
- e. Yes, my children, I feel light-headed like one who has completed all his tasks and is gay and free to go (*Anthills of the Savannah* p.126)
- f. I have heard what you said about this young man,...But leave this young man alone to do what he is doing for Abazon and for the whole of Kangan... (*Anthills of the Savannah* p.122)
- g. Who is this young lady? (*Anthills of the Savannah* p.177)

In the text, the constant use of expressions like: 'the old man', 'the young man', 'you young people', 'these young people' 'my children' etc. by some characters referring to others characters as seen in extract 36 clearly shows age differences among the characters. Elewa's uncle, constantly refers to her as 'our child' and "my daughter" in Chapter Eighteen. The use of honorific title such as: "ma" or "madam" by a younger character to an older one also ensures this as observed in Agatha's response to Beatrice:

Extract 38.

Agatha!  
Madam!  
Leave the table alone and get us coffee, please. After that you can clear the table'.  
Yes, madam! (*Anthills of the Savannah* p.116).

Finally, a close reading of the novel reveals that age automatically bestows authority on an elder individual to pray for or bless a younger individual. This is observed in prayer of Elena's uncle at the naming ceremony as he blesses the new born baby and those that attend the ceremony:

Extract 39.

May she have life and her mother have life.

What happened to her father, may it not happen again.

May this child be the daughter of all of us.

May these young people here when they make the plans for their world not forget her.  
And all other children.

May they also remember useless old people like myself and Elewa's mother when they are making their plans.( *Anthills of the Savannah* p. 228).

## **4.8 DISCUSSION**

This section covers the general discussion on the study which deals with the concept of language codes and the discussions on sociolinguistics variables used in *Anthills of the Savannah*. To achieve the aim of the study, the study employed Bernstein's (1971) theory of Deficit Hypothesis as its theoretical framework which fully explains the concept of language codes which are analysed in the course of this research which are "restricted" and "elaborated" codes. As the study also sought to analyse the sociolinguistic variables used in the select text, the main sociolinguistic variables analysed in this study are social class, education, religion, ethnicity, sex/gender and age.

### **4.8.1 Restricted and Elaborated Codes**

Bernstein's (1971) studies was that the speech habits of members of the lower class who have little social influence differ syntactically and semantically from those of the middle class who are

powerful and influential because of their material and intellectual privileges. The linguistic characteristics which differentiate the speech behaviour of the lower class from that of the middle and upper classes are interpreted as a language deficit phenomenon. The study therefore considers the following aspects to characteristic of Bernstein's (1971) ideas of the different speech codes. The "elaborated" speech code provides access to social privileges whereas the "restricted" speech code prevents such access. The difference between the elaborated and the restricted codes is precisely the deficit which prevents the social success of restricted speakers. The "elaborated speech code is to be found in the middle class while the "restricted" code is to be found in the lower class. The speech codes have social, psychological and linguistic correlations and the codes are defined by their lexical and syntactic predictions as these features are observed in extracts 1-9 of the analysis. According to Dittmar (1976) the elaborated code incorporates the restricted code as a subset. This means that the speakers of elaborated code performs dual function as they speak both the elaborated and restricted codes the reverse however is not possible. For instance, in Extract 12 of the analysis Beatrice, an educated character also speaks in Pidgin English to Elewa who is an uneducated character in the text thus:

You no fit carry on like this at all. If you no want save yourself then make you save the pickin inside you belle. You hear me? I done tell you this no be time for cry. The one wey done go done go. The only thing we fit do now is to be strong so that when the fight come we fit fight am proper. Wipe your eye. No worry. God dey (*Anthills of the Savannah* pp. 174 & 175).

In contrast, Elewa cannot communicate to Beatrice by using Standard English. The three out of the five select characters for the analysis: namely Ikem, Chris and Beatrice are represented in *Anthills of the Savannah* as educated elite whose social privileges underlie their interactions with the ordinary class of people and their use of language also differs significantly. These educated characters speak both elaborated and restricted codes. However, Elewa and Agatha because of their social status and level of education speak only the restricted code. The incorporation of restricted code as a subset of elaborated code in the select text is seen from Extracts 10 – 17 of the analysis. The incorporation of the restricted code as a subset of the elaborated code shows that literary writers either consciously or unconsciously choose certain linguistic items over others to represent an experience or event in a text to achieve an effect.

#### **4.8.2 Sociolinguistic Variables of: Social Class, Education, Religion, Ethnicity, Sex/Gender and Age.**

In any social interaction there are variations among the speakers who constitute that social group. The cause of variations may be as a result of certain factors: like religion, social class, education, ethnicity, sex/gender or age. The variations among speakers in a social interaction happen in real life situations. However this is possible in a literary text because writers of literary texts make things happen real through the roles or behaviors of the characters. Achebe's *Anthills of the Savannah* as a novel is not an exception. The factors which are responsible for variations among the speakers of a social group are what this study refers to them as sociolinguistic variables. The evidence of sociolinguistic variables of: social class, education, religion, ethnicity, sex/gender and age in the select text can be observed from Extracts 18 – 39 of the analysis. The aforementioned sociolinguistic variables influence the characters' language variation and choice



of language codes in *Anthills of the Savannah*. For instance, Ikem, Chris and Beatrice because of their social level of education and social status, they speak both Standard and Pidgin varieties of English. On the other hand, the aforementioned sociolinguistic variables also influence the choice of language of the characters like Elewa and Agatha as they speak only Pidgin English as seen in Extract 1-4 of the analysis.

#### **4.9 Findings**

The study recorded the major findings which are shown below:

1. There is a communication gap between the literate and semi-literate characters in the select text.
2. There are variations in the use of language by characters in the text which is caused by some sociolinguistic variables.
3. Standard English is used by literate characters while Pidgin English is used by illiterate or semi-literate characters in the text.
4. Education as one of the sociolinguistic variables is responsible for social stratification in of the characters in the text.
5. The five major characters selected for the analysis of the study namely: Ikem, Beatrice, Chris, Agatha and Elewa stereotypically represent Achebe's construction of key social actors in the socio-political world in the text.
6. To some extent, English is the only language that unifies the characters in the text since they come from different ethnic groups.
7. The use of Standard English and Pidgin by different characters shows the social status of these characters.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

#### 5.1 Introduction

This final chapter of the study summarises the major aspects of the study and draws conclusion from the research findings. Specifically, the chapter begins with a summary of the aims, method and approaches adopted in the study and then proceeds to highlight the key findings of the study. The chapter ends with the conclusion drawn from the study.

#### 5.2 Summary

The general aim of the study was to investigate or examine language codes and sociolinguistic variables in Achebe's *Anthills of the Savannah*. In the light of this, the study sought to address three major issues. First, it aimed to examine how characters in the selected text used different codes. The second concern was to examine the various sociolinguistic variables in the text and then to examine how language codes indicate social status of the characters. To achieve this, the study employed Bernstein' Deficit Hypothesis as its theoretical framework.

Being descriptive and explorative in nature, the study adopted the qualitative research design. This type of research is interested in deriving and interpreting meaning from signs such as words or texts, pictures and or observable behaviour. The particular qualitative approach employed by the study was content analysis.

In order to answer the research questions, the utterances of some characters were extracted from the selected text to examine or check the use of restricted and elaborated codes by those

characters whose utterances were extracted. Also the sociolinguistic variables of: social class, education, religion, ethnicity, gender/sex and age were explained and the utterances of some characters were extracted from the text to check the presence of these variables. The analysis was primarily based on the utterances of the major characters in the text such as: Ikem, Chris, Elewa, Beatrice and Agatha. However, references were given to other characters where it is necessary.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

This research work conducts a study on the language codes and socio-linguistic variables present in Achebe's *Anthills of the Savanna*. The analysis reveals that the elaborated and restricted codes are the two language codes used by the characters in the text. The elaborated code is the standard variety while the restricted code is deficient and the nonstandard variety of language. The characters' choices of any of the codes are influenced by education or illiteracy. Also, sociolinguistic variables of: social class, education, religion, sex/gender, ethnicity and age are identified as the reasons for the characters' language variation and choice of language codes. Finally, the identification of the language code of the characters and an analysis of their utterances using the afore-mentioned sociolinguistic variables help in easy identification of their social status.

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