

Principles of Literary Study

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Office hours: Thursdays 11:45–12:45 in MU 040A or by appt.

April 20, 2026. Achebe (2).

paper 2

- ▶ evidence
- ▶ motive
- ▶ argument
- ▶ quote! quote more! quote correctly!
- ▶ AND ANALYZE

quiz: check-in

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- ▶ Discuss: is Ikemefuna's killing justified? Why would that even be a question?

perspective

focalization the relation between the elements of the *fabula* and the vision through which they are presented. Who narrates and who perceives may be distinct.

EF external focalization: the point of view is not attached to any actor in the *fabula* (is “omniscience” really a thing?)

CF character-bound focalization: the point of view is attached to a character

who perceives?

Even Okonkwo himself became very fond of the boy—inwardly of course. Okonkwo never showed any emotion openly, unless it be the emotion of anger. To show affection was a sign of weakness; the only thing worth demonstrating was strength. (28)

And so he [Okonkwo] was always happy when he heard him [Nwoye] grumbling about women. That showed that in time he would be able to control his women-folk. (53)

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And so he [Okonkwo] was always happy when he heard him [Nwoye] grumbling about women. That showed that in time he would be able to control his women-folk. (53)

Nwoye knew that it was right to be masculine and to be violent, but somehow he still preferred the stories that his mother used to tell. (53)

voice

Among the Ibo the art of conversation is regarded very highly, and proverbs are the palm-oil with which words are eaten. (7)

As the elders said, if a child washed his hands he could eat with kings. (8)

But the Ibo people have a proverb that when a man says yes his *chi* says yes also. (27)

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An old woman is always uneasy when dry bones are mentioned in a proverb. (21)

voice (2)

Eze elina, elina!

Sala

Eze ilikwa ya

Ikwaba akwa oligholi

Ebe Danda nechi eze

Ebe Uzuzu nete egwu

Sala (60)

King, do not eat

Sala

King, do not eat,

If you eat this

Where Danda is being crowned

Where the dust is dancing

It is people

Sala

Francis Abiola Irele, ed., *Things Fall Apart* (New York: Norton, 2009), 37n8. Irele's note also explains that "Sala" is a "refrain taken up by the audience" and Danda is "the ant, a trickster figure."

perspective again

- ▶ How does point of view move in chapter 7? Describe each transition.

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1. CF (Okonkwo): Ezeudu's warning (57)
 2. CF (Nwoye), CF (Ikemefuna): the elders come (57)
 3. CF (Nwoye): Ikemefuna taken away (58)
 4. CF (Ikemefuna): Ike's increasing inwardness (59)
 5. "As the man who had cleared his throat drew up and raised his machete, Okonkwo looked away." (61)

His hands trembled vaguely on the black pot he carried. Why had Okonkwo withdrawn to the rear? Ikemefuna felt his legs melting under him. And he was afraid to look back. (60–61)

reported discourse, irony

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Dazed with fear, Okonkwo drew his machete and cut him down. He was afraid of being thought weak. (61)

next

- ▶ no further exercise due this week
- ▶ read through chap. 19