CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background of the Study

Igbo written prose has witnessed impressive expansion in the recent times. As a result there are numerous Igbo prose texts. What the Igbo novelists do is to take into consideration the philosophy and culture of the people and the general trend of events of a period. This is because there is no strict guideline for the production of these texts in Igbo.

The publication of Ubesie’s novels from 1973 coincided with the renewed efforts of some Igbo patriots shortly after the Nigerian civil war at the head of which was the late F.C. Ogbalu – to give the Igbo language a new impetus and image. Moreover, the war had just ended and the Igbo, having lost heavily in that war, were now engaged in self-assessment. Some of his novels center on the civil war or issues that are the fall-outs of that war, including crimes and banditry, materialism and opportunism and true love as opposed to fake and intrinsic love. Generally, Ubesie’s novels take their bearing from events in contemporary, African society which centres on his Igbo people with an emphasis on what these events and incidents mean to him.

Ubesie writes about tradition and innovation in the novels he wrote. The terms tradition and innovation as employed here refer to what Ubesie met as he grew up in the Igbo tradition and the use he made of them in the process of his writing. In Ubesie’s works, tradition is a combination of the impact of the literary heritage that his Igbo culture affords him, his exposure to English literature and history through reading, as well as familiarity with the writing of Igbo authors of both Igbo and English expressions.

Innovation results from the regenerative use to which an author puts tradition, the modification and expansion that a writer imposes on what is available and known. In the case of Ubesie, we regard as innovation what he made of tradition in his efforts to establish a personal style, tone as well as what he put back into the pool of modern Igbo literary creativity. We must never forget that Ubesie has both preparation and consciousness before he took to writing in Igbo. Thematically, one could speak of Ubesie’s innovation in what he did with such concerns as selfhood and personal worth. In his war novels, for instance, he concerns himself not with the lament of the massive distinction brought about by the civil war, not with who is right or wrong, as is observable in much of Nigerian war fiction, but
with the intimate and familiar gains and losses in honour, prestige, decency and integrity by individuals.

Ubesie has an excellent mastery of the Igbo language usage, which makes his writing easy and fascinating to read. His sense of humour totally captivates the reader. His use of sophisticated irony leaves the reader musing about the motives of human behaviour in complex situations. His authentic characterization plants image of the protagonists so indelible to the consciousness of the readers’ mind that the reader continues to see the face long after finishing the story. The total effect of these in each of his novels is one of suspense; wonderment, curiosity, and aesthetic delight, all of which make the reader want to reach out for Ubesie’s next novel.

Ubesie is a competent hand in almost all literary genres. Ezikeojiaku. (2001:49) describes Tony Ubesie in the following words:

...of all modern creative writers, Tony Ubesie is undoubtedly the most polyvalent. He has an enviable record of several books on drama, culture, poetry and prose narratives. The author was to turn Ukpaka M[ir[ Onye Xb[am (1975) into drama with the title Otu Mkprrx Anya Ji Isi Xgwq.

Ubesie is as indispensable in Igbo written literature as tortoise is in Igbo folktales. His craftsmanship has earned him repute among Igbo literary scholars.

Ubesie’s uniqueness stems from his handling of themes, language, characterization and other stylistic devices. Ubesie’s uniqueness can be traced back to the fact that although Ubesie’s novels are Igbo in origin and setting, their themes are relevant to universal phenomenon. The themes and techniques in Ubesie’s novels are embodiments of naturalness.

Tony Ubesie himself is an architect of cultural ideology who portrays many cultural themes. He is also a novelist who in spite of his setting in Igbo land, moves from belief of traditional and communal concepts of Igbo life to universal issues. His novels can be grouped with the work of social realists.

Literature as we know does not exist in a vacuum. The writer must have a theme on which he writes on. Such themes must have a way of presentation. This is what is known as technique of narration.

Theme is the central or dominating idea in a work, although there may be sub-themes therein. Out of the six published novels of Ubesie, two major themes feature prominently, these are marriage and war (Nigeria/Biafran war, intra and as well as intercommunal wars). Ubesie is at best when writing on these two major themes as they give him insight into
traditionalism and modernism. These themes afford him the opportunity of exploring thematic contrast. Tradition according to the New Webster’s Dictionary of the English language (2004:1046) is “a cultural continuity transmitted in form of social attitudes, beliefs, principle and convention of behaviour deriving from part experiences and helping to shape the present”. Traditionalism is the exaggerated respect for tradition. In the contexts of this story, traditionalism is used to connote the transmission of cultural continuity, beliefs, and legends and so on. Modernism, on the other hand, is a movement dating from the late 19th century which aimed broadly at harmonizing traditional beliefs with modern scientific and philosophic thought. (Webster, 2004).

A novelist is a keen observer of human nature and human behaviour. He watches people as they act and react and interact over issues and problems in society, in their everyday relationships. The novelist judgement guides what happen in the novel because things happen according to the perception of the novelist. The novelist conceals this perception from the reader, and as you follow people and events in the story, you almost forget the writer, the artist who created them. Sometimes, the created work may have weak parts, either in the narrative structure or the delineation of characters or the social issues involved. Some works may be deemed to have failed as a work of art if the weaknesses are too many or major. Some are praised and held in high esteem because they are free from weaknesses. It takes a lot of skill and critical perception for a reader to detect such weaknesses.

1.1 Statement of Problem

Many research works conducted by scholars on Ubesie’s novels are essentially on the themes, styles and characterization. None, to the knowledge of this researcher, has taken up Ubesie in all his novels from the point of view of all the critical elements of literature. It is in the light of this shortcoming that the researcher has decided to study Tony Ubesie’s six novels so as to situate him properly as an accomplished or as a failed Igbo novelist, taking into consideration his global x-ray of Igbo cultural life, his language, and being an Igbo and haven written in Igbo.

1.2 Purpose of Study

The main purpose of the study is to assess Ubesie’s six novels –*Ukwa Ruo Oge Ya O Daa*, *Mmiri Oku E Ji Egwu Mbe*, *Ukpana Okpoko Buuru*, *Isi Akwu Dara N’ Ala*, *Juo Obinna*
and Ŭkpaka Mjiri Onye Ubiam and then establish Ubesie rightly as an accomplished Igbo novelist.

The specific purposes of the study are to:
- examine Ubesie’s treatment of themes in the six novels;
- examine Ubesie’s treatment of settings and plots in the novels;
- examine Ubesie’s points of view in the six novels;
- examine his employment of characters and mode of characterization in his six novels;
- assess Ubesie’s use of language in the six novels.

1.3 Scope of Study

Ubesie is an accomplished Igbo writer and has successfully written the following novels in Igbo: (a) Xkwa Ruq Oge Ya Q Daa (b) Mm[r Qkx E Ji Egbu Mbe. (c) Xkpana Okpoko Buuru (d) Isi Akwx Dara N’Ala, (e) Xkpaka Mm[ r Onye Xb’am and (f) Jxq Obinna. A prolific writer, Ubesie has made his impact on different areas of Igbo studies like fiction, poetry and culture. In Akpa Uche, he contributed nine poems while he also has a book of essays on selected Igbo customs and tradition. He also has one book on drama to his credit but these are not part of this research.

This study is restricted to the themes, settings and plots, language, character and characterization points of view, theme and tones in the Ubesie’s six novels above.

1.4 Significance of Study

A work such as this which sets out to study one of the Igbo novelists in Igbo should contribute meaningfully to Igbo literary scholarship.

The study will be useful to curriculum planners/designers to know the category of works to be included in the school curriculum. It will also help the historians to record important events in the life of the Igbo people. The study will help the ethnographers to know the cultural patterns and institutions of the Igbo.

The study will help the reader to assess Ubesie’s themes in the six novels and relate them to real life situation in our society.

The study will be useful to other researchers who may wish to study the elements of literature in other Igbo novelists.
Generally, this research will serve as a source of material to authors, readers and educators in researching further into this study or other studies.

1.5 Research Methodology
1.5.1 Data Collection/Analysis

In this study, the data will be collected from the six prose texts used for the study, internet sources and different libraries in the University such as school library, Linguistics / Igbo library and analyzed on the basis of literary writing and stylistics.
CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Preamble

An appreciable number of works have been written on Igbo novelists, especially literary criticism ranging from books, dissertations, long essays and articles to seminar papers. All these have boosted the current efforts in developing Igbo written literature. Many literary critics have reviewed Tony Ubesie’s novels. Their review works are based on different subjects. Some of them discuss Ubesie’s language and style, diction, character and characterization as well as themes. This chapter reviews the available and related literature on our subject of study.

2.1 Theoretical Studies

The theoretical studies will be discussed under the definition of the concepts ‘novel’, ‘romance’, setting, character/characterization, point of view, theme, tone, plot and language as literary forms.

2.1.1 Novel

‘Novel’ has been variously defined by scholars and critics. The encyclopaedia Americana defines the novel as the 20th century generic term for any type of prose fiction of book length in which characters and action are presented in a plot as if representing persons and events in real life. In a similar regard, the New Encyclopaedia Britanica defines ‘novel’ as,

“a genre of fiction, and fiction may be identified as the art and craft of contriving, through the written word, representation of human life that instruct or divert or both”

A novel is that genre of literature which reflects the life styles of the society and their endeavours. According to Webster (1995:819).

A novel is a fictional prose narrative of considerable length and a certain complexity that deals imaginatively with human experience through a connected sequence of events involving a group of persons in a specific setting. The term also refers to literary types constituted by such narratives.

Chinweizu et al (1980:18) see the novel as an extended fictional prose narrative whose subject matter is “man in society”. In support of this definition, Akwanya and Anohu
(2001:2) look at the novel from the humanist point of view contending that “the novel is a special kind of literature characterized by a reflection on the individual’s experiences in relation to the socius (society). Akwanya and Anohu (2001:3) enlarging the scope of the humanist approach opine that the novel treated under social discourse, is either a weapon of reaction or a way of escape. This approach is based on the supposition that lyric and dramatic literature are systems which are totally different from the novel and it matters little that they have all been handed down by tradition as literary forms. Also there is the phenomenologist approach which defines art including literature (novel) as “a movement of thought or fantasy coming into being as, and in one of the forms sanctioned and hallowed by tradition. (3).

In other words, phenomenologist approach to the concept of the novel sees it as a weapon of reaction or a way of escape from realities of life, and or fantasies of life (Ikeokwu, 2005:387). As regards “realities”, the politically disenfranchised use it as a weapon of expressing opposition. On that of “fantasy”, the unspecified and emotionally disturbed use the novel as an instrument of pacification and as a place of refuge or explaining mysteries of life where the world could be left behind. For whatever reason the world could be left behind, the narrators of such novels employ metaphor and allegory to protect or explain what they under normal circumstance would not find a way to say.

Igiligi (2002:58) notes that a novel is an imaginative prose narrative of some length usually concerned with human experience and social behaviour. Forster (1927:25) stated the novel to mean any fiction in prose that is not less than 50,000 words in length” Forster contends that any work of fiction which did not attain the 50,000 words length was never discussed or cited in his Aspects of the Novel. Forster’s commandment on length criterion of a novel gave rise to the classification of works of fiction as novels, novella, novelettes or short stories.

Nwadike (1995) notes that another characteristic of the novel is its shower tempo, a wider range of character and setting, and a more complex action to really distinguish it from the short story or epic which has a single action with unity of word and limitation of characters. Character portrayed generally looks a new turn. Action are performed by distinct individuals who are recognizable in terms of life experiences.

Stevenson (1960) postulates that any work of art or any piece of fiction to be regarded as a novel should have unity of structure. He argues that even though earlier types of fiction did not possess lifelike characterization, they were invalidated by the stringing together of episodes and events. The new novelists had a change of style by ceasing “to string together
picaresque adventures and began to build the vast and complex fabric of the novel with architectural proportion” (p.8).

Watt (1974:30) remarks that the previous stylistic tradition for fiction was not primarily concerned with the correspondence of words to things, but rather with the extrinsic beauties which could be bestowed upon description and action by the use of rhetoric.

A novel is a piece of imaginary prose written in a narrative style. It is usually comprehensive and in-depth discussing its subject matter the people in the society. It may be drawn from life experiences of all kinds emphasizing true events, containing prose yet not stylistic limits on that prose. It has no restrictions with regard to structure, content, motive, authorship, originality etc.

However, from the foregoing and in summation, I define the novel as a narrative prose with imaginary characters representing actions with some high level of reality of the people in the society.

2.1.2 Romance

Beckson and Ganz (1961) define romances as stories of love and chivalric adventure, either in prose or verse, popular during the Middle Ages. The major sources for these romances were ancient history and literature, the stories that centered around Charlemagne and Arthurian legends.

The New Encyclopedia Britannica, defines romance as “to make up a story that has no connection with reality” (p.1020). To most English readers, the term romance, carries implication of the wonderful, the miraculous and the exaggerated. In the preface to his short novel, *incognita, or Love and Duty Reconciled* Published in 1962, William Congreve summed up romance literature in the following words.

> Romances are generally composed of the constant loves and invariable courage of heroes, heroines, kings, and queen, mortals of first rank, and so forth, where lofty language, miraculous contingencies and impossible performances elevate and surprise the reader into a giddy delight, which leaves him flat upon the ground whenever he gives off, and vexes him to think how he had suffered himself to be pleased and transported, concerned and afflicted by the several passages which he has read… when he is forced to be very well convinced that ’tis all a lie …(Stevenson, 1960 p.52)

Between 1580 and 1700, the large output of prose fiction did not establish the novel as a literary type. This is because as the history of the novel began to develop scholars tended to
define and classify its different forms such as romance and realism. In a further elaboration, Stevenson contends that as the scientific rationalism of Francis Bacon gained currency, intelligent minds could no longer find satisfaction in the idealistic dream world of prose fiction. Factual observation and analysis won the day.

Many books of the same genre were concerned more with satirizing contemporary society than with suggesting and proposing reforms. According to Stevenson, “in all these prose narratives, the narrative and descriptive elements were merely a frame for the expository discussion, and therefore none of them can be included within the definition of the novel”.

Scholars and critics have tried to distinguish between romance literature of old and the emergent novel genre. For both the scholars and critics, the essential quality for any acceptable novel is the illusion of reality. However, this does not mean the exclusion of everything fantastic and supernatural. Therefore, even though many modern novels may combine fantasy and realism, the only distinction lies in the art of fictional narrative.

2.1.3 Setting

The setting of the novel is the background against which the characters live out their lives. Ogbu (2006:244) uses the term ‘setting’ to refer to “the time, location and social condition in which the action of a narrative takes place”. He further explains elements of setting as the geographical location, topography and scenery, the character’s occupations and daily manner of living: the time or period in which the action takes place (for example, the historical epoch, seasons of the year, time of the day): and general environment of the characters, such as the religious, mental, moral, social and emotional conditions through which the characters move.

According to Nwachukwu-Agbada (2001), setting is an important factor in the author’s choice of subject matter and certainly is influential in the implementation of the themes. The physical setting of a story is its realistic background, its geographical environment. It is the physical location of the occurrences in the story.

The details of setting are those that describe the natural, man-made and social background against which and out of which the action develops. The accuracy of the description of this background – the place, the time, the season, the weather, and the furniture of the scene – is one of the prime means of producing a sense of reality in the work. Finally,
setting, in a narrow sense refers to the place and time of a story, but in a larger sense, it refers to the social conditions or total environment.

### 2.1.4 Character/Characterization

Characterization is the process of conveying information about characters in narratives or dramatic works of art or everyday conversation (Wikipedia the free Encyclopedia). It also refers to the description and development of characters. One could say that settings and themes generally work to develop characters. This support the fact that there would be no story without character. Brace (1969) states that:

“The creating and animating character is the most importance job that an author has to do; without good characters, fiction is nothing”.

Characterization is the process by which the author creates characters. He can do this (reveal characters) through a number of ways: what the character says; what he does; what he thinks; how he looks (physical appearances); what other characters say about him; and what the author says about him. For example, Mr. Do good is very good while Mrs. Eat all, eats up everything. These types of characters are called allegorical characters.

According to Qn×igbo (2006:238), in Nsólibe, (2010) “the drawing of clear images of a person, his actions and manners of thoughts of life is characterization”. It (characterization) illustrates the techniques employed by the author to reveal the peculiar qualities of these imaginary persons in such a way that they appear credible and real to the readers.

Mbah and Mbah (2007:255-261) show different types of characterization. For example,

- Characterization by naming
- Block characterization
- Characterization by motifemic labeling
- Emblematic characterization
- Characterization by dramatic conflict

**Characterization by Naming**

This is the method of characterization where the fictionist gives certain names which are not only meaningful but which are closely related to the actions of the characters concerned to their individual nuances and mannerisms.

**Block Characterization**
This technique of characterization is the type in which the fictionist devotes a paragraph or more, early in the narrative, to describe in detail the physical appearance of a character or analyzing the moral and psychological nature of the character. By this method, the actions of the character, which may have appeared inordinate and out of place in the novel are given relevance and made believable.

In traditional Igbo folklore, this method of characterization is common. This is reflected in *Xkpana Okpoko Buuru* (p.16) where Ubesie describes meenihu elaborately as background to what he will do in narrative. Before then, Kasie had been well presented in this form of characterization.

**Characterization by Motifemic Labeling**

Here, a character is associated with some kind of recurrent mannerism or idiosyncrasy, gesture or saying. Wherever and whenever the character appears, he is likely to be presented as putting for that peculiar mannerism, gesture or representing peculiar kind of phrase or sentence (Mbah and Mbah, 2007:257). In the Nigerian movie industry today, an Igbo actor Chinwetalu Agu exhibits this mannerism of representing a kind of phrase or the other in every film he acts. In the film “Royal Destiny” he exhibits this phrase “Aazx Ikpookpo”.

**Emblematic Characterization**

This is where a character is identified with a certain kind of emblem, picture or material, talisman, dress etc. The meaning and significance of the emblem is revealed more and more in the character as the story develops. The emblem builds gradually the status symbol of the character. The traditional doctors are known in their tattered dress, torn caps with weird feathers to match. This type of attire captures the proverb “Nkirika b xu ugwu dibia.

**Dramatic Conflict Characterization**

This is where a fictionist may create his character by involving him in a conflict with another character. It may be conflict between man and society as Enyi in *Mmiri Qkx E ji Egbu Mbe*. Ubesie (1974) showcases various incidents that evidenced conflicts between Enyi and the society. Enyi had conflict with Nneka, the uncle’s wife, the Whiteman’s cook, the Whiteman’s dog, the police, even with hunger and the river that nearly drowned him. The last two conflicts mentioned are with nature.

In summation, characters in works of fiction may not necessarily be human characters. There are animals, spirits, and forces which have been so personified that they participate dynamically in the story (Mbah and Mbah, 2007:255).
2.1.5  **Point of View**

Point of view is the mode of narration. It is the position from which the writer presents his story. It is one that is often a valuable first entrance into a story, and for this, Lubbock (1921) says:

“One whole intricate question of method, in the craft of fiction, I take to be governed by the question of the point of view – the question of the relation in which the narrator stands in the story (p.251)”.

Like Lubbock, Booth (1961) another great authority in the craft of fiction, sees point of view as the most fundamental device in the art of the novel.

2.1.6  **Theme**

The theme of a story is whatever general idea or insight the entire story reveals. In literary fiction, a theme is seldom so obvious. That is, a theme need not be a moral or message; it may be what the happenings add up to, what the story is about.

According to Anderson et al, (1993): the story’s theme is really its root; theme is unseen and usually unstated, yet it is vital, it gives meaning to the story’s character and event, and at the same time reveals the writer’s own personal attitude towards the world, towards how people should behave and how they actually do behave.

Griffith (1982), defines theme as the central idea in a work-weather fiction, poetry or drama. It is the comment the work makes on the human condition. It deals with four general areas of human experience – the nature of humanity, the nature of society, the nature of nature and the nature of our ethical responsibilities. Theme is derived from the total effect of all the elements of story.

Finally, in a fiction or drama, the theme is not intended to teach or preach. In fact, it is not presented directly at all. You extract it from the characters, action and setting that make up the study.

2.1.7  **Tone**

Tone determines the attitude of the author toward his subject matter, his audience and life in general. In literature (written) we don’t hear the author speak; we rather hear him
through the written medium, and the hearing is through the mind’s ear. According to Miller and Curie (1972:72) in Uzochukwu (2001) tone in spoken utterance can change the implication of a statement. It can reveal anger or sympathy, resignation or exasperation, depending on how the statement is uttered. But in the written word the author does not have the benefit of sound quality to convey the full implication of his meaning. The only resources available to him to achieve this purpose are the quality of the words he selects and the sentence type.

2.1.8 Plot

The plot of a story is its narrative structure – the way the story is told. It is the arrangement of the incidents in such a way that they are logically associated until the end of the story.

Aristotle defines it as the imitation of an action as well as the arrangement of the incidents. Forster defines it as the narrative of an event, its emphasis falling on causality. For Forster, it demands intelligence and memory. He further adds that the plot of a story is structural and serves as a means to an end. One may recapitulate the above attempts at defining plot as involving the logical and chronological ordering of the ingredients of the narratives with their emphasis falling on causality (Mbah and Mbah, 2007:296). In other words, plot is a cause effect affair which has triple process – complication, crisis and resolution.

2.1.9 Language

This is the expressive device. It refers to how a speaker or writer says what he says. Language as the vehicle that carries the author’s work of art is a very important element in prose. Without it, no story can be penned down, and written literature will not be in existence. In the words of Izuka (1987:29), language is “the medium through which the effectiveness and beauty of novel and any creative work of art are realized.

Ngara (1982:10) writing about language affirms that:

“Language is the thing by which we judge the success of the author. Although a work of art consists of various elements such as: plot, theme, characters, and ideas, but without language these elements would not be what they are. In other words, they are realized and given through the medium of language.”

2.2 Empirical Studies
From the above general comment and remarks made on novel and all the elements of literature, we now turn to those who made it on Ubesie in particular.

Ezeugwu (2005) studies the themes and techniques in Tony Ubesie’s novels and finds out that Ubesie’s creative capability in story telling is captivating. The stories are such that they appeal to all because of the universality of his subject matters. She grouped the six novels of Ubesie under three headings: marriage, war and picaresque. Ubesie’s major concern as a writer is the presentation of realities for a better change of the society.

Onyekachwú (2001: 113) observes:

> that Ubesie contributed a lot to the growth and development of Igbo written literature. This contribution did not stop at writing many books of fiction in Igbo; it went further in pioneering and ushering in what we may refer to as “New writing in Igbo”. By new writing in Igbo we mean those writing that emerged after the civil war, which have in content and style helped to revolutionize and modernize Igbo literary works in their sleeping pre-war state.

Ubesie achieves his creative capabilities through his use of language and theme as he mirrors the society in which he lives. In support of the above assertion, Oladele (1986:15) posits that

> A writer’s narrative technique is a mirror held up to his personality and his particular circumstances. It is through the use of language that he reflects his individual awareness of a given situation.

A writer’s style speaks much about his way of life. The readers through the author’s use of language either enjoy or discard his work.

Nwadike (2001:64) in his criticism of Ubesie’s novels described Ubesie in the following words:

> What distinguishes Ubesie a second-generation Igbo novelist from his counterparts and contemporaries is his style. He writes in such impeccable standard Igbo that it is difficult to distinguish his locality except in commentaries and personal authorial interruptions where he tells the reader that Achi is his home...Even though he has contributed some dialect words and expressions into the dynamic lexicon of standard Igbo, he is not a dialectal writer. He consistently adopts lexical borrowing and Igbonization strategies in enriching Igbo languages especially in the area of military jargons.

Naturally, the novelist writes in pure standard Igbo but he adds dialect words creatively in order to enrich the Igbo language.
Similarly, Ukwuọma (1984), attempts a linguistic survey of Ubesie’s novels namely; *Isi Akwu Dara N’ Ala*, *Űkpana Okpoko Buuru*, *Ŭkwa Ruo Oge Ya Ọ Daa*, *Ŭkpaka Mịjị Onye Ubijam*, *Mmiri Ọkụ E Ji Egbu Mbe* and *Jụọ Obinna*. He describes Ubesie as a writer that shows an enormous command of Igbo language to the extent that he manufactures expressions of high creative intent. Okwuọma further posits that Ubesie is a poetic prose writer and a proverbialist who generally writes in a very verbose style. He sees Ubesie as a good story teller. He contends that Ubesie sometimes formalizes proverbs into anecdotes.

Furthermore, Ọnqukwusi (1981: 13), in his review of *Jụọ Obinna* states that “the language used in writing the novel is standard Igbo. Ubesie used many figurative expressions in order to describes his characters effectively.”

Ubesie uses his novels as satiric medium. For instance, he narrates bad acts and at the same time brings out the failure of such victims. They are most effectively felt in *Isi Akwu Dara N’ Ala* where Ada is rejected by her husband, Chike, at the end of the war.

*Chike wee si ya, ọnodụ ị no ugbu a na-ewute m nke ukwu; ma ị bu rụla onye ndị mmadụ ụfọrọ na di. Mụ bụ Chike anaghị eri ihe eri foro eri fo. Nne, were ego a gbaa ugbọ lawa na be mma gi, ma buru n’ uche na ọ dighị ihe ga-emе ka m ụkwọ gi ọzọ maka na isi akwu dara n’ala edetula aja (p. 205).

(Chike told her, your condition now is annoying me so much. But you have disgrace yourself with men as a married woman. I, Chike cannot eat the remains of what the public has eaten. My dear, take this money for your transport back to your father’s house and bear in mind that nothing will make me to marry you again because the palm head that had fallen on the ground have touched sand).

In Ubesie’s *Mmiri Ọkụ E Ji Egbu Mbe*, the story deals with crime, violence as well as detention. In that story, there is a lot of military strategies applied going on surveillance, impersonation, procurement of men including war veterans, systematic training in military tactics, lightning operations, killings and escapist manoeuvres Nwadike (1998:1) in agreement with this states thus-

*In Mmiri Ọkụ …..which is a detective juvenile novel, Enyi and his group of robbers employed a lot of military escapist manoeuvres and strategies as a means of either getting free from difficult situations or achieving their goals.*

Apart from all the praises concerning Ubesie’s works, some people still criticize him and other Igbo fiction writers in their use of proverbs. Emenanjọ (1982:58) states thus:
In a good deal of the available narratives, the language is too matter-of-fact and too long. There is little or no originality in the way hackneyed proverbs and idioms are thrown at the reader. At times, one gets the impression that most writers of Igbo feel that the only way of writing good Igbo is by forcing proverbs down the throat of readers. Open the so-called novels and the number of proverbs is astonishing. In Ubesie’s Ukwu Ruo Oge Ya there are 301 proverbs in 76 pages.

A close look at Ubesie’s novels shows that he explains only few of his proverbs and not all, so it is not proper to judge him in this perspective. In response to this Kanu (2000:14) remarks thus:

Ubesie’s use of proverbs is he explains the proverbs contrary to Igbo proverb ethics. This particular criticism may be in consonance with a popular Igbo adage which says that “Onye a turu ilu Kowaara ya, ego e jiri lọrọ me ya furu ohia. (When you tell a proverb to a person and explain the same proverb to him, the dowry paid on his mother is a waste).

Nwadike (2001:72) on his own side says that:
Leaving the proverbs without illustration and expansion within the context, the reader will not understand why it is used, he therefore extends the storyline with his illustration.
Soja o bua e bu njiru n’ihu ogu bu onwu ka o niara iche, mmadụ egbughi ya o gbuo mmadụ.
(Any soldier that comes in the war front has come to wait for death. If somebody did not kill him, he will kill another”.)

The above is in support of the need for explaining proverbs, which will assist the reader to comprehend the writer’s ideas and views.

Apart from the above argument it can be seen that Ubesie’s stories are full of humour even when he is narrating sad stories. At times his humorous style makes people cough even when the situation is tough. In agreement with this, Nwadike (2001:78) says this:

One of Ubesie’s highly developed and powerful tool of art is his irony. He makes use of verbal and structural ironies, but more of the latter.

The above excerpt goes to attest that Ubesie is a professional novelist. Mojekwu (1986:16) comments on Ubesie’s popularity as a professional novelist in the following words:

“Ubesie rightly said, My works have made me to be known everywhere I go because people always have a steady market.
According to him, Isi Akwu Dara N’ Ala was first recommended as WAEC text in 1979 certificate examination”.

Since then other novels of Ubesie are being used for similar purposes. From the above quotation, one may say that Ubesie was a popular Igbo novelist as his novels made him to be known everywhere he found himself until his death.

Obiageli (1997:1) notes that as a novelist, Ubesie is more than a story teller when compared with his contemporaries like Qgbalu, Nzeako, Achara, Maduekwe among others because of the way he uses language. When one reads Ubesie’s works, one appreciates fully and unmistakably the handicaps of his other contemporaries who seek to communicate their cultural setting in a foreign medium. For example, in the works of Ubesie, metaphors, humor, imagery, witticisms, symbolisms, hyperboles, ironies, satires and so on are employed in such a way that the reader is entrapped and he begins to ponder over the story.

Emenyonyu, (2001:45) uses Isi Akwu Dara N’ Ala and Jqo Obinma to reveal Ubesie as a writer who has full control of his language. He describes Ubesie in the following words:

“Tony Ubesie is a highly skilled writer in an indigenous Nigerian or African language. Whether he is writing about the tragedies of war, courtship and marriage, the fantasies of contemporary youth, chieftaincy struggles, armed robbery or inter community warfare and robbery, Tony is consistent in his almost geometric control of his subject matter, his language precision and literary innovations. He is a leader in the new generation of Nigerian writer who appear to have listened so attentively to the voices of the master they now speak with unrivalled eloquence and authenticity.

In the area of grammar and lexical levels, Ubesie is an adept in using the Igbo language to achieve what is generally referred to as tone (Uzochukwu 2001:27). According to Millar and Curie (1972:70) tone in spoken utterance can change the implication of a statement. It can reveal anger or sympathy, resignation or exasperation, depending on how the statement is uttered. But in the written word the author does not have the benefit of sound quality to convey the full implication of his meaning. The only resources available to him to achieve this purpose are the quality of the words he selects and the sentence types.

In his novel, Ubesie uses sentence type and apt vocabulary to indicate tone. An illustration can be taken from Isi Akwu Dara N’ala:

Egwu a na-ekwere igbe esula! Edere a na-ekwere ab[a esula! Qgx a na-a[r] akx adaala! Ugbo a na-akpxrx qgx eruola mgb a ga-aqk ya! Taa ka ihe di woro ogori ga-azu
Here, the feeling of urgency and expectancy following the enactment of a long-expected marriage is achieved through the use of short sentences and apt vocabulary.

Ugwuanyi (1985), in Úkwa Ruo Oge Ya Ô Daa deals with Ubesie’s skill in characterization, which is observed in explicit presentation of character omniscient as representative of certain philosophy of Igbo life and association of character with events. In the same regard, Nwadike (1988) in his study of Jụọ Obinna, Úkwa Ruo Oge Ya Ô Daa and Mmiri Ôku E Ji Eghu Mbe, describes Ubesie as “a writer with super imagination. This manifests in the way he presents his characters, imbuing them with certain character traits which enable them to overcome difficult times.” Also Nwadike (1986:9) in his study of Úkpana Okpoko Buuru, says that Ubesie can relate present events as if they happened in time immemorial.

Ọzọ (1988), studies the content and style of Jụọ Obinna and Isi Akwu Dara N’ Ala, and also agrees that Ubesie is a writer with superb excellence. In the words of Ọzọ, “Ubesie did well in the language of all his novels; however, his problem lies in the superfluous use of proverbs where only one proverb can serve. Every author is specially gifted in a special way, because of this each writer writes in his own style. In the style of Ubesie, the end of the story brings out or highlights the title of a particular novel. Emenyọnu (2001:33) commenting in Ubesie’s narrative techniques says:

The title of the book and its significance come out at the very last line of the novel in a form of witticism or aphorism, which is a summation of the narrative or its theme. This is true of Isi Akwu Dara N’ Ala, Jụọ Obinna, Úkwa Ruo Oge Ya Ô Daa, and Úkpana Okpoko Buuru. Thus, each work ends as it started on a
Also commenting on Ubesie’s techniques of narrating his stories, Dike (2001:192) submits that Ubesie possesses most if not all the attributes of a good writer. Üzöchukwu (2001:24) in appreciation of Ubesie’s works on literary point of view says:

_In all his novels Ubesie adopts the third person omniscient narrator point-of-view. He describes the events as if he knows what goes on in the minds of all his characters. This gives the author opportunity to comment freely on incidents._

In Ubesie’s presentation of themes, Ezikeojiaku (2001:47) remarks:

_Ubesie is probably the most mature writer of Igbo novel among his contemporaries. He is not only perceived as an author who portrays cultural practices but also as a novelist who in his themes x-rays the Igbo society. Yet he is a universalist who in spite of the settings of his novels in Igbo land moves from romantic comedy to romantic tragedy, from thriller detective to picaresque, exploring human values that would help reshape our contemporary society._

Another area that needs mention in Ubesie’s art of writing is his setting. Setting, which refers to the spatial or temporal background against which the action of a novel take place is a fundamental bedrock for the evaluation of theme. For often than not, authors attempt to make setting reflect in theme and character. Ubesie’s novels reflect both historical and cultural setting against which his characters live out their lives … The setting of his novels as well as most of the characters in them are drawn from Igbo society (Ezikeojiaku 2001:50)

From the above literature review, it is seem that much has been done on critical analysis of novels including Ubesie’s novels. However, none has dwelt fully on critical elements of literature as the theme, plot, setting, character characterization, tone, point of view and language in Ubesie’s novels which we intend to investigate. The existence of these gap makes our study necessary.
CHAPTER THREE
SYNOPSIS OF TONY UBESE’S NOVELS

3.0 Preamble

Tony Ubesie is an acknowledged Igbo novelist. As one of the second generation Igbo novelist, he has six (6) novels to his credit. These include: Ùkwà Ruò Ogè Ya Ò Daa (1973), Isì Akwu Dara N’Aì (1973), Mmùri Òkù È jì Ègbù Mbe (1974), Ìkpàkà Mììrì Onye Òbjìam (1975), Ìkpàna Òkpòkò Buuru (1975), and jùọ Òbinna (1977).

The synopses of the novels are as follows:

3.1 Ìkpàna Òkpòkò Buuru (UOB)

Ìkpàna Òkpòkò Buuru is a novel set in pre-colonial Igbo. It is one of the best sociological novels of the Igbo. It is also an epic where the heroes (ObijìỌfo and his sons) perform feasts of great magnitude when they act in defense of their community at the critical moments of their lives because of their moral uprightness and dogged determination to withstand the forces of evil; Amaeke is wiped out by the people of Ìmụñikenga. The novel is also a symbolic one showing that at every age and situation, despite the debased actions of some human-monsters, good triumphs over evil and that there are always prophets and God sent defenders of truth and morality so that the ideals of the society will stand and the dignity of man upheld and restored. In the story, Ndị Òdogwu, a class of lawless people forms a gang of robbers, kidnappers, murderers, impersonators etc. to harass, Ìfìte Amaeke and her neighbouring towns. In order to be protected under the law in their criminal acts; they banish the reigning monarch, Obi Udeaja, and install a member of their group Mr. Okoye as the leader.

ObijìỌfo, a patriarch known for his uprightness, opposes the group vehemently. Ndị Odogwu sees ObijìỌfo as a thorn in their flesh and they hatch out a plan to exterminate him and his family. But in the encounter, ObijìỌfo and his sons wipe out the group sent on the mission. In his sojourn to Ìmụñarọ as a refugee after the massacre of the robbers, a team of Ndị Odogwu assassinate him some years, after a while he is on a hunting expedition. In the end, his family returns home to Ìfìte Amaeke to face a new wave of bitter attacks from Ndị Odogwu but each time, they (ObijìỌfo’s sons) triumph over them. The climax of the evil acts of Ndị Odogwu is the kidnapping and killing of Kasiemobi, the only son of his mother, with whole skin they re-make their edere, the talking drum.

Mgbafọ, Kasié’s mother, consult Ògba the greatest oracle in the land and pleads with it to avenge her son’s death upon the murderers. Soon, a war erupts between Ìfìte Amaeke
and Ŭmkenga, Kasie’s home town. Meenihu, the commander of the Ifite Amaeke army proves very invulnerable. No type of ammunition would pierce his body. He is a great strength to his people and his continued participation and presence in the battle-field means the prolongation of that war. At long last, the impenetrable generalissimo, like Achilles the Greek, was subdued through an unorthodox war strategy (p.89). Ifite Amaeke is wiped out but is regenerated by Obijiofo’s lineage after their return from their place of refuge at the end of the war:

3.2 *Isi Akwu Dara N’ Ala (IADN)*

The setting of *Isi Akwu Dara N’ Ala* is in Enugu, an urban area before and during the war. *Isi Akwu Dara N’ Ala* is a novel that gives a vivid account of life in beleaguered Biafra. Ubesie describes the experiences of a lady, Ada, who desperately wants a husband. She is uncomfortable in her office as her married colleagues discuss their affair with their husbands. She does not consider herself fit to participate in such discussions and always prays for a suitor. Ada gets excited when Obiobrah first make advances to her. But unknown to Ada, Obiobrah is married with children but hides this from Ada. She sees the relationship as one that will graduate into marriage and therefore, wants Obiorah to go to her father to indicate his intention. Obiobrah considers this usual for a lady to dictate to a man when to go to her parents to indicate his intention. Ada continues the pressure on Obiobrah who is then forced to reveal to her that he is married with children. He probes further to know if she would accept to live with him in such a circumstance. Although Ada’s reply is positive, she does not see it as a proposal that will materialize and, therefore, decides to try her fortune elsewhere.

Chike is a man who is in the habit of philandering with womem promising them marriage. He sees Ada and is fascinated by Ada’s disposition and he promises her marriage without hesitation. He immediately declares his intention to visit Ada’s parents. With this statement, Ada becomes convinced that Chike is prepared and, therefore, gives consent. Chike goes to her home and performs the traditional rites of marriage for her people. Ada thus becomes Chike’s wife.

Chike’s marriage with Ada is blessed with two children: They are Obianuju (a female) and Chukwuma (a male). They live happily until 1967 when the Nigeria-Biafra war breaks out. Initially, Chike provides for the family alone. Worried about what Ada should do to assist him in maintaining the family, Chike sells his matrimonial bed and the money realized is given to Ada to start the “attack trade”. This appears to be the climax of all events.
Ada starts trading in salt, a venture that yields her a huge sum of money. She then turns away from Chike who has become impoverished by effects of the war. Ada abandons him and engages in amorous relationship with army officers. Chike becomes disillusioned with the trend and tries to find out why Ada has decided to spurn him. She moves to Aguata with her luggage, leaving her family behind. She carries on well with her army officer boy friends and loses that affection as a mother for her children. She becomes intoxicated with her new-found-wealth and pays no heed to their marriage vow. The war rages on and Chike moves out of Enugu to return to his home, Awka. He discovers that refugees have occupied every room in his house, leaving only one apartment for him. Chike does not worry about the entire scenario as one of the effects of the war. He however, makes some money for himself. With the heavy sound of shell bombs more people return to Aguata.

At Aguata, Ada continues to indulge in those perceived disgraceful acts, with the army officers who are greatly feared and she could not be confronted. Ada comes several times with them to defy her matrimonial home. Chike is most unhappy with this treatment but he is helpless. He becomes so wretched and decides to go to Ada for assistance. His mother objects strongly but Chike, badly tortured by hunger and other deprivations, decides to go. He is shocked to discover that Ada is having a swell time with army officers while he pines away in abject poverty and despair.

Chike, still nursing that regard for Ada as his wife, calls her to tell her that she owes him an obligation as a wife. But Ada does not bother as she is comfortable with the army officers. She rather tries to persuade Chike to enlist in the Biafran Army to fight in the war sector.

The war ends and Chike becomes a millionaire. He organizes a party to thank God immensely for saving his family during the war. While the party peaks, Chike identifies Ada as she comes in; he laughs and retorts; (Di gbakwa ọkụ; let husband go to blazes). Ada becomes remorseful and pleads with Chike to reconsider her as his wife. Chike refuses and gives her transport fare and requests her to go back to her father’s house, for he Chike, is not a man who would marry a lady who flirted with men, for “Isi Akwu Dara N’ Ala Edetula Aja” (the bunch of palm fruit that has dropped on the ground, has picked sand and dirt and therefore no longer worthy of its taste).

Ubesie uses this novel to advise young men whose wives abandon to remain calm and pray. Such men should not bestir in anguish and self pity in the midst of molestation or intimidation from their wives and their friends. He also counsels young men whose wives
abandon in times of adversity only to rejoin them in time of pleasure to reject such wives and advises women too to remain with their husbands for better or for worse.

3.3 Ọkpaka Mịri Onye Ubiam (UMOU)

The novel, Ọkpaka Mịri Onye Ubiam is about a girl, Chinyere, whose ambition from her childhood is to become a nurse. She goes with a friend to the hospital where she is horrified with what she sees about the sick. The scene at the hospital so pricks her conscience and intensifies her interest to become a nurse. She is on the verge of getting involved in that noble profession when a young man, Amadị, come calling and asks for her hand in marriage. As she is thinking of accepting Amadị, another affluent old man comes asking for her hand in marriage. His name is Emeọdị and Chinyere’s father immediately transfers his affection to Emeọdị due to material gains.

Chinyere and her mother object to Emeọdị marrying Chinyere but Emeọdị employs every means at his disposal to succeed. Emeọdị promises to cater for chinyere’s education and Chinyere gets admitted into a secondary school in an attempt to entrap Chinyere into marriage. While Chinyere is still in the school, her mother dies.

With only her father left to decide with, it now becomes easy for Emeọdị to manipulate things and have his way. Thus, Chinyere gets married to Emeọdị against her will. The death of her mother robs her of her mother’s affection and protest against Emeọdị marrying her. Chinyere is very hardworking in the school and distinguishes herself as the best student in her school at the School Certificate Examination.

The displeasure in marrying the man she does not have liking and love for becomes apparent and from an unidentified place, she writes farewell letters to her friends, father and husband before her mysterious death. Her corpse is brought home to her father’s house in Enugu. The scene of the corpse of Chinyere horrifies her father who also dies because the only thing that is his hope in life has passed away.

3.4 Ọkwa Ruo Oge Ya Q Daa (UROY)

This is a novel that illustrates culture conflict between the Igbo and English marriage contracts. Chude and Ngozi Ọnwụka become intimate friends because they see the cordial relationship that exists between both families. Their relationship grows stronger and deeper as the children become mature.

When Chude’s father dies, Maazị Ọnwụka, Ngozi’s father, then wants to cut the relationship but Ngozi’s mother will not allow it. The more Ọnwụka tries to separate Ngozi
and Chude, the stronger their relationship grows. The temptations that befall Chude and Ngozi individually test their love and at the same time strengthen it.

Ngozi is kidnapped and all the affluent men who parade themselves as her suitors run away. Chude, to prove his true love for Ngozi, undergoes all hardship and suffering to rescue her. At last, in spite of all efforts from Ngozi’s father to separate the two, the breadfruit ripens and falls for the lucky winner (Chude). The kidnapping of Ngozi Ọnwụka, and the rescue operation carried out by Chude shows that Chude really loves her. The exposition of the title and its full meaning “Ukwa Ruo Oge Ya O Daara Onye ọ chọrọ idara” (When the breadfruit ripens and is ready to fall, destiny shakes it to drop for one whose fortune it is to pick it) becomes apparent.

3.5  

*Mmiri Ọkụ E Ji Egwu Mbe* (MOEJEM)

*Mmiri Ọkụ E Ji Egwu Mbe* is a fictional prose published in the year 1974. The novel centers on robbery and maltreatment of the orphan. Ubesie brings into limelight a family life that is filled with jealousy, hatred and strife. In *Mmiri Ọkụ E Ji Egwu Mbe*, Enyi an orphan comes to live with Ebuzọ his uncle. Enyi is hated right from the first day by his uncle’s wife. He is accused of stealing meat and he is banned from entering their house. He goes to live alone in the school compound, and fends for himself. He makes friends with criminals and eventually becomes a notorious thief who forms a gang of robbers and operates at Enugu, Ndiabia and Onitsha. He goes for robbery in Zengu which nearly cost him his life. With support from his people he starts farming and five years later he becomes rich, useful and built a dignified house.

Enyi is intelligent enough that the police are unable to catch him in any of their outings because he always guesses their next strategy. Later, when he discovers that all his boys have been caught and jailed, he decides to go down to his village, Ndiabia. Enyi’s exploits with the police and his disarming the police and snatching a car proves that Enyi is highly intelligent.

The theme in *Mmiri Ọkụ E Ji Egwu Mbe* is the consequence of strife in the family and the evil effects of child negligence and maltreatment of their children that are not one’s own. Enyi is a wise man. In order to avenge what Nneka and her children do to him, he steals meat from the pot of soup. After that, he puts Adamma’s earrings into the pot of soup as incriminating evidence that Adamma is the real person that steals the meat. Adamma could not deny it when Nneka finds the earrings in the pot of soup.
During one of Enyi fruit gathering, the white man’s steward waits for him at the foot of the mango tree in order to deal with him, when he sees no escape route, he simply jumps on the man’s chest wounding him in the process. By this he is able to make his escape.

On one occasion, the Whiteman’s dog is waiting for him at the foot of the mango tree and in order to avoid being bitten by the dog; he climbs from the tree to a branch of another tree. Even when the dog nearly catches him, he (Enyi) throws sand into the dog’s mouth. Through Enyi’s wisdom, he is able to hide his own share of Zengu robbery where it is never found. Enyi is kind-hearted. Apart from being a thief, he is a good man. He is not happy with the kind of treatment he gives his victims during his operations and because of this, he warns his boys not to steal indiscriminately only when there is need to.

Enyi is a strong man. The manner in which he manoeuvered the man they stole his cow shows that he is really a strong man. He also manifests his strength from the way he carries loads that even few men cannot carry. When he starts farming he farmed only for five years and becomes rich.

Ubesie uses Enyi in *Mmiiri Ọkụ E Ji Egbu Mbe* to portray the prodigal life of children left without any parental guide. In our present day society, many married women do not like to live with their husband’s kinsmen. They accuse them falsely of many things just like Nneka did to Enyi.

3.6  *

_ụọ Obinna (JO)_

_Jụọ Obinna_, probably the best Igbo novel on the Nigerian civil war, is a skillfully crafted commentary on the phenomenon of the Biafran straggler, the loud-mouthed “we must fight to the last man” advocate who shows his bravery and commitment to the war effort by the unequalled dexterity with which he dodges conscription into the army. He is adept in military tactics without ever reaching any war zone.

Ubesie creates him as a simple but yet a complex and pathetic character. Obinna has a fantastic imagination and can effortlessly weave endless stories about his military gallantry, fitting every minute detail of military manoeuvres so that his audience cannot help but admire him as the incomparable war hero. His audience is always the women-folk who adore him for his daredevil adventures and his indefatigable commitment to the cause, “Biafrans” who survive the war will find in this character a revelation of sort. He is an alarming ironic symbol of the people’s delusion.

Whatever his theme, Tony Uchenna Ubesie is always consistent in his sensitivity to language and his geometric control of the subject matter. He is in the true Igbo
narrative tradition, the story vendor and the owners of word. After nearly half a century of
struggling to survive, Tony Ubesie seems to have restored to the Igbo novel what is lost in the
era after Omen’kọ (1933) when it was eclipsed by the rifts and controversies over how to
write or how not to write fiction in the Igbo language.
CHAPTER FOUR
SETTINGS, THEME, CHARACTERS/CHARACTERIZATION, POINTS OF VIEW, AND TONE IN TONY UBESIE’S SIX NOVELS

4.0 Setting

Setting is the physical description of the place in which the story occurs. It includes all of the physical aspects of the story: the time of day, the time of year, the geographical location of the story, the climate and weather at the time of the story, the historical period of the action, the immediate surroundings of the characters, that is the characters’ clothing, homes, offices, favourite places, the important objects in the characters’ lives. (www.nvcc.edu/home/ataorminal/novels/structure/setting)

According to (Nwachukwu- Agbada, 2001:23), the physical setting of a story is its realistic background and its geographical environment. It is the physical location of the occurrences in the story. This may be localized in known or imaginary unfamiliar places. All actions in the piece of fiction or drama take place in a physical location; at a particular time or under certain psychological and social conditions. He further states that setting is an important factor in the author’s choice of subject matter and certainly, it influences the implementation of theme. It is the nature of the story that helps to determine the nature of setting to be employed. More often than not, authors attempt to make setting reflect in the theme and the characters.

Setting refers to the spatial, temporal background against which the action of a novel takes place. Ubesie sets his novels against some background that include spatial, temporal and psychological. He sets his stories in both familiar and unfamiliar places in Igbo land.

Ubesie’s novels reflect both historical and cultural setting against which his characters live out their lives. For instance, historical development show Nigeria between 1967 -1970 as a fragmented country torn to shreds by bloody and fratricides war. Ubesie took part in the war on the Biafran side. After the war in 1970, he wrote novels which reflect some of the happenings during the war. The setting of his novels as well as most of the characters in them are drawn from the Igbo society.

_Juo Obinna_ is set in Igbo land during the Nigerian –Biafra civil war (1967-1970). Ubesie shows what life was like during that period such as the way people were suffering, young boys and men were being conscripted into the army.

The common spatial setting of Ubesie’s novels is the urban or modern city of Enugu even if he now and again shifts settings in some of the novels. Most of his works are placed
in contemporary times with the exception of *Ukpana Okpoko Buuru*, which is set historically in pre-colonial Igbo land, in his home town, Achi, in Enugu state.

Setting is of primary importance in the make–up and behaviour of fictional characters. The entire action of a novel is frequently determined by the locale in which it is set. It sometimes happens that the main locale of a novel assumes an importance in the reader’s imagination comparable to that of the characters and yet somehow separable from them. Wessex is a giant brooding presence in Thomas Hardy’s novels. The popularity of Sir Walter Scott’s “Waverley” novels is due in part to their evocation of a romantic Scotland stere (1769:70-71). So also Ubesie’s novels are interesting due to the fact that actions are determined by the locales. Each action in *Isi Akwu Dara N’ Ala* corresponds to the setting. The setting of *Isi Akwu Dara N’ Ala* is Enugu, an urban area and during the war. Chike’s places of business are not in the rural communities with scanty population, but in the urban cities with large population. His places of abode in the city and in the village befit his status as a wealthy man. When war broke out, his condition shows that things are hard because he had to adapt to the hard times of the war like living in refugee camps, eating from relief materials shared out to the inmate and at a time when salt was not available in people’s meals.

Whatever the locale of his work, every novel is concerned with making a credible environment for his characters. For a rich or poor character, they would show so. In the war front, the setting indicates it. The setting in *Juo Obinna* indicates an environment of war in all its ramifications. *Xkwa Ruo Oge Ya Q Daa* is set in Enugu but its setting was before the Nigerian–Biafra civil war. *Mmiri Qku E JI Egbu Mbe* is also set in Enugu. UROY has a realistic portrayal of primary and secondary school life. The spatial and temporal setting in *Isi Akwx Dara N’ Ala* was revealed by the air raids, shelling, bombs or fighter planes, armoured cars and a total war equipment and siege.

From the events in the story in *Xkpaka M[r] Onye Xb[am, it could be seen that two urban towns –Enugu and Onitsha featured prominently in the story. The novel is also written to serve the general public by warning them to desist from choosing husbands for their daughters because of material gains.

Ubesie uses apt proverbs to vividly describe the environments and situations which provide the background to the actions of those characters. The situations influence the actions of those characters. Sometimes the author’s change of setting in his novels affects his characters. In *Isi Akwu Dara N’ Ala* for example, the atmosphere in Enugu was initially that of hope and
optimism symbolized by the economic and progressive life in the city because it is a place where Chike and Ada worked ever before they met and married. For Chike and Ada leaving for Awka to which they fled during the war was bad. Chike was still buoyant, he had the money to keep his family going as well as caring, at times, for the refugees in his house. Later in Awka, the situation becomes less promising, because the change in currency affected Chike adversely. All his money was used up and he could no longer feed his family well. The worst experience was that when the enemies entered Awka, Chike, his wife and children had to leave Awka for Agxata. It was there that the couple found themselves in a complex situation, because hunger presented itself as another theatre of war thereby making life in their new abode not only terrifying and calamitous but also very pessimistic. Chike was so poor, dejected and frustrated that he could no longer hold the family together. So, Ada left him and the children for Nanka where she lived a life of luxury at the initial stage. Through ‘ah[a aataak]’ and prostitution, Ada became wealthy. But Ada’s world at Nanka later turned sour and at the end of the war she was a thorough wreck. At the end of the war, the action in the novel moved back to Awka and the world of Chike changed from that of abject poverty to plenty, joy, cheerfulness, optimism and wealth. For Ada, it was a life of fear, sadness, uncertainty and regret through the reversal in the fortunes of the couple, and Ubesie proves the axiom that no condition is permanent.

Finally, setting is the place and time that the events in the story take place. Ubesie uses Igbo land as his place of settings. He usually sets his stories in urban towns. However, there are cases where he uses rural areas. In some of his novels, he calls the real names of the towns where the events take place that is towns that are actually known like Awka, Agxata, Enugu, Nnewi etc as we see in Isi Akwu Dara N’ala and Jxq Obinna.

At other times, he uses the names of unknown towns as we see in his other two novels Xmxlkenga and lfiti–Amaeke in Xkpana O’koko Buuru, and Nd[ab[a and Zengu in Mmiri Qkx E Ji Egbu Mbe

On the time of setting, Ubesie usually sets his works, particularly his two novels Isi Akwu and Juq Obinna during the period of war, which was a period of survival of the fittest, a period when men would be going into hiding to avoid being conscripted into the army.
4.1 Themes in Ubesie’s Novels

The theme of any story is its central idea, the author’s most important perception about some aspects of existence. It is the subject matter or topic of discussion, that which has motivated the author to write his story. It is also an idea or an issue that develops or gradually unfolds out of the human relationship taking place in the novel. A theme may extend through the entire novel involving the major characters. In this case, such a theme becomes the dominant theme in the novel. It may be limited to a few events or episodes, may involve some of the minor characters or the major and the minor. A theme in a novel usually has parallels in the outside world, in the real society, because what we do is to project events, situations and relationships in the novel to the external world or people in society, and to establish similarities in the real world. A theme evolves gradually as we watch the characters interact with one another in the novel.

Using the six novels of Ubesie under consideration, we shall identify the following themes: conscription, refugee situation, predicaments, women’s infidelity, love, marriage, child abuse and theft.

Theme of Conscription

Of all the modern Igbo novelists so far, Ubesie is the only one who has devoted great attention to the theme of conscription. He explored this theme in the novels because it is the genre which offers full scope for the exploration of human experience in its extended dimension with their possibility of making a statement of clarification of a specific condition or predicament. The novels involved are *Isi Akwux Dara N’ala*, *Jux Obinna* and *Ukpana Okpoko Buuru*. The novelist used the third novel to show dissimilarities in methods of conscription.

Conscription simply means the act of forcing somebody by law to serve in the armed forces (Kanu, 2000:31). In this novel, Ubesie presents the reader with two different methods of conscription, namely, collective conscription or the conversion of a large segment of the society and individual conscription.

Collective Conscription

Using *Ukpana okpoko* as a good example of this method of conscription, Ubesie makes us to realize that conscription here involves collective individuals, especially young and able-bodied adult males who are ready to wipe out tears in the eyes of their people. This,
Ubesie has actually indicated in *Ukpana okpoko Buuru* to show that collective conscription has been in existence from time immemorial depending on the degree of insult and urgency of the situation. In that war that broke out between Ifite-Amaeke and Umuikenga after Kasie’s murder, Ubesie narrates thus:

> Mgbe nd[ Xmxikenga ruru xlq, ikoro na-ada ebe xmxqkqrqgb[a niile na-awpxta site n’aka nr[ na aka ekpe, onye na-afx opi ike na-egbu ebenebe n’qnx ... O ruola mgbe a ga-ekpu nkata n’isi wee gwa eze arxrx ala okwu ... (p.81)

*(When the people of Umuikenga reached home, the ikoro sounded everywhere. Young men were dashing out. The flutist was performing wonderfully. It was time to talk to the devilish king …)*

The feeling of anxiety as can be seen from the above extract coupled with the urgency which characterize war situation were employed to save the situation. There is no way the able-bodied young men could have evaded conscription because of the urgency of the situation.

**Individual Conscription**

The manner in which the author paints the picture of individual conscription indicates hatred as people are always at alert fearing death or trying to save their lives.

In *Isi Akwx* and *Jxq Obinna*, the protagonist is always on the alert to avoid conscription. Obinna makes his stand very clear from the beginning despite the jeers of his two female friends with whom he is discussing, when a man ran and passed them followed by another man. The author categorically lets the reader understand Obinna’s objective of running away from conscription, that is because he fears being killed in the war front by shell fire (p.4)

In *Isi Akwx Dara N’ala*, it is the same fear that has prompted Chike, the husband of Ada to be on the run or to be hiding whenever soldiers appear. Ubesie points out this fear when he says:

> Nd[ na-ejide nd[ ah[a iwu na-achxghar[ nd[ mmadx... Ah[a iwu kacha ibe ya ugbu a bx xmx nwoke na-eyigh[ uwe kek[...... Mmadx nille tinyere isi n’gh[a. Chike amaghi ebe q ch[furu uwe ya o jiri mere ajx. Nke ahx abxgh[ mkpa ya ugbu a.... Maka na kama ihe ga-eri isi Odogwu, o ka mma na ihe ahx kpuuru Okpu ya (p.118)
(Those arresting traders dealing on contraband are chasing the people.... The most prized contraband now are male civilians.... Everybody dashed into the bush. Chike did not know head pad. That is not his main concern now... because anything that would claim his life should instead take his hat).

Many strategies are adopted by these draft dodgers Obinna and Chike to avoid being conscripted. Nwadike (1998:10) points out these strategies as adopted by Obinna in *JO* in this way:

*His first line of action was to go to a dibia who prepared for him an anti-conscription medicine and the ability to outrun the conscriptions. When he felt that this medicine has lost its potency, he resorted to going to the spiritual churches, copious reading of the bible and hiding as buffer measures for salvation.*

The strategies adopted by Chike in *IADN* include avoiding to go to the market, venturing out only at night, hiding in one old woman’s house in the neighbourhood, dashing into the bush through a hole deliberately opened in the backyard thatched fence and even hiding in the food box and covered with food items and cooking utensils. Again for Chike in *IADN*, he avoids being conscripted in such a way that he has to deliberately endure his wife’s blatant prostitution. This includes her going out and coming in any time she likes, leaving her matrimonial home to live in Nanka, bringing soldiers into their matrimonial home who stay to romance her and insulting and threatening him in every conceivable way.

Ubesie has equally made it clear that in this conscription bid for would-be soldiers, there is no exception. Boys, young men, adults even the elderly are not spared in this conscription exercise. Again, it does not matter whether or not one is married or has children.

**Theme of Refugee Predicament**

A refugee, according to Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary (1974:708) is a person who has been forced to flee from danger due to flood, war or political persecution. It is through refugee predicaments that Ubesie paints the picture of the horrors of the Nigeria/Biafra War and wars in general. The novelist systematically brings out people lives in an environment of peace, joy and tranquility and conversely presents the opposite – that is the people’s sorrowful condition as refugees. During the Nigeria/Biafra war, people abandoned their homes with neither food nor money.

The manner in which Ubesie paints the picture of refugees in *Xkpana Okpoko Buuru* is quite different from that of *Isi Akwu Dara N’ala*. The degree of suffering varies from one
novel to the other. In the former, refugee predicament is sectional as it involves only Obijiofo and his two sons.

**Theme of Women’s Infidelity**

According to Nnadi (2007:16)

*Infidelity is an old practice that scatters and shatters families whenever it is discovered … A family where infidelity exists will not and will never experience happiness and unity unless God intervenes. The consequences of infidelity have remained multi-layered as well as multifarious. Most of the couples have remained irreconcilable and their families left in tractable.*

There is a derogatory saying that when a man finishes a fight, the women tell the tale. At the onset of the Nigeria/Biafra war, many women acted as the bread winners of their families. During this period, many of them who used to be faithful housewives changed overnight and became irresponsible housewives. Ada, Chike’s wife, is a typical example of such women. Before the commencement of Nigeria/Biafra war Chike is a rich and popular man. Ada on her own side is obedient and respectful to him. As Chike’s economic condition changes because of the war, Ada turns wayward. The love she has for Chike begins to fade. At a point she pack out of her matrimonial home leaving her husband and children to the mercy of the merciless war. The greatest aspect of infidelity of women during the war period is prostitution. Another kind of infidelity of women is their materialistic nature. Ada is a perfect example of such women. She has many able-bodied men who have been going on ‘attack trade’ and have been making substantial gains for her. On one of such trips her goods are confiscated and instead of sending back her agents to another business trip, she embarked on the journey herself despite the danger therein. Ada is prepared to use her body to clear the way so that her agents and other followers will be permitted to scale through.

**The Theme of Marriage**

Ubiesie explores the theme of marriage in his novels. His handing of the theme of marriage in his novels are quite interesting in *Ukwa Ruo Oge Ya*. The marriage here is founded on real love and not on infatuation. Ngozi and Chude grow up together and have known the likes and dislikes of each other. They undergo various trials. At a point in the novel, Chude and Ngozi come to realize that there is something peculiar about their relationship. From this realization, they start growing up deeper and stronger in love.

In *Ukpaka M[Ix[ Onye Xb[am*, Ubiesie explores the theme of marriage quite different from that of *Ukwa Ruo Oge Ya*. This is because Chinyere’s father opposed his
daughter’s desire to marry a handsome young Amadi. Her father forces her to marry old ugly Emeodi, who has no iota of love for Chinyere. His only interest is to parade her as his young elegant beautiful wife. In the novel, the novelist sees discrimination against womenfolk as harmful, and that male dominance should be eschewed. Here, Chinyere’s father exhibits his male chauvinistic character by using his only daughter in exchange of money simply because Emeodi promises him heaven and earth. Unfortunately, none of the promises is fulfilled as Chinyere sees the marriage between her and Emeodi as abnormal and unworthy.

However, in *Isi Akwu Dara N’ala*, not much detail is given to marriage when compared to the two previous novels. The marriage here is between Chike and Ada who are grown ups and know what is good for each other. In short, Ubesie presents them as working class people. Their marriage relationship exists only in time of boom as Ada after their marriage has everything she needs both material and otherwise. Unfortunately, when the going becomes tough as a result of the war, Ada quits her matrimonial home. Ubesie through this marriage warns men against infatuation of women. This is because several women only pretend to keep to their marriage vows when their husbands are booming in money.

**The Theme of Love**

Ubesie exposes certain qualities of real love in his novels. Love, in the words of Mcsweeney (1985:155) is defined “as giving one’s life for another in one way or another”. He further states that it means doing one’s best to make other people happy. Love and happiness are two inseparable words for without one the other cannot exist. In *Ukwa Ruo Oge Ya*, Chude’s love for Ngozi is unfathomable. He suffers all sorts of punishment, humiliation and intimidation starting from his school days. Chude almost loses his life while attempting to rescue his lover from the hands of the hoodlums who kidnap Ngozi. The mishaps that befall Chude and Ngozi test their love in time of difficulty. Similarly Chinyere suffers for her love for Amadi. She is humiliated in school by her classmates for her engagement to, and marriage with Emeodi[ the chimpanzee. In *Isi Akwu Dara N’ala*, infatuation supercedes real love between Chike and Ada. Ada’s love for Chike is as a result of his wealth. This is exemplified in Ada’s attitude towards Chike during the war. Chike on the other hand condones Ada’s abnormal behaviour simply to avoid being conscripted into the army. In the end, Chike turns his back to Ada when she seeks reconciliation after the war.

In *Ukwa Ruo Oge Ya*, Ubesie portrays four qualities needed for real love. Such qualities are faithfulness, fulfillment of promise, gift and perseverance. Ubesie explores faithfulness using Ngozi and Chude as a perfect example. The manner in which Ngozi treats
all the wealthy men who parade themselves as suitors is a mark of faithfulness. She rebuffs all of them choosing only her time lover, Chude. Chinyere and Amadi are also faithful to each other, the only problem they have is Chinyere’s father who shatters their plan.

Ubesie also explores the fulfillment of promise quality in *Ukwa Ruo Oge Ya*. Chude and Ngozi’s promise is fulfilled. In spite of Chude’s hardship as a result of his father’s death, Ngozi promises to marry him and this promise was later fulfilled.

Gift is another good quality that holds love together. Chude received some money from Ngozi when he was in school. In a similar regard, Amadi also sent some money to Chinyere in the school through letter writing.

Ubesie also uses perseverance as a key for a lasting love. This is exemplified in Chude and Ngozi, Chinyere and Amadi to a point of optimum. Chude did not relent in his effort to rescue Ngozi despite all odds.

**The Theme of Child Abuse**

Child abuse can be described as maltreatment of a child which can be in the form of scolding at violently, under feeding, denial of rights among others. In *Mmiri Qk x E Ji Egibu Mbe*, Ubesie uses Enyi as the object of child abuse. He is maltreated by his uncle’s wife, Nneka, after the death of Enyi’s mother. The author uses Enyi to present the time picture of the horrors of child abuse in our society and its attendant consequences. The novelist presents underfeeding as one of the abuses a child can be subjected to in the hands of another woman. Ubesie paints another gloomy picture of child abuse such as thrashing and scolding violently. For example, Nneka attracts the attention of other children who mock Enyi. Enyi cries because of the false allegation leveled against him and this reminds him of his parents’ death. This is an indication that the death of a child’s parents can subject him or her to an abuse situation.

**The Theme of Theft**

The ravages caused by armed robbers and the way robbers are dislodged are portrayed in *Xkpana Okpoko Buuru* and *Mmiri Qk x E Ji Egibu Mbe*. In the two novels, there is a marked difference in the mechanism of the thieves operation. The author uses the two novels to show the difference in the methods of stealing prior to the advent of western civilization and thereafter. For instance, in *Xkpana Okpoko Buuru*, the system of stealing involves archaic method whereby breakages is not involved, rather the thieves go out stealthily in search of items. In *Mmiri Qk x E Ji Egibu Mbe*, both archaic and modern robbery methods are involved.
This is because the thieves are out for breakage and vandalization of property with modern war implements.

Ubesie uses the two novels to x-ray the problem of armed robbery which has become rampant immediately after the Nigeria/Biafra War. Ubesie’s themes are universal and he uses such themes to mirror the society.

4.2 Characters/Characterization in Ubesie’s Novels

If we read novels for their stories to find out what happens, we also read them to discover the fate of their characters. We become interested in fictional characters for varying reasons. They may remind us in some ways of ourselves; they may represent alternative directions we might have taken, alternative decisions we might have made. Although fictional characters cannot be directly equated with actual people, they are usually recognizably human, and as such, subject to the changing conditions of fate and circumstances.

Characters bring novel to life. First and last, we attend to characters: to how they look and their appearance tells us about them; to what they say and what their manner of saying expresses; to what they do and how their actions reveal who they are and what they stand for. We may come to know them and respond to them in ways we come to know and respond to actual people, all the while realizing that character are imaginative constructions, literary imitations of human beings. Even though characters in novels are not real people, their human dimension is impossible to ignore since actors portray them, and their human quality engage us. Nonetheless, it is helpful to remain mindful of the distinction between fictional characters and actual people so that we do not expect them always to behave realistically, and so we do not expect novelists to tell us more about them than we need to know.

Characters in novel can be classified as major and minor, static and dynamic, flat and round. Major characters in narrative sequence feature throughout the various developmental stages of the plot, whereas minor characters aid the swift or rough adventures of main characters. Minor characters play supporting roles in the conflict, such as presenting alternative views of events, or serving as contrasts to the main characters. Character can be said to be ‘dynamic’ when it changes either psychologically, intellectually or spiritually in the course of the narrative. A character can also be said to be ‘static’ when it does not change in the course of the narrative. Another way of describing static and dynamic characters is as flat and round characters. Flat characters reveal only a single dimension, and their behaviours are predictable, round characters are more individualized, reveal more than one aspect of their human nature, and are not predictable; in behaviour or speech. It should be noted that no type of character (round or flat, dynamic or static) is inherently better than or superior to another
It should be borne in mind that the distinction between flat and round (or any other classification model) is not very sharp, but rather elastic (Nwadike 1999:56).

Character is the companion of plot; the plot of a novel involves the actions of its characters. Another way of defining plot is simply as characters in action (or inter-action). And in the same way a novel’s plot must be unified, so a character must be coherent. This means that all aspects of the character - speech, dress, gesture, movement-must work together to suggest a focused and unified whole. Our sense of characters’ identity and personality are derived essentially from four things: (1) their actions – what they do; (2) their words – what they say and how they say it; (3) their physical attributes – what they look like; (4) the response of other characters to them – what others say or do to or about them. Of these, however, our sense of a character’s coherence derives mainly from his or her speech and actions. From these we gain a sense of who characters are and what they are like.

Characterization broadly refers to the description and development of characters. One could say that plots and settings generally work to develop characters. This supports the fact that there would be no story or plot without a character or characters. To Nwachukwu – Agbada (2001:19), “without characters, there would be no action since the events are determined by them”. These characters are not only human characters; there are also animal, spirit and super-natural characters. There are also personified inanimate objects. As long as any of these entities can be shown to participate dynamically in a work of art, they can be described as characters.

Characterization in Ubesie’s novels refers to the manner in which Ubesie has portrayed the characters in the six novels under review. He creates credible characters in his novels. He has both the flat and the round characters in all the novels. Many of these characters are developed whereas others are partly developed. He presents the characters to the reader as they act, reflect, talk and interact without any effort on him to influence what the reader thinks about the characters in question. He concerns himself with a portrayal of true – to – life characters especially as he has so much influence of Igbo oral tradition. He has for his audience the Igbo man in the village. This is why he gives Igbo names to his characters. Igbo names are not given ordinarily. They are meaningful to situations or experiences associated with a person who gives the name whether directly indirectly. According to Nwadike (1995:78), names of the characters coincide with the names given to individuals in real life to indicate the experiences, expectations and historical events in our various Igbo families.
Ubesie’s style of characterization is such that he creates collective character types in his novels which expresses the communal life of the African people. There is a deep exploration of characters as he pays much attention to the physical or psychological details of his characters. Some of the characters are developed whereas others are not at all. Some are flat and others round. These characters are delineated through their actions and what they say as well as what other characters say about them. In this work, only the major characters will be used to expose Ubesies’s style of characterization.

Obinna.

At the onset of the novel, Ubesie presents Obinna as a fearful person. He was afraid of enlisting into the army which made him to always be on the run, he swore that instead of being caught it would be better for him if he is shot dead where his corpse will be seen (Pg. 14). It is because of this fear in him that made him to visit Maazi Onyido for a charm that will prevent the army boys from getting hold of him.

Even though Obinna tries to evade going to the war front, Ubesie makes the reader appreciate the fact that they do this for different objectives. Obinna’s time of joining the army has a postponed realization. The author puts Obinna’s objectives as follows:

Mba! Chineke Ekwela! o bughị ya ka a ga-akpụrụ jee n’ ihu ogu mgbo na-egbu mmadụ ma ochị umụaobogho chiri mmadụ anaghị egbu egbu. (Juo Obinna, Pg. 4).
Never! God forbid it is not him that will be dragged to the war front to be killed by bullets. Bullets kill but jeers from girls do not kill.

The author also presents Obinna as boastful. Obinna boasts a lot. Before the commencement of the war, he boasted of how he will deal with the enemies. But at the commencement of the war, he was found wanting. On another occasion, when he recovers from the bomb injuries at the hospital, he began to boast to the nurses how he fought at the war front, that he sustained injuries as a result of his bravery.

Again, the author presents Obinna in the following words:

Obinna ji ogu a na-alu we nuọ iyi si oke o buọla ga-ejiko ya na mmadụ na ndị soja onye ahụ kporo rie (Pg. 16).
Obinna swore with the raging war saying that he would forgo whatever benefit that would make him come in contact with soldiers.

Obinna make his stand on the war quite clear from the beginning of the war. In spite of his beliefs in self-preservation, he is mouthy boastful and greedy. He wants to reap where
he did not sow. For example, he sustains the first bullet wound as he goes to steal petrol for sale in the company of Ikechukwu. The second bullet wound is sustained as he goes to carry away bags of stockfish the day the war ended, and this attitude makes him a vane glorious robber.

The activities and character of Obinna overshadow those of other characters portrayed in Jụọ Obinna. The reader only meets them when they are used to achieve Obinna’s selfish ends, like helping him to evade conscription or making charms for him to evade war.

Ubesie portrays Obinna as a liar. That a reader at a point pities the young women, Nnenna and Ogbenyalu as each hinges her hope on marrying a young and brave army officer, as Obinna. Ubesie does not see all categories of women as opportunists. And so, even though Obinna tells lies to Nnenna and Ogbenyalu about his purported gallantry at the war front and loss of property at the end of the war. They are ready to accept him as he is and console him, believing that he speaks the truth. Ubesie presents Obinna in the following way:

Obinna what you are saying is not sensible. Why are you lamenting the loss of a car? Is it not a human being that brings the money used in purchasing a car? Have you ever heard that money is used in purchasing a human being?

Maazị Ọnyiido

Maazị Ọnyiido in Jụọ Obinna is presented as a traditional medicine man. He is used to represent the role of traditional medicine man in Igbo land during the civil war. In spite of the series of tests Obinna wears the charm Maazị Ọnyiido prepared for him, it does not work. Obinna is finally in the army’s net. He still join the army which he was avoiding. His saving grace on many occasions are his intelligence and tricks.

Maazị Ọnyiido who claimed that he can prepare charm that will prevent people from being recruited into the army, was equally caught. Maazị Ọnyiido fulfilled his promise of informing Obinna of the time they will escape from Olo war front. If he is not trustworthy he would have escaped without alerting Obinna (P. 84). Maazị Ọnyiido is presented as intelligent as he uses his initiatives to device a trick he and Obinna used to escape from the army officers that met them on the way. His intelligence made him to use the blood of a chick on the bandage Obinna used to feign hand injury. This performs the whole magic they needed.
(P.84). Maaz onyido is compared to chinweuba in *Mmiri Oku E Ji Egbu Mbe* who also is a inedicine man that concords inedicine for the Ndi Odogwu.

*Ūkwa Ruo Oge Ya O Daa*

The heroine of *Ūkwa Ruo Oge Ya*, Ngozi Ọnwụka, is sufficiently endowed with personality which commands respect and arouses sympathy for her and her poor lover Chude Obi. Ubesie presents Ngozi Ọnwụka’s kindness and generosity in herself and in other people. For instance, Ngozi is able to resist till the end the massive pressure from men of substance and power to whom she is given over by her father.

Nna Ngozi nwara oke ya ka Ngozi kweta otu onye n’ime ndị ahụ na-abiara ya di … ọ bu ọ na ihe ịği Chude mma, nna Ngozi agaghi na-ekwu udị ihe ahụ. Ma ebe ọ bu na ndị na-abiara Ngozi di na-ebunye ya nta na imo, ọ were ọ bụ ya kpara  Chude... (Ūkwa Ruo Oge Ya, P.39)

Ngozi’s father tried his best to convince Ngozi to accept one of these suitors (the rich ones)... if Chude had been better placed, Ngozi’s father would not have been saying this type of thing. But since Ngozi’s rich suitors lavish all sorts of gifts on him, he started to rain abuses on Chude.

Ubesie presents Ngozi’s father (Ọnwụka) as an average Igbo father who is too eager to marry his daughter into wealth and affluence. In Maaz Ọnwụka’s estimation, the financial status of a suitors takes precedence over all other considerations in marriage. Maaz Ọnwụka sees the love between Chude and Ngozi as mere childish love which he must guard against.

Maaz Ọnwụka is seen as a father that worships money. The argument whithin himself on whether his daughter (Ngozi) has not gone out of her senses in preferring poor, wretched Chude to the wealthy car owners flocking around her as suitors, testifies Ọnwụka’s love for money and wealth.

Chude in *Ūkwa Ruo Oge Ya* is presented as a young, dashing and persistent young man who prefers true love to artificial glamour. The reader cannot but be strongly moved by Chude’s courage and heroism. Chude’s readiness to suffer for Ngozi makes him lose his job for an undisclosed reason. The author presents, Chude’s mental attitude after loosing his job in the following way:

*Ūdị ahụ ọ ọrọ ya bia, ọ gaghi ada mba ruo mgbe Ngozi gbanworo aha nna ya, zawa Obi, hapụ ịa Ọnwụka, maka na mmadụ nama ịghị asị na ike egwụla ya ma ọ rughị ebe ọ na-eje (Ūkwa Ruo Oge Ya. P.45)
Let any type of hardship come. He will not give up until Ngozi changes her surname from Ọnwụka to Obi. Moreover, one does not relent one’s effort until the desired goal is achieved.

Chude is rational and natural, true to himself and to the facts of life. The author uses this medium to warn parents giving their daughters in marriage to bear in mind that physical compatibility deserves the same consideration as the dowry and other matters in marriage contract

In Ìkwa Ruọ Oge Ya, Ngozi Ọnwụka is presented as being strong-willed in her marriage with Chude. The marriage between Ngozi and Chude is founded on real love, not on infatuation. Ngozi and Chude grew up together and have known the likes and dislikes of each other. They undergo various trials. At a point in the novel, Chude and Ngozi come to realize that there is something peculiar about their relationship. From this realization, they started growing up deeper and stronger in love. Every pretence and false show disappears and they come to know each other better with affectionate openness. Thus, they eventually ended up being united in a successful marriage. For example, when Chude is out of school due to hardship as a result of his father’s death, Ngozi on seeing how her lover feels it, promises him thus:

...Ugbu a nna gị anwụọla. I nweghị ego nke ịji enwe aku mana otu ihe karịrị ego na aku ịnwere nke ndị ọzọ ji ego apụghị ịzuta bụ mụ bụ Ngozi (P. 31)

Now your father is dead. You have no money, but one thing more than money which you have, and those who have money cannot buy is myself, Ngozi

Ubesie traces the traumatic experiences through which Ngozi undergoes her emotional conflicts and stubborn resistance to forces of seduction, which threatens her honour. The reader is skillfully guided to see and appreciate the circumstances leading to Ngozi’s abduction and kidnapping. She appreciates merit, kindness and generosity in herself and in other people.

In Ìkpaka Mịjị Onye Ụbiam, Chinyere’s father worships wealth and prestige. In as much as he likes to maintain his independence, he battles with lust for money. Mr. Emeodị is quick at reading and understanding his, (Chinyere’s father) psychology and proceeds to exploit same. Emeodị is therefore not surprised when Chinyere’s father approves, in his favour, who is to marry Chinyere. Hence, the author declares:

Maazị Emeodị maara nke ọma na o nweghi ihe nyịrị ego ime
(Ìkpaka Mịjị Onye Ụbiam: Pg. 78)
Mr. Emeodi knew quite well that with money nothing is impossible.

Chinyere in *Ukpaka Migi Onye Ubiam*, is not as strong-willed as Ngozi in *Xkwa Ruo Oge Ya*. She readily accepts her mother’s suggestion about allowing Emeodi to sponsor her in school and at the end opting for the man she loves. Chinyere is stubborn and resists to some extent but unlike Ngozi of *Xkwa Ruo Oge Ya* when confronted with the choice between the man she loves and her father she is thrown off balance.

*Ọ bụrụ na o sie ọnwụ na Amadi ga-alụrị ya. Nna ya ga-aju ya ma ọ bu gbuchuori onwe ya (Ukpaka Migi Onye Ubiam P. 62)*

If she insists on Amadi marrying her, her father will disown her or may go further to commit suicide.

Ubesie uses the above excerpt to portray the degree of mental conflict going on in the mind of the protagonist, namely, that of choosing between her father and the man she loves.

Ubesie’s method of characterization can be simply described as realistic from which other Igbo novelists could emulate. As one of the Igbo novelists, his method of characterization is mainly allegorical. Ubesie gives names to characters which have close relationship to the actions they perform. Ngozi and her mother in the novel, *Ukwa Ruo Oge Ya*, are two female characters who take the decision to fight against womanhood humiliation. Both of them are roundly delineated but Ngozi alone will be given attention in the work.

**Ngozi**

The author portrays her growth and academic pursuit starting from primary through secondary school as well as the predicament she encounters before her marriage. Minute details about Ngozi and her lover’s life in school are vividly painted by Tony Ubesie. This, the author does by giving us clue on how Ngozi reacts to her fiancee’s behaviour while in the midst of his playmates.

*Ngozi weesị na, Chude, i hurụ na mgbe ndị ọzọ tiri m ihe, etigwara m ha, ma mgbe i tiri m amaghị m ka m ga-esi tigwara gi, maka na ọsọ di n’ikwu nne mmadụ chuwa ya, ebee ka ọ ga-agbaga?... Echere m na onye ọzọ tiwe m ihe na i ga azowa m... (P.4)*

*Ngozi said, Chude, you see that when others beat me I revenged, but when you beat me I could not, because when one is being pursued from ones maternal home where else can one take refuge... I think that if someone is beating me, you will rescue me.*
From Ngozi’s statement, we can infer that Ubesie paints her as a caring, loving and outspoken lover despite her young age. Ngozi is also delineated as self-reliant. She rebuffs all the wealthy suitors, and readers admire her steadfast love for Chude.

**Chude**

He is another major character in *Ükwa Ruo Oge Ya*. He is presented as a smart and hardworking boy with excellent morals. The hope that he will be a medical doctor after his university education gingers him to study harder if not for anything, it will qualify him to marry Ngozi Ọnwụka. However, the untimely death of his father thwarts his plan. To Chude his dream to marry Ngozi ends in a fiasco. In the words of Ugwuanyi (1985:20).

> This time Chude’s dream to marry Ngozi is like a surrogate apple hanging just within sight. Chude stretches out his hands to pluck it but realizes that even as the land of Canaan was to Moses, the apple can only be within sight and never will be within reach.

From Chude’s condition, Ubesie portrays the life philosophy which states that the world is not a bed of roses.

Other qualities possessed by Chude include tolerance, hardwork and patience which sustain him throughout the trying period of their courtship. Ubesie delineates Chude to reflect the Igbo cosmology of life which states that the world is full of thorns.

**Chinyere**

Chinyere is the protagonist in *Ükpaka Miịri Onye Ubiam*. She is portrayed as a naive half-hearted but humble girl. Ubesie presents her as one who has a great interest in the nursing profession, but circumstances surrounding her could not permit her. The author also presents Chinyere as one who depends on the mother.

**Maazi Emeọdị** is presented as the major source of rivalry in *Ükpaka Miịri Onye Ubiam*. Although he loves the way of traditionalism, he has absolute love and respect for modernity. He loves young girls in modern attire but he would prefer his wife to dress in long outdated style so that other men will not lust for her. Emeọdị is as well crafty, suspicious and gullible. For instance, when he suspects Chinyere as playing pranks on him, he quickly invests a trick of catching her through an anonymous foil who performs the work creditably.

**Ada**

Ada Okafo is an indispensable character to the development of the story in *Isi Akwu Dara N’ Ala*. At the initial stage, Ubesie presents her as a very beautiful lady who has been longing to get married.
Later, Ada gets married to Chike and becomes the mother of two children-Obianuju and Chukwuma before the outbreak of the war. As the war breaks out, things change as Chike cannot meet up with Ada’s expectations. Ada turns to be foul mouthed and abandons her husband and children to the mercy of the world and runs after men in uniform (soldiers).

**Chike Obijiofo** is Ada’s husband. From the onset of their marriage, he is presented as a rich, loving, patient and generous husband. During the war, Chike loses his wealth and conversely his wife becomes the breadwinner of the family. Chike’s survival from his wife’s ill-treatment is an act of God. In one of the most awful treatments he receives from Ada during the war is that he kneel down before her, pleading for some amount of money. Chike’s condition at that time was very touchy and sympathetic.

Nwaozuzu (2001:97) sums it up thus:

*In him Ubesie paints a lurid picture of a typical Biafran male who suffers as a result of the inordinate ambition of his wife. Helpless as he is, he could not discipline Ada for fear of being conscripted into the army of her husband’s lovers.*

Ubesie paints Chike as an epitome of endurance and this brings him to a successful end as he later regains his riches at the end of war.

**Obijiofo in Ùkpana Okpoko Buuru**, occupies a central position in the novel. He is mostly annoyed at the level of corruption he sees around him in Ifite Amaeke. The author presents Obijiofo as a prophet as all his warning and predictions to the gang later manifest. He is equally a very wise man, a patriot as well as courageous. He is equally presented as an honest man who loathes things that are detrimental to human image such as banditry. Obijiofo represents the voice of conscience, the voice of wisdom and that of vision.

In *Mmiri Oku E Ji Egbu Mbe*, the author uses the characters to narrate his story. All the names used are real names. They all have human characteristics. Enyi is the main character in the text.

**Enyi is a wise man**: In order to avenge what Nneka and her children do to him, he steals meat from the pot of soup. After that, he puts Adamma’s earrings into the pot of soup as incriminating evidence that Adamma is the real person that steals the meat. Adamma could not deny it when Nneka finds out. During one of his fruit hunting expeditions, the white man’s steward waits for him at the foot of the mango tree in order to deal with him, and when he sees no escape route, he simply jumps on the man’s chest wounding him in the process. By this time he is able to make due his escape.
On one occasion, the white man’s dog was waiting for him at the foot of the mango tree and in order to avoid being bitten by the dog, he climbed from the tree to the branch of another mango tree. Even when the dog nearly caught him, he (Enyi) throw sand into the dog’s mouth.

Through intelligence, he and his co-criminals are able to steal from so many places without being caught. Through his intelligence he is able to hide his own share of the Zengu robbery exploits where it was never found. He started living a self contented life after he lavished his ill gotten money. He is able to use his money to build a very beautiful house.

**He is a criminal:** Initially, Enyi is not a bad boy, but because of the treatment meted out to him by Nneka, he run away from home. In the process of escaping from evil at home, he run into a bad gang. This lead him to stealing. His name becomes a terror in Enugu and Ndiabia. He is not just a mere thief but a leader of a gang of robbers. He rob many places which include the market place, Mr. Anigbogu’s house, police barracks, Ndiabia and Zengu.

**He is greedy:** He steals everything he sees when he go to steal from Mr. Anigbogu’s house. He is not content with his criminal activities in Ndiabia so he go to steal a cow. He do not want to share the loot with the others; he wants to have everything for himself.

**He is kind-hearted:** Apart from being a thief, Enyi is a good natured fellow. He is not happy with the kind of treatment he gives his victims during his operations because he warns his boys not to steal indiscriminately but only when there is the need.

**He is a strong man:** The story has it that Enyi is a strong man. The manner in which he manoeuvers the man they steal his cow shows that he is really a strong man (P. 48). He also manifests his strength from the way he carries loads that even many men cannot carry. When he starts farming, he farms only for five years and become a rich farmer.

**He is a lavish spender:** Enyi is known from his childhood as a wise boy but the money he gets from the Zengu robbery turns him into a spendthrift thinking that the money will last forever. The only good thing he do with the money was to build a house in Nd[a]. When eventually the money finishes, he comes back to his senses. (P.67).

**Chukwudj**

Chukwudj is a young unemployed graduate. He is Enyi’s friend as well as Ndụka, the police man. He is a police informant; he meet Enyi when he is searching for a job and Enyi promise to offer him one. On one occasion after an operation, Enyi and his gang in a drinking parlor reveals their activities. Thereafter, Ndụka employs Chukwudj as an informant in the activities of Enyi and his gang. Chukwudj is a wolf in sheep’s clothing.
Enyi never know that Chukwudi will ever betray him. Enyi deals with both great and small but it is only Chukwudi that defeats him. It is Chukwudi that reports Enyi’s gang on one occasion after their robbery. Also after the Zengu robbery, it is Chukwudi that reports Enyi to the police that lead to his arrest. Enyi do not know that Chukwudi, his trusted friend is the brain behind the arrest.

Chukwudi’s character depicts the hypocritical life of many people today. The one you trust so much may be the one to betray you. Some of the friends we have are not true to us.

**Nneka**

Nneka is Enyi’s uncle’s wife. After the death of Enyi’s parents, Ebuzo, his uncle takes him to his house and thus he comes to live with Nneka. Nneka is a wicked woman: she never love Enyi since he comes into her household despite the fact that Enyi is still a mere child. She hate Enyi so much that she hardly gives him enough food. Even when she tries to give him food, she never gives him meat or fish because she believes that it is a waste of resources. She cares only for her children.

**Nneka is heartless:** She always beats Enyi blue black. She has no value for other people’s children. To portray this wickedness, when she sees Enyi eating fish after a meal, she think that it is her fish that Enyi is eating, not knowing that he goes fishing with other kids, because of this, she gather other children in the neighbourhood and start making jest of him, and accusing him of stealing fish. Nneka’s attitude ruin Enyi’s life in their village as many people stop associating with him anymore believing Nneka’s story to be true. In vengeance, Enyi steal meat from the pot of soup and put Adamma’s earring into the soup as evidence that Adamma too is a thief. Nneka do not treat Adamma the same way she treats Enyi so that the villagers would not see her daughter as a bad child. Through Nneka’s character, the author brought to limelight the negative attitude of some women towards their wards. Nneka’s attitude towards Enyi lead him to fall into the hands of robbers. The bible says “Train a child in the way he should go, when he grows he will not depart from it” (Proverb 22:6). If a child is not well trained, he will become a terror to the community.

**Nwokeobia**

Nwokeobia is Enyi’s childhood friend. Other children in the neighbourhood molest him a lot and that is why he befriended Enyi for protection. He loves Enyi with all his heart. They are always together. He is trustworthy; he sympathizes with Enyi anytime he receives those terrible beatings from Nneka.
His character depicts children’s innocence, truthfulness and trustworthiness. He is not like Chukwudij, the hypocrite. He loves Enyi and helps him to the best of his ability. He also portrays that a weakling often suffers greatly from his peers.

**The Police**

These are special government agents that are called to prevent a breakdown of law and order amongst people. They have government offices where they settle disputes and arrest criminals. They stay in many places including banks. They receive a lot of troubles from Enyi and his gang like false accusations, snatching of their cars, etc. All their efforts to arrest the criminals should be emulated by our present day police force.

In a nutshell, we can conclude by saying that Ubesie’s novels stimulated both pleasures and thought. The characters are, on the whole, sufficiently endowed with convincing attributes. We also observe some characters in the form of dramatic conflict characterization. Here the real nature of the characters are revealed when they finds themselves under certain conditions in life. For instance, in *Ukpaka Mjiiri Onye Ubiam*, nna Chinyere (Chinyere’s father) is a simple and responsible man at the initial stages of the novel, but the appearance of another character, Maazi Emeodi changed him into a different person altogether. Emeodi is rich and that attracted nna Chinyere (Chinyere’s father) and influenced his behaviour, he becomes quarrelsome with his family, loses his sense of direction and suffers an untimely tragic death. A similar incidence is seen in *Ukwa Ruo Oge Ya*, for instance, when Maazi Obi (Chude’s father) is alive, everything is going on well between Chude’s family and Maazi Onwuka’s (Ngozi’s father) family, but on the death of Maazi Obi and by the sudden contact with a rich man who now wants to marry Ngozi, Maazi Onwuka develops a cold attitude towards Chude. He chases material wealth at the expense of genuine love; his family is in pieces rather than in peace. The kidnap episode, in which Ngozi was a victim and the subsequent rescue by Chude, provide a situation for Onwuka to regain his sense of direction. This has shown that Maazi Onwuka is a mediocre; he is always interested only on the good things in life.

**4.3 Points of View in Ubesie’s Novels**

Holman (1972:408) defines point of view as “a term used in the analysis and criticism of fiction to describe the story”. Azonye in Mbah and Mbah (2007) identifies four types of point of view, these includes:

i) The shifting point of view. This is the one which involves a series of first person point of view, otherwise known as “eye witness account”.
ii) The stream of consciousness point of view, this is the one that presents the inner thoughts and feelings of the main character.

iii) The first person point of view, this is that in which the narrative is told. Solely from the perspective of the main character.

iv) The omniscient point of view, here the narrator is able to present the inner thought and feelings of his characters as well as the surrounding circumstances of the action, both as they were, as they are and as they will likely be.

Ubesie makes use of omniscient point of view in some of his novels whereby characters are presented in such a way that the author seems to know everything about the characters in the novel. For this reason, the third person predominates. For example, in *Ukwa Ruo Oge Ya, Ukpaka Mịriụ Onye Ụbịa and Isi Akwu Dara N’ Ala*, he adopts the omniscient point of view and dialogue in his narrative style. In *Ukwa Ruo Oge Ya*, Ubesie tells the story of Maazụ Ọnwụka’s attitude towards Chude, he would be son-in-law after Chude father’s death. The author presents Ọnwụka’s attitude as being chameleonic. Ubesie in his omniscient narration says:

> Ugbu a nna Ngozi bụ Ogwumagana... Ọ bụ ocha, ọ chawa, ọ hụ oji o jiwe. Chude sị na ya gba nkịtị ndi mmadụ anara ya Ngozi (P.39)
>
> Now Ngozi’s father is chameleonic. If he sees white, he turns white, if he sees black, he turns black. Chude said if he keeps silent people would snatch Ngozi from him.

Also omniscient method, allows the author to comment freely on incidents as if he is an eye witness to the story.

Although Ubesie employs multiple point of view in his novels, his predominant narrative technique used is the third person or the omniscient point of view as indicated in the above example.

In *Ukpọna Okpoko Buuru*, Ubesie adopts yet another interesting narrative technique through the first person narrative using the first person singular pronoun “I” in describing events of the story. Through this narrative technique, Ubesie steps right into the narrative and addresses the reader directly by himself. For instance, in telling the reader how well built and handsome Kasiemobi is, the author says:

> Enyi m, hapụ ihe na-eme gee nị ka m kọọọrọ gi akụkwọ. N’obodo m bụ Achi ndị ogbọ mụ na ha ha n’ogolo ọhịghị nne. Otu m si too ka m si daa dimkpa. Agaghị m agwa unu ma m mara mma, n’ihi na m meghee ọnụ Ụmụagbogho ajuwa ase ebe m nọ (P. 61)
My friends leave whatever you are doing and listen to my story. In my town Achi, my age mates who are as tall as I am are not many. As I am tall so also I am huge. I will not tell you whether I am handsome because if I open my mouth girls will be asking about my where about.

The novelist uses this narrative technique to strike the reader’s consciousness to the plight of Kasie due to his natural beauty.

In Jugo Obinna, and Mmiri Oku Eji Egbu Mbe Ubesie adopts the omniscient narrative technique.

Finally, Ubesie’s narrative technique is unique due to his changes from one style to another. He weaves story telling technique and also creates room for freshness and originality.

4.4 Tone

Tone determines the attitude of the author toward his subject matter, his audience and life in general. In literature (written) we don’t hear the author speak; we rather hear him through the written medium, and the hearing is through the mind’s ear. Depending on what he is saying, and to whom he is speaking, we can detect his tone which can be soft, harsh, humourous, anxious, joyous, sad, frightening, contemplative, advisory, angry, ironic, prayerful, disappointing, assertive, forceful, cajoling, coaxing, skeptical, sarcastic, iconoclastic, moralizing etc. In creating tone, the author makes use of the other elements of fiction – setting, character, plot etc. It is the manipulation of these that determines whether the story is humourous, tragic, sentimental, satiric or comic.

In Mmiri Qkx E Ji Egbu Mbe, the attitude of Ubesie towards Enyi is that of sympathy. He presents Enyi as an orphan who suffers in the hands of Nneka, his uncle’s wife. The author presents Nneka as a wicked woman who always refuses Enyi food but subjects him to all sorts of inhuman treatment. Ubesie loves Enyi and presents him as a victim of circumstances. Ubesie’s tone towards the audience is that of warning. He uses this narrative to warn members of the society that are fond of maltreating children that are not their biological children. The author uses the novel Mmiri Qkx E Ji Egbu Mbe to teach the audience this lesson. In this, the narrative embodies the tone of pedagogy. He teaches that a child should be well brought up otherwise he may turn out to be one of the bad eggs of the
society as exemplified in Enyi. Ubesie is convinced that the environment heavily influences man. Enyi joined the armed robbery bandits because he was not adequately taken care of by his uncle’s wife. Ubesie’s tone in *Mmiri Qkx E Ji Egbu Mbe* is also ironic. He presents Enyi as a changed man after serving five years in prison due to his involvement in a robbery operation at Ndagaba and Zengu. Enyi who has become a notorious armed robber to have changed to a successful farmer indeed ironic. The author uses this medium to tell the general public that no condition is permanent. With the change of fortune, Enyi resigns his robbery operation to become a successful farmer.

In *Xkwa Ruo Oge Ya*, the author uses the advisory tone. He advises parents to allow their daughters to marry a man of their choice. He loves Chude who, in spite of all odds, achieves his heart’s desires by marrying Ngozi Qnwxka. Ubesie’s tone towards the audience is didactic. He uses this medium to teach the reader that what God has destined is bound to happen when time is ripe for it.

The author also uses the tone of disappointment. He presents Maaz[ Qnwxka as being disappointed when Ngozi refuses all the wealthy suitors seeking her hand in marriage and opt for Chude, a poor orphan. Ngozi is not skeptical in her stand to marry Chude in spite of all the harsh and threatening statements by her father, Qnwxka. Although Maaz[ Qnwxka feels sad about Ngozi’s love with Chude, there is nothing he could do to convince Ngozi not to marry Chude. There is also the tone of caricature in *Ukwa Ruo Oge Ya*. For instance, Ngozi and Chude used Maaz[ Qnwxka as their messenger. Maaz[ Qnwxka delivers Ngozi’s love letter to Chude and vice versa without knowing it. Ubesie uses this medium to advise the readers that people should not be too rigid in their lives. He outlines patience and perseverance as two ingredients for conquest in difficult times and issues. The author also uses the tone of satire. He satirizes some parents in the society who scheme their daughters’ marriage. The author uses this medium to warn the society against parents scheming husbands for their daughters. Parents should allow their daughters free hand to choose their own husbands.

In *Jxq Obinna*, the author presents the picture of Nigerian civil war. The tone of the author is derision. The author uses the medium to show that it is the empty vessel that makes the most noise. He berates boasters. Though Obinna does not die in the novel, he lacks self-esteem as he is relegated to the lower class of the society. Till the very end of the novel, after his boasts, Obinna is given no honour and regard.
In *Ukpaka Okpoko Buuru*, he denounces rebellion and upsetting the societal status quo. From among the hunted and oppressed, the author raises a steel-willed redeemer from whom, like in the family of Macduff of Macbeth, the progress and sense of sanity in government shall be restored. He is optimistic about life. He looks forward to the fact that evil shall bow before good no matter the wastes incurred and the time lag. The author uses the medium to express the community’s disappointment over the activities of the Odogwu. The author uses the tone of warning to the readers to desist from war as it pays no one any good. Ubesie uses the events in the novel to advise the audience that one good turn deserves another. The narrative starts with a stiff opposition between Nd Odogwu and the society. It gives an insight into how in defiance of wise counsel, the Nd Odogwu revolt and attack the society of which they are supposed to be an integral part, turned against them.

In *Isi Akwụ Dara N’ala*, the author uses the tone of endurance. Ubesie uses Chike, the hero as a symbol of endurance. The author also uses the tone of satire in the novel. He satirizes Ada as a femme fatale, and as all wicked woman of history shows their character of wickedness in her association with others in contact with her. The author is sympathetic with Chike on his wife’s infidelity. Ubesie uses the events in the story to educate the audience that no condition is permanent in this life. This is vividly shown in Chike’s recovery of his wealth after the war and Ada’s plea to come back and live with Chike. It is didactic because it teaches the fact that no condition is permanent. The author makes the audience to feel sympathetic with Chike in his mental state during the period his wife deserted him and lived with the army officers.

According to Mba and Mba (2007), in every functional narrative, the characters created by the authors are presented in certain kinds of bowdlerized action, in certain kinds of bowdlerized situation and in certain kinds of bowdlerized setting. A character, action, situation or setting may be natural, historical, social or cultural.

In *Isi Akwụ Dara N’Ala* and *Jụọ Obinna*, the themes are analyzable through social characters. The situation is historical. They represent the femme fatale and the miles glorious respectively. Obinna represents the braggart soldier, a swaggerer and a coward at heart. In *Isi Akwụ Dara N’Ala*, Ada represents the femme fatal and as all wicked women of history shows this character of wickedness in her association with others in contact with her. The help which Chude gets during the war, is as a result of his own intrinsic good nature.

In *Jụọ Obinna*, there are sub themes that are based on cultural characters and actions. Onyido is presented as an object of anti-clericalism, which forms the sub theme. The
incantations of some of the native doctors and diviners are caricatured and the role of incantations in divination is painted. The nefarious activities of the soldiers conscriptions during the war are historical actions involving historical actions.

The themes of *Mmiri Ọkụ Eji Egbu Mbe* and *Ụkpana Okpoko Buuru* are analyzable through social action. The theme of *Mmiri Ọkụ* is give me a child and I will make him what you want. The theme of *Ụkpana Okpoko Buuru* is that a daft fly gets buried with the corpse. The character of the Odogwu reflects what happens in the capitalist society. Thus, no matter how one gets his money without being apprehended officially, he commands respect and are even conferred with titles. The other sub theme is that one with God is majority. Obijiofo single handedly fights the Odogwu to a stand still. The characters are social characters involving human characters. There is also a natural character in the form of Udemmfo. There are historical actions as wars and social actions as marriage. The other novels: *Ụkwa Ruo Oge Ya* and *Ụkpaka Miirị Onye Ụbijam* have their theme based in social actions involving the relations between men and women.

Ubesie presents his heroes and heroines in the third person point of view. He presents some of the minor characters in the first person point of view. For example, Kasie’s mother is presented in the first, person point of view. In *Mmiri Ọkụ*, Enyi is the centre of consciousness while in *Isi Akwu*, Chike and Ada form that centre. In *Ụkwa Ruo Oge Ya*, Chude and Ngozi are the searchlight on one hand and on the other Ngozi and Onwuka. In *Jụọ Obinna*, Obinna is the centre of consciousness whereas in *Ụkpana* it is Chinyere, her mother and father, Emeodj and Amadi. In *Ụkpana Okpoko Buuru*, the limited point of view is Obijiofo. The one that acts as a foil to the chief character is the antagonist. In *Jụọ Obinna*, Obinna is in dramatic conflict with himself while in *Ụkpana Okpoko Buuru*, the Odogwu are in conflict with the society.

In *Isi Akwu*, Chude tends towards the flat character type. He is a symbol of steadfast goodness irrespective of the situation. One is able to predict his behaviour in all situations. Ada on the other hand is a round character. This changing attribute makes her change according to the circumstance. In *Ụkwa Ruo Oge Ya*, characterization is also into these two modes: round and flat. There is a stiff neck precept in the character of Chude, Ngozi, her mother and Emeodj. Onwuka and Amadị are round characters. Ngozi’s father is a round character. In *Jụọ Obinna*, Obinna is presented as a round character. He changes according to the circumstance. In *Mmiri Ọkụ*, Ubesie uses characterization by naming. The type of naming is allegorical characterization.
In Укпана Окпоكو Буруу, there is a block characterization. Kasie, Meenihu and Udemmọ are presented using block characterization.
CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 Plot of Ubesie’s six Novels

In this chapter, the focus will be on Ubesie’s plot. A plot is the narrative structure of the novel. The narrative structure involves the way the author handles his actions, conflicts, suspense, flashbacks, how he begins and ends his stories as well as whether the narrative structure is tight or loose among others. Forster defines it as a narrative of events arranged in their time – sequence but with emphasis of casualty (Forster, p.87). By this we mean that a novelist so arranges the event or incidents that one gives rise to the other.

The plots of Ubesie’s novels are generally unified plot which has a clear beginning, middle and end. In them incidents are well connected and a concerted effort is made to chronologically narrate events in such a manner that no episode or event is displaced or omitted. Such displacement or omission can destroy the unity of the whole narrative sequence. For example in Xkwa Ruo Oge Ya Q Daa, love is the major theme. We notice how love incidents and other trials affecting Ngozi and Chude which culminate a marriage are narrated in chronology. Ukpaka M[r[ Onye Xb[am, is a romantic tragedy. It witnesses the intrigues of Chinyere’s father to ensure his daughter’s marriage to Maazi Emeodi (the old man capable of being her father) whom she has no atom of love for, and the concomitant tragedy, portray well-connected incidents.

In J[u Obinna, Ubesie deals with the exploits of Obinna, a straggler and a boaster. In J[u Obinna, the author skillfully depicts how conditions manageable at the outset of the civil war deteriorate as the ravages of the war take their toll on human affairs.

The incidents in Isi Akwu Dara N’Ala are chronologically narrated. Ubesie narrates the good days of Ada and Chike which are followed by the account of their refugee status, the desertion by Ada and her attempt to stage a come-back at the end of the civil war.

Moreover, Ubesie occasionally makes use of flashbacks and thus avoids narrating his story in a purely chronological order. For instance, in J[u Obinna, he starts his narration with a poignant question thus: Ḭ ka n’iri Obinna?” (Pg.1)

This question posed by Ubesie sets the tone of the novel as it immediately portrays what Obinna turns out to be at last. The author then proceeds to narrate the incidents leading to Obinna being portrayed as a straggler in the novel.

There are other lapses in the sequence of narration of Tony Ubesie. For example, in Ukpaka Mjiiri Onye Ubiam, we are told that the payment of the bride price by Amadi should be delayed till Chinyere finishes her studies in the nursing school. At the same time we are
informed that the payment of Chinyere’s bride price is eagerly being expected by Amadi and Chinyere. In *Ukpaka Mịjị Onye Ụbịa*, we were also made to know that the plan hatched by Chinyere’s mother to retain Amadi as the prospective son-in-law has been revealed to Amadi. Equally too, we are informed of the difficulty to be encountered at the revelation of this trick hatched by Chinyere’s mother to Amadi.

*In Mmiri Ọkụ E ji Egbu Mbe*, the incidents in the novel are chronologically arranged. The story is orderly arranged in chapters such that events or actions flow easily as follows: Enyi, an orphan comes to live with Ebuozo. He is hated the first day by his uncle’s wife. Enyi is accused of stealing meat. He goes to live alone in the school compound and fends for himself. He made friends with criminals and become notorious trained thieves and operated within Enugu, Ndiabia and Onitsha. The boys’ operation in Mr. Anigbogu’s compound nearly convicted him but for his illness. He goes for robbery in Zengu which nearly costs him his life. After his release from prison, he goes back to the village. He turn a new leaf and with the support from his people, he started farming. After five years he become rich, useful and built a dignified house.

Ubesie arranges his narrative in *Ukpanna Okpoko Buuru* in a chronological sequence. In his narrative, he starts with the activities of Ndị Odogwu – a class of lawless people from a gang of robbers, kidnappers, murderers and impersonators. The climax of the evil acts of Ndị Odogwu was the kidnapping and killing of Kasiemobi, the only son of his mother with whose skin they re-make their edere.

*Ukpanna Okpoko Buuru* is written in chapters and events in chapter one lead the readers to events in chapter two till the end of the narrative. After the killing of Kasiemobi, Ubesie narrates how Mgbafọ, Kasie’s mother consults Ogba, the greatest oracle in the land and pleads with it to avenge her son’s death. A war later erupts between Ifite Amaeke and the people of Umqikenga, Kasie’s home town and in the end, Ifite Amaeke is wiped out but is regenerated by Obijiofo’s lineage after their return from their place of refuge at the end of the war indicating that the evil that men do live with them and even after them.

Forster describes plot as “a narrative of events arranged in their time sequence. Taylor (1981:51) rightly observes that in fiction, authors never follow chronological order in their works. This is as a result of the fact that what is important is not the events themselves but rather the ideas which these events express.

The events in *Ukwa Ruo Oge Ya Q Daa* and *Ukpaka Mịjị Onye Ụbiam*, are patterned in order whereby a first event is the cause of the second and so on. Thus we have
the events in a logical sequence. The two novels start with prologues in the form of “Okwu Mmalite”. These prologues introduce the content of the story to the reader. By this order the reader is made aware of what the novel is going to talk about, and so becomes conscious of how the story is going to be manipulated with a view of knowing the outcome of the actions.

The novels are divided into chapters; each chapter is made up of episodes and recurrent themes which finally end with a dominating theme. Following Taylor’s observation we notice some kind of cause and effect relationships between the various incidents in the texts. For example, the events in episode A give rise to the events in the episode B and so on. But sometimes, certain episodes are created, to enlarge the existing ones. For example, the death of Maazi Obi in chapter seven of Ùkwa Ru Oge Ya Ò Daa gives rise to a kind of conflict where we now see Maazi Onwuaka doing what he should not have done was his friend Maazi Obi, is to be alive.

The kidnap episode of Ngozi in chapter seventeen is also of purpose, and the aim of creating this episode is to create situation where Chude’s assistance might be needed. Chude rescues Ngozi and creates another incident—that of re-union between Maazi Onwuaka and Chude. This logical sequence of events reach a climax where Chude finally marries Ngozi.

In Ùkpaka Miiri Onye Ùbiam, the novel starts with a rising action and one event leads to the other in a logical sequence, but in Ùkwa Ru Oge Ya Ò Daa, another episode is created to enlarge the existing ones by the introduction of another episode. For example, in chapter four of Ùkpaka Miiri Onye Ùbiam, a new character Maazi Emeoji is introduced. Maazi Emeoji is a rich man and as is the case in Ùkwa Ru Oge Ya Ò Daa, nna Chinyere (Chinyere’s father) who had been in good terms with Amadi and his family, changes his behaviour. He now becomes interested in the wealth of Maazi Emeoji, who gives him a lot of money and other gifts. The result of this is the eventual imposition made on Chinyere to marry Maazi Emeoji. This later leads to the tragic death of Chinyere and her father which is the climax of the whole story. The novel ends with an epilogue which contains some moralizing statements put in a series of proverbs.

Another feature in Ubesie’s style of plot is his ability to create emotions. For example, in Ùkwa Ru Oge Ya Ò Daa chapter eighteen, we see how Ngozi is kidnapped by some men of the underworld. Everybody is now worried about her whereabouts, nobody has any idea of who her kidnappers could be or what could be Ngozi’s fate in their hands. At this stage the reader becomes emotional, curious and wants to know what is going to be the outcome of this situation, and as a result he tries to read further in order to satisfy his curiosity. In Ùkpaka Miiri Onye Ùbiam on (page 146) we see another instance where
Chinyere suddenly leave her school one early morning and travels to Onitsha, after dropping some letters for her father, her uncle, their pastor and relatives, nobody see her again. The situation calls for a lot of suspense in the mind of the reader. As a result, he becomes emotionally disturbed about the outcome of this sudden disappearance. This is the very good style which an author, can use to capture the attention and interest of the reader.

Tony Ubesie achieves a unified plots, although the events do not necessarily go in a chronological order, hence such an order will make the whole story look like a historical fact.

5.1 Elements of Plot in Ubesie’s six Novels

*Mmiri Ọku*

The plot is largely but not exclusively episodic. In *Mmiri Ọku*, there is no use of dialogue. It is only a novel of initiation. There is use of intrigue. For example, the sacking of Ndụka from the police force is as a result of the intrigue of Enyi who has the interior motive of recruiting him as a member of the gang. There is a lot of suspense. After the robbery at Zengu and the deceit of the police who would have arrested them, one is suspect as to whether they would ever be arrested. The suspense is intensified as Enyi successfully escapes to Enugu and Nduka settles down in the North as if they have nothing to do with the robbery. Finally, there is poetic justice. Good is rewarded and evil punished.

In *Ukpana Okpoko Buuru*, Ubesie starts with a dynamic opposition between the Odogwu and society. It gives an insight into how in defiance of wise counsel the Odogwu revolt and attack the society of which they are supposed to be an integral part. The unconnected activities of the Odogwu make the incidents a bit episodic. There is a stock situation: a daft fly gets buried with the corpse. The stock situation is recurrent in the novel. The atmosphere is sombre and gay. It is sombre owing to the death of Obijiọfo and the death of Kasie as well as the horrifying torment of the mother. It is gay because of the eventual supervening poetic justice. The blood of the innocent shed is the price of justice while the blood of the Odogwu that is shed is the cost of injustice and insubordination.

In *Ukwu Ruo Oge Ya O Daa*, Ubesie uses a unified plot. It has a clear beginning, middle and end. It starts with the background of the generosity of Obi. This builds up through complications to the middle where affluence turns to affliction. There is thereafter melodrama, which resolves the complication, heals the scar of the said affliction in a positive and happy way.

There are dialogues. One is used when Ọnwụka attempts to dissuade Ngozi from marrying Chude. The other one is when intrigue is employed to break the collusion of Ojugo
and Ngozi’s mother. The other intrigue is used when Chude schemes to outwit his mother and go in search of Ngozi. The dialogues help to develop the characters and the situations within the narrative piece. The atmosphere is gay. The story is a comedy. Suspense forms an element of the plot. The question as to who will marry Ngozi begins with the introduction of many suitors, the position of Mr. Onwu, which is answered only at the end. The question forms the hallmark of the suspense.

Another element of plot is resolution. When Chude disarms the guardmen, there is dramatic irony and peripeteia on the part of Ngozi, Chude by achieving reconciliation with the darker part of him fulfils an obligation.

In Isi Akwu Dara N’Ala, the plot is unified and complex. It is unified because it has clear beginning, middle and end. It presents at the beginning a happy home, Chike is the breadwinner. The happiness in the home is complicated by the introduction of a war situation. There is reversal. Chike degenerates into poverty and Ada becomes the breadwinner. Ada breaks her marital vows. There is another melodramatic reversal. The war ends, Chike regains lost ground but Ada loses out. She is divorced. The atmosphere of the novel is gay. It is a comedy. There is intrigue. Ada manipulates the soldiers to recruit her estranged husband into the army and send him to the hottest war front where he will likely be killed so that she may be free to stray in sexual promiscuity and licentious lasciviousness. The intrigue introduces suspense. Will Chike die in the warfront? There is also poetic justice. Evil is punished and good is rewarded. There is climax when Okechukwu rescues Chike from imminent death.

In Jugo Obinna, Obinna is portrayed as a coward. This is portrayed by his meandering pretensions during the entire war. At the end he is by metonymy exposed. There is a deemed recognition of his character in the final analysis. Obinna is a boaster and was tested to prove his mettle. At the outbreak of war, which is the litmus test of bravery, Obinna fails. He successfully dodged all combats in the war. He pretends to have fought the war but he is exposed by one who is in a position to know his intrigues.

There is dialogue in the novel. When Obinna is caught escaping to Owere Ezukala, he is engaged in a dialogue. There is also exposition. At the end of the novel information about Obinna’s intrigues is offered through reflection and flashback.

In Ukpaka Miiri Onye Ubiam, Ubesie uses unified plot. It has a clear beginning, middle and end. The beginning is well grounded, the middle dominated by conflict and the end tragic. It is a simple plot because there is no reversal.
Love drives Amadi to consult Chinyere’s parents so that he marries her. The parents schemes and get Chinyere meet and she fall in love with him. The beauty of Chinyere attracts Emeọdi so that he woos her. Chinyere is forced to wed Emeọdi, a man she has grown to hate. She absconds after her final examinations only to die mysteriously at Onitsha. Nemesis dates her father as he sees the corpse and has cardiac arrest.

According to Mbah and Mbah (2007) the atmosphere of the novel is sombre. The tone of the author rebukes those who force, on their daughters, men labouring under the disability of hate from the supposed beneficiaries of their love. The novel is a tragedy. There is also intrigue, the idea of accepting Emeọdi, to train Chinyere in school so as to repay him on finishing school and gaining employment. There is also suspense in the novel. The introduction of Emeọdi raises the question as to who will eventually marry Chinyere. There is catastrophe marked by the death of Chinyere and her father. There is no room for spiritual regeneration as the novel ends tragically. The death of Chinyere’s father makes the novel have some poetic justice. He fuels the heart break of Chinyere and is responsible for her eventual death. There is no clue to the resolution of the disaster and the tragedy of love and the devil are allowed to triumph.
CHAPTER SIX

LANGUAGE IN UBESIE’S NOVELS

The novelist uses language as his indispensable tool. “Language is the most essential of all the elements of fiction for without it nothing can be said or written in the first place”. By paying attention to the language of a story, we can arrive at meanings which may not be obvious on the surface. The language and the narrative technique of a writer aid the development of plots.

Roger (1971) observes that in literature language is central. Ubesie’s medium is the Igbo language and it is through it that he expresses his creative ingenuity. The form and manner in which Ubesie has particularly used Igbo language in his novels are of interest here.

According to Ngara (1982:10) “Language in terms of literature is more than an exclusively human property consisting of a system of sounds, word structures, and meanings; it is creative in the sense that the individual is capable of using it in a completely novel manner…”

At this stage of our analysis we shall pay attention to Ubesie’s use of language through proverbs, idioms, allusion, imagery, anecdotes, antithesis, parallelism and even sentence patterns and grammatical structure, among others.

Proverbs

Holman (1972 : 42) defines proverb as “A sentence or phrase which briefly and strikingly expresses some recognized truth or shrewd observation about practical life and which has been preserved by oral tradition, though it may be expressed and transmitted in written literature as well…its language is sometimes archaic”.

Nobody can claim the authorship of proverbs because proverbs are as old as man himself. We can identify two forms of proverbs- (i) functional proverbs, that is, when they are used appropriately in a context and (ii) cosmetic proverbs, that is, when they are either used out of a context or when they are heaped in one place. We illustrate these with the examples below:

Ubesie in his bid to describe the impossible task ahead of the police in tracing Ngozi’s whereabouts, says, ọ bụ eziokwu na ha ekwela nkwa, echi dị nso bụ ndị mara ụzọ ga-eru” (Ukwa Ruo Oge Ya, P. 62); that is “although they have made a promise, tomorrow is near for only those who know the way”. What he is trying to say in this proverb is that it will be difficult for the police to trace Ngozi’s whereabouts, without prior knowledge of who her
kidnappers are, how they operate and the probable place they might have taken Ngozi to. This proverb is used appropriately in this context and this makes its meaning stick out. At the same time, Ubiesie uses proverbs in a cosmetic manner. For instance, he heaps proverbs in one place only to describe the way Ngozi fits Chude as a wife by saying:

“Ọjị bụ osisi ka ịbe ya. Ọ mara mma karịa ọsisi ndị ọzo nke bụ na ebe ndị mmadụ ụrụ ya, ha amara na ọ bụ ihe nkirị. Ugo bụ nnụnụ ka ịbe ya mma. Ndị gụrụ egwu na-asị na Ugo bụ eze nnụnụ. Ndị turu ilu sị, onye ụrụ Ugo ya nurịa, n’ ihi na a naghị ahu Ugo mgbe ọ bula” (Ụkwa Ruọ Oge Ya, P. 76)

The iroko is the greatest among other trees, it is the most beautiful tree, and this makes people to always admire it whenever they see it. The eagle is the most beautiful bird. Singers say that the eagle is the king of the birds. It is said in the proverb that whoever sees the eagle should be happy because the eagle is not seen always....

With this padding of proverbs, the reader gets bored of what he is reading. Other instances of proverbs are found in Ụkpaka Miịri Onye Ụbiam, for instance, the author uses a proverb to describe how Mmaọzụ Emeq did explain to Chinyere’s father why he intends to marry his daughter. For example:

“Ajuru m ndị mmadụ ase maka unu tupu m abịawa ikwu okwu na m ga-auf Chinyere, n’ihi na ọ bụghị ebe ọbụla mmadụ ụrụ ka ọ na-eje agụta okụ Ụkpaka miịri Onye Ụbiam, (P.35)
I asked people question about you before coming to seek Chinyere’s hand in marriage, because one does not go to fetch fire wherever he sees.

The implication of this proverb is that Mmaọzụ Emeq did is trying to convince Chinyere’s father to allow him to marry his daughter. This proverb is also used appropriately because it rhymes with the sentence. Like in Ụkwa Ruọ Oge Ya, Ụkpaka Miịri Onye Ụbiam, also contains some proverbs which are cosmetics, for instance, in deserting how Chinyere is disillusioned considering her age vis-a-vis marriage, the author writes:

“Ihe di n’ụwa a bụ onye tote, ọ tokwuru. Mmadụ di na nwata, ọ na-enwe obi ọcha: Nwoke na-etọ, mkpa ya a na-etọ. Ma nwoke gbaa afụ onụ, mkpa na-echе ya ebụtu ya uzọ gbaa afụ ihi na afụ obi. Agbogho toputa, o tokwuru ndị na-echе ya ka ha lụọ ya. Ma ndị oma ma ndị ojọọ na-echе ya”.

In this world when a person grows up, he grow into something. When a person is in his childhood, he has a clean heart. As a man grows, his problems grow also. But when a man grows mouth ache, the problems that await him will have grown hairs in the nose and on the chest. When a girl grows up, she grows to meet those who are waiting to marry her. Both the handsome and the ugly ones wait her.
Because Ubesie has a large repertoire of the Igbo proverbs, he tends to manufacture proverbs himself. Proverbs are at times formalized into anecdote. Sometimes, Ubesie twists proverbs to suit his purpose and this can take form of showing meaning in opposites. For instance, at the beginning of *Jụọ Obinna*, Ubesie uses six proverbs in a stretch to show the nature incapabilities and cunning nature of Obinna the hero of the novel, they are:

...Ọgaranya kecha ekpe hapụ iñwu, ihere ọnwụ egbüọ ya....ihe bara mmadụ n’ ọnụ arapụtahi ya, nke si ya n’ ọnụ pụta achipụta ya ukwu n’ ezi. O kpata o di ka o gaghị ericha. O richaa, o di ka o bu nkapụ. Oke mmọnwụ na-eti onwe ya. Onye duuru mmụọ je gbuo mmadu, duuru mmadu bia ụlọ akwa pụta n’ ụzọ jụwa ndị o dugara ụlọ akwa ebe ha si. (P.1).

When Obinna went to Maazi Onyido at a time he mostly needs his help, despite the fact that Obinna once cajoled him, Ubesie explicitly expresses this in the proverb:

“Ọ bụ agụụ na-eme a juchaa a narakwa”. (P.7)

His versatility in Igbo proverbs is as a result of his knowledge of oral tradition from which proverbs originate. Such proverbs are sometimes transformed into anecdotes for the purpose of clarity and embellishment. Ubesie has a wonderful technique of providing some explanatory clues within the context in which such proverbs are used. For instance on page 55 of *Ukwa Ruo Oge Ya*, Ubesie says:

*Cheta na ndị be anyị sị na eze taar aka arụ, agụụ guwa onu, eze agaghi ahụ ihe ga na-etetara ya ihe o ga na-ata* (P . 55).

*Remember that our people say that if the teeth bite the finger, when hunger catches the mouth, the teeth will not see something to chew*

In *Jụọ Obunna*, we have yet another interesting proverb with an explanatory clue:

*Ọjị ọ bua dara n’ ala bu ndị mmụọ ka ọ na-eche, soja ọ bua e buia n’ ihu ọgụ bu onwu ka ọ na-eche* (Pg, 68).

*Any kola nut that falls on the ground is waiting for the spirits; any soldier that is taken to a war front is waiting for death.*

On pages 44 and 46 of *Isi Akwu Dara N’ Ala* and *Mmiri Ọkụ E Ji Egbu Mbe* respectively, similar proverbs like the examples above are obtainable. In the above proverbs used as examples, the part marked off with semi colon is the main proverb while the second part becomes the explanatory clue. Thus, by using the technique of explanatory clue, the reader does not always crack his brain to capture meaning.
Ubesie has been severely criticized for his excessive use of proverbs (Emenanjọ: 1982, Nwadike: 1989) on the basis of their number, their clustering or padding, and their explanation. Emenanjọ states that in .Ui.Kwa Ru.0. Oge Ya, there are 308 proverbs. He also observes that in Mniri Oku E Ji Egbu Mbe, there are 87 proverbs and in Ukpana Okpoko Buuru, there are 85 of them. But the author should be pardoned for this because in Igbo tradition, a good speaker or an orator in the Igbo context is the one who has the mastery and command of proverbs and other rhetorical devices to move and convince his audience. This can be noticed in the Igbo traditional method of story telling.

Most of the time Ubesie deviates in his use of proverbs by introducing poetic device in a prosaic format. This can by noticed in Ukpana Okpoko Buuru, Okwu Mmalite. He also uses informative and not expressive language in his application of proverbs in his stories. For example, Di.ka ndi Igbo na-atụ n’ ilu or Ndi Igbo/be anyi na-atụ n’ ilu sị:

He dovetails them with the events he narrates. For example “Maazị Ezekwe ezi ihe ka anyị na-atụ anya n’ aka gị maka na ibu a na-ebo nwata bụ ka isi ya ha (P .14). Here the author does not separate the proverb from the piece of ironical advice Maazị Obi.ịọfo gives to Maazị Ezekwe who is conferred with the title of “Ekwueme” a title ironically achieved from successful robbery operations.

Apart from using proverbs for illustrative and aesthetic purposes, the title of Ubesie’s novels are couched in proverbs which are explicated at the beginning or end of his novels. In the words of Emenyọnu (2001:38)

“This is Ubesie’s favourite style of ending his novels. The title of the book and its significance come at the very last line of the novel in a form of witticism or aphorism which is a summation of a narrative or its theme. Thus each work ends as it started on a high philosophical note which provides substantial food for thought for the reader”.

Simile and Metaphor

One of the distinctive features of Ubesie’s style is his use of simile and metaphor. With them he creates visual and arresting images while at the same time showing his ingenuity for acute and accurate observation. He draws his simile from various facets of life and nature. To show the degree of the humiliation of Ndi Odogwu by Obi.ịọfo’s sons, he describes them (Ndi Odogwu), as being as cold as the harmattan water “…ha jụrụ oyi ka mmiri ụgwụ” (Ukpana Okpoko Buuru, P.52). Ubesie’s metaphors, like the similes are equally pungent and visual. In Ukpana Okpoko Buuru, (P. 20) Obi.ịọfo a great hunter, calls his gun
“Mmiri na-ama ụmụ anụ” (the rain that beats the animals, that is, the destroyer of animals). A critical look at his similes and metaphors show that Ubesie draws them from everyday Igbo life and speech.

In Ọkpaka Mịrị Onye Ubiam, Ekemma’s father describes her lazy attitude in this way: “Zuzuru ụzọ ka nkakwụ dị ime bịa ebe a” (P.51). (Sluggishly come here like a pregnant shrew).

In Mmiri Ọkụ E Ji Egbu Mbe, to describe how Enyi thought out a way of coming down from the mango tree, Ubesie likens his brain to the ticking of a clock.

Ubụrụ Enyị na-akụ ka elekere (P.23).

**Humour**

Ubesie’s language is generally full of humour and comic vision of the village life. He realizes the fact that comedy is a strong element of traditional life since within the Igbo traditional society much importance is attached to jokes, the ludicrous and the absurd aspect of life. His narrative is on the main full of comic relief and light heartedness (Nwadike, I.U. 2001). For example, a reader who goes through Jụọ Obinna will discover that he is wading through a cluster of jokes. It is no exaggeration to say that the entire Jụọ Obinna, is one long literary indulgence in humour and the humorous. Think of the funny and fictitious stories Obinna tells the nurses (P. 46): Obinna’s narration of his experiences while he is in detention. Even in tragic issues like wars, ritual killing, armed robberies and other social evils, one still finds huge streaks of jokes and the ludicrous.

**Hyperbole**

According to Nwadike (2001), Ubesie, like the Elizabethans of English literature, is given to flamboyance and much exaggeration in his novels. The actions in his stories are magnified; his characters are imbued with very high intelligence and extraordinary abilities. In Ọkpọ Okpoko Buuru, Obijọfo’s strategies and the way he and his son’s disorganize the plans of Ndị Odogwu and the way they eliminates them is alarming and unbelievable (P.22-25), the way his sons attacked and disarmed those who killed their father, is fairytale-like (P.31-32). But within the context of these exaggerations, the reader is highly thrilled and entertained, thus one of the objectives of literature is fulfilled.

**Use of Idioms**

There are many idioms in Ubesie’s novels. Ọnụkwusi in an article “Language Aesthetism in Jụọ Obinna” notes that not only are idioms aptly used, they also contain images of intense picturesqueness, which offer pleasure to the readers especially as they
discover the equivalence between the situation, which prompted the idiom and the meaning of the idiom. In *Jyu Obinna*, there are such idioms as

\[\text{Chi adili obu onye, obu onye} \]
\[\text{Erimeri bu aturu tawa} \]
\[\text{Anwughi anwu efughi efu,} \]
\[\text{aga-akpo ndu oku.} \]

Again, Ubesie uses idioms to express extreme happiness. For instance, in *Isi Akwu Dara N’ Ala* (P.2):

“Obi na-adị onye obula ka e tinyere ya nnu”
also on page 125 he says: “Ego buuru aturu tawa”

The first idiom expresses extreme happiness while the second denotes surplus.

**Use of Onomatopoeia**

In *Isi Akwu Dara N’ Ala*, Ubesie uses onomatopoeia extensively. For instance in pg 23 he describes different sounds of military armaments in the following words:

\[\text{Gbi-i-m} \]
\[\text{Gbi-ii-i-m} \]
\[\text{Gbi-ii-i-m} \]
\[\text{Wi-ii-gwom} \]
\[\text{Wi-i-ii-gwom gwom} \]
\[\text{Fu-fu-fu! Womi-womii.} \]

All these are used to denote the different sounds of military armaments in constant usage during the Biafra Nigerian war. Also in *Ukwa Ruol Oge Ya*, Ubesie writes:

\[\text{Ihe ozọ a nurụ bu ‘dawam’ na nti ya! Tupu o nweta onwe ya} \]
\[\text{ihe ozọ a na-ahụ bu ‘ kpoọ kpoọ’ ebe Cude na-enye aka nri,} \]
\[\text{aka ekpe.} \]

These words above in quotation marks are used to describe the sound of heavy slap and strong blows that were exchanged between Chude and Obiọra.

**Personification**

In personification, inanimate objects are given animate features. Ubesie describes the state of happiness by workers by the time they receive their January salary as if that happiness was a person. Ubesie writes:

“mkpọtụ na-emę ebe aḥụ, obi anụrị na-akụ mmadụ niile isi n’ala”. (*Isi Akwu Dara N’ Ala*, P.3).
On page 196, we have another good example of personification which goes like this: “Obi anụrị ụzụ ụmu ụdụ chisara Chike”. Literally, it means that happiness reared children for Chike. Here “Obi anụrị (happiness) is personified.

In *Jọọ Obinna*, Ubesie uses the image of the sky as if it is a human being, “ihu ụzụ eligwe naani anụ ụmu What he really means is that “the face of the sky is very bright”.

In *Mmiri Ọkụ Eji Egbu Mbe*, Ubesie describes the state of Enugu in this way: “Enugu na-aranụ ụra”. Literally it means that Enugu is sleeping. What he really means is that Enugu is very calm.

**Prose Rhythm**

Good prose always has a harmony of its own and its rhythm plays an important part in the meaning. Prose rhythm can occur in Igbo novel as a result of different constructions by different authors. Ubesie achieves this mainly by the following:

i. **Parallelism**

   *ihe suru a gbawa ya bụ oso!..*
   Onye ekwe amaghị ebe onye ogene nọ
   Onye ogene amaghị ebe onye oja nọ
   Onye udu amaghị ebe o dewere udu ya.
   Onye bu ọkụ amaghị ma ọ bụ ọkụ ka ya bu
   Onye ya na nwunye ya yi bia ajughị ase ya
   Onye a na-akpo ọkụ, o jiri oso na-alia be ya,
   si gi ka odi echi. Ihe a nọ bụ oke n’oso,
   ngwere n’oso. Ndị mmadụ ji ọso gbasaa
   ka mkpurụ ụkpaka (p.15)

   People run when there is panic. The wooden gong man cannot say where the metal gong man is, the metal gong man cannot say where the flute man is. Udu (musical clay pot) man does not know where he kept his musical clay pot (udu). The person carrying the light (bush lamp) does not even know that it is lamp that he is carrying. The person that came with his wife did not ask for her. Whoever is being called, runs home without looking back saying he will see you tomorrow. It is like rat race, lizard race, everybody running as far as his legs can carry him. Everybody/ people ran and scattered like the oil bean seed.

ii. **Short Sentence, Repetitions, Paring and Parallelism**

   *Udemmụọ mgbe ọ bula a na-eri “Nnekeji” ana m egburu gi ewu. Mgbe ọ bula a na-eri “Nnekeede” ana m egburu gi ọkụkụ. Mgbe ọ bula i wara afa ehi, afa ewu, afa ọkụkọ, afa ji ma ọ bu afa ede, ọ dighị mgbe mụ emeghị ya. Ezughị m ji mmadụ. Ezughị m ede mmadụ. Anwughị m ọkụkọ mmadụ. Akpughị m ewu ma ọ bụ ehi mmadụ. Emetughị m ọkụkụ gi aka, nke m ji*

   *Udemmụọ mgbe ọ bula a na-eri “Nnekeji” ana m egburu gi ewu. Mgbe ọ bula a na-eri “Nnekeede” ana m egburu gi ọkụkụ. Mgbe ọ bula i wara afa ehi, afa ewu, afa ọkụkọ, afa ji m ọ bu afa ede, ọ dighị mgbe mụ emeghị ya. Ezughị m ji mmadụ. Ezughị m ede mmadụ. Anwughị m ọkụkọ mmadụ. Akpughị m ewu ma ọ bụ ehi mmadụ. Emetughị m ọkụkụ gi aka, nke m ji*
emetu ewu gi aka. Ezughị m ohi. Agbaghi m ama... (Ukpaka Okpoko Buuru, P.75).
Udemmọ whenever Nnekeji is been celebrated, I kill goat for you. Whenever Nnekeede is been celebrated, I kill cork for you. Whenever you Udemmọ oracle call for cow, cork, goat, yam, and cocoyam, there is never a time I did not bring it. I did not steal somebody’s cocoyam. I did not touch your cork neither did I touch your goat. I did not steal. I did not reveal anything...

The author employs this apostrophe and invocations to portray how aggrieved the character is, for she (Mgbafọ) always propitiates the deities. Furthermore, she never touches what does not belong to her nor wishes anyone evil, hence the self vindication. Ubesie uses this type of construction to reinforce and evoke the readers’ empathy justifying the callousness of Ndị Odogwu.

Ubesie achieves a lot of aesthetism through both conformity and deviation from the norms of every day use and lineation in prose.

Conformity

Conformity is one of the ways that Ubesie uses to achieve beauty in his narration. He uses standard Igbo variety and hardly employs dialect forms. His syntactic structures follow the syntactic typology of the language, namely subject verb object and adjunct pattern. He uses both loose and periodic sentences. In a loose sentence, the main clause comes first while in periodic sentence it comes last. He combines these types of sentence beautifully. For instance, in Ṣkpaka Mịri Onye Ubiam, there is a periodic sentence such as:

Akpụlie nwata n’ike na-agaihe, Ọ na-ebe akwa na-eleghi anya n’azụ, ebe ahụ ọ na-arụ aka ma na-ele anya bụ ebe nne ya ma ọ bụ nna ya nọ. (p. 80)

In Ṣkpaka Okpoko Buuru, there is another periodic sentence:

Mgbafọ jụrụ Mazị Jidefo na nwanne ya ma ha emeela ihe ha biara, ha jiri nwayọ chọwa ụzọ be ha. (P. 43)

In the first example, “ebe ahụ ọ na-arụ aka ma na-ele anya bụ ebe nne ya ma ọ bụ nna ya nọ” is the periodic sentence.
In example 2, “ha jiri nwayọ chọwa ụzọ be ha” is also the periodic sentence.

Use of Parallel Structures
Ubesie also makes use of parallel structure. By this technique, he gives effect to sentence as an expression of thought. It produces agreeable prose rhythm and memorable syntactic structures. In *Ukwa Ru Oge Ya*, we have parallel structures within a sentence

\[ \text{Ufodú budoroibe ha igbe akwụkọ, Ufodú na-eti mkpu, ndị ozo na etu ube ha aha:} \text{ (P5)} \]

Ubesie uses parallel sentences in consecutive structures as can be found in *Ukwa Ru Oge Ya*,

“Onye jiri ego chọọ izụta moto, o nwere ike,
Onye jide ego chọọ ịwu ọlọ, o nwere ike…”

In *Jọ Obinna*, there is an example of parallel structures in consecutive utterances.


Deviance

Deviance in literature means the departure from the standard or acceptable norm of the literary culture of a language. In *Ukpana Okpoko Buuru* page 1, for instance, Ubesie piles up a series of figures of speech to the extent that the reader is unavoidably lost with regard to what the subject matter might be and the object of the writer. However, on P. 1, paragraph 3 of *Jọ Obinna*, he demonstrates his pedantry at figures of speech. He shows that he is not merely a native speaker but a son of his father. His combination of the proverbs, though they may be many, is apt as they drive home many of his points.

Phonological Deviation.

There is phonological deviation on page 30 of *Jọ Obinna* where we have “ọọ kwa “instead of “O bukwa. There are also borrowed words: in *Jọ Obinna*, there are “bomboụ” (page 40.), eletriki (page 33), Olimpiki (page 121) nọọsụ (page 25), shel (page 125), koolu (page 125), atiları (page 126) and jeti (page 133). He adopts borrowing by phonotecisation. He readapts the words to equate the phonotatic of Igbo. By this method, Ubesie expands the frontiers of the language.

Ubesie’s stylistic proficiency, has elevated him as a good tailor of prose. He has a recognizable pattern of writing to the extent that one can identify him without necessarily seeing his name against his work. He has what one may describes as an onomatopoeic style.
CHAPTER SEVEN
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

7.0 Findings

Ubesie is a highly successful writer in Igbo. He uses his novels like any other literary artist to entertain, teach or correct the ills of society. Ubesie in his artistic manipulation of setting, theme, character/characterization, tone, plot and language portrays the impact of environments and situations act on the individual as well as the society. Such effects raise the questions about the customs in courtship (love) and marriage, male dominance, women’s rights in the society, women’s infidelity, virtues and vices as well as societal ills such as unprecedented corruption, opportunistic tendencies, immorality, egocentricism and gossip. Ubesie always succeeds in decidedly pinpointing a theme and sticking to it and very creatively too. Ubesie’s message in his stories is not only that the law of retributive justice is here and now in our lives but also that any dynamic culture ought to accommodate the good features of another culture.

Ubesie’s novels reflect the historical and cultural setting against which his characters live out their lives. He usually sets his stories in urban towns. However, there are cases where he uses rural areas. In some of his novels, he calls the real names of the towns where the events take place, that is, towns that are actually known like Awka, Agxata, Enugu, Nnewi etc. as we see in Isi Akwx Dara N’ala and Jxq Obinna. At other times, he uses the names of unknown towns as we see in his other two novels. Xmxiakenga and Ifite – Amaeke in Ukpana Okpoko Buuru, and Nd[ab[a and Zengu in Mmiri Qkx E ji Egbu Mbe.

Ubesie’s style of characterization is such that he creates collective character types in his novels which express the communal life of the African people. There is a deep exploration of characters as he pays much attention to the physical or psychological details of his characters. Some of the characters are developed whereas others are not at all. Some are flat and others round. In Isi Akwx, Chude tends towards the flat character type. He is a symbol of steadfast goodness irrespective of the situation. One is able to predict his behaviour in all situations. Ada, on the other hand, is a round character. This changing attribute makes her change according to circumstances. In Xkwa Ruo Oge Ya, characterization falls into these two modes of round and flat.

In Jxq Obinna, Obinna is presented as a round character. He changes according to the circumstances. In Mmiri Qkx, Ubesie uses characterization by naming. The type of naming
is allegorical characterization. In *Ukpana Okpoko Buuru*, there is a block characterization. Kasie, Meenihu and Udemm are presented using block characterization.

In the findings of point of view in Ubesie’s novels, we observe that he adopts the third person omniscient narrator point of view. He describes the events as if he knows what goes on in the minds of all his characters.

Again, in order to arrest the readers attention, he uses many narrative devices, prominent among these are his use of suspense, dramatic irony and coincidences.

The plots of Ubesie’s novels are generally unified plot which has a clear beginning, middle and end. The incidents in the novels are well connected. He tells his stories in a chronological sequence. For example in *Xkwa Ruo Oge Ya Q Daa*, love is the major theme. The love affair and other trials between Ngozi Qnwxka and Chude and their eventual marriage are narrated chronologically.

In the findings of tone in Ubesie’s novels we observe that Ubesie uses many tones in narrating his stories such as advisory tone, derision, warning, disappointment, satiric etc to correct and condemn some societal ills. For example, satirical novels ridicule ideas, persons, organizations or even mankind. From classical times, satire has been used to mock human vices and frailties. Using *Ukpaka M[Ir[ Onye Xb]am* as an example, Ubesie ridicules the attitude of some parents who ‘love’ the bride – price to be paid on their daughters more than their daughters themselves.

In the area of style, Ubesie’s use of language gives him enviable quality which no other Igbo writer has. In his use of language we observe that Ubesie’s language is devoid of ambiguity for his readers easily understand him. His choices of words enable the readers to read his works with ease and understanding.

In addition, Ubesie through his good language acquisition exhibits his gift of knowledge. This he does through his assemblage of words manifested in his use of figurative language, in the description of his character’s appearance, actions, inner feelings, values, and ordering of events. All these help to enhance the readers’ comprehension of the novels.

In Ubesie’s hand, anecdotes, similes, proverbs, metaphors, personification, wit, humour, myths, prose rhythm, irony, imagery and symbolism among others are employed so uniquely that his reader is trapped, confounded and begins to wonder at such literary dexterity, stylistic elegance and uniqueness in approach. All these go to point that Ubesie is conscious of his art and he worked hard to accomplish it.
Although Ubesie is now dead, he has assumed the form of immortality as he continues to speak to us and we continue to hear his melodious voice, his rhetoric and oratory in the medium of his six published novels under review.

### 7.1 Conclusion

In conclusion, we can state that Ubesie’s novels stimulate both pleasure and thought. The characters are, on the whole, sufficiently endowed with convincing attributes. The central theme running through all his novels is the dominance of ego. This is made manifest in *Ukpaka Miijı Onye Ubiam, Jọp Obinna, Úkwa Ruọ Oge ya and Isi Akwu Dara N’ Ala*. Ubesie is a prolific writer and a good story teller. He has left an indelible mark in the evolution of Igbo novel. Ubesie is truly an accomplished Igbo novelist who writes in Igbo and about the Igbo using Igbo tradition and culture and bringing in contemporary issues in his works. His major concern as a writer is the presentation of realities for a better change of the society. His themes deal with universal phenomena such as marriage, war, love etc which are the basis of his success as an Igbo novelist. His approach and vision have to deal effectively with social realities. All stylistic devices employed by Ubesie are directed towards elucidating the themes. His technique of writing and messages possess a serious challenge to other Igbo novelists. Thus, Tony Ubesie is the eagle on the iroko as far as Igbo prose fiction is concerned, and he has achieved for Igbo novel what Achebe achieved in English prose fiction. Tony Uchenna Ubesie’s fame as a novelist is as result of his mastery of the Igbo language. This makes his work easy to read and to understand. Emenyeọnụ (1984:11) describes Ubesie as a very important contemporary Nigerian creative artist whose distinction as a writer lies in his stylistic innovations and thematic realism. He creates a fresh awareness to familiar themes and discusses them in relation to contemporary social and cultural issues in ways that demonstrate the author’s understanding of the varying themes that suit any condition. Language is the wheel on which every literary work moves. Ubesie’s use of creative language can be seen in two ways: his use of existing possibilities within a language and when he goes beyond the established possibilities existing in a language.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


Sterne, L. (1769). Tristram Shandy vol. 6: 70-71


The encyclopaedia Americana.


TONY UBESIE AS AN IGBO NOVELIST

BY

ACHOMADU OLUCHI
PG/MA/08/49792

DEPARTMENT OF LINGUISTICS, IGBO AND OTHER NIGERIAN LANGUAGES

JULY, 2011
TONY UBESIE AS AN IGBO NOVELIST

A RESEARCH PROJECT PRESENTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF
LINGUISTICS, IGBO AND OTHER NIGERIAN LANGUAGES, UNIVERSITY OF
NIGERIA, NSUKKA

IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF
DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS

BY

ACHOMADU OLUCHI

PG/MA/08/49792

JULY, 2011
This thesis has been approved for the Department of Linguistics, Igbo and other Nigerian Languages, University of Nigeria, Nsukka

____________________     ______________________
Supervisor       Head of Department

____________________     _______________________
Dean, Faculty of Arts       External Examiner
CERTIFICATION

Achomadu Oluchi, a postgraduate student in the Department of Linguistics, Igbo and other Nigerian Languages with registration number PG/MA/08/49792 has satisfactorily completed the requirements for courses and research project work for the degree of M.A. in Igbo Written Literature and Stylistics. The work contained in this project is original and has not been submitted in part or full for any other Diploma or in degree of this or any other University.

____________________     _____________________
Head of Department       Supervisor
DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my darling husband, Apostle K.C.T Ezeoma for his uncommon, valuable and uncountable support and kindness during the course of my study.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This work is not the effort of one person alone. A good number of people contributed towards its successful completion and I am faced with the difficulty of expressing gratitude to each and everyone of them. Be that as it may, some names need to be mentioned for their extraordinary roles.

Firstly, my gratitude goes to God for my life, good health, knowledge and wisdom which he granted me during the course of the research. I say a million thanks to Him.

I wish to specially thank my noble supervisor, Prof. I.U Nwadike for his fatherly advice, encouragement and untiring efforts in standardizing the work. I also thank him greatly for releasing his Ph.D thesis and other relevant materials, which I have drawn heavily from in the process of organizing this work. His constructive criticisms were of immense help. I also thank Dr. B.M Mbah for his care, acceptance and assistance in reading my work through it various stages.

I am indebted to the Head of Department of Linguistics, Igbo and Other Nigerian Languages, Prof C.N Okebalama, Prof. G.I Nwoozuzu and Dr. E.S Ikeokwu for their wonderful inspiration, encouragements and suggestions.

I express my gratitude to other academic and non-academic members of staff of the Department of Linguistics, Igbo and Other Nigerian Languages, University of Nigeria, Nsukka for their friendly dispositions.

My warmest gratitude goes to my fellow postgraduate students, Miss Catherine Asogwa, Mrs. Ezeoliaku Udoka, Mrs. Okanume Augusta, Rev. Sr. Okoye Louisa and others.

Finally, I sincerely thank my darling husband, Apostle K.C.T Ezeoma and my son Ezeoma Mentor for their patience and understanding throughout the duration of this work.

I also express my thanks to all who wished me well during this research work. Their names are too numerous to mention here. May the good God bless them all.

Achomadu, Oluchi

11th July, 2011
Abstract

This study examines Tony Ubesie as an Igbo novelist. The purpose of the study is to assess Ubesie’s six novels and then establish Ubesie rightly as an accomplished Igbo novelist. Ubesie’s treatment of themes, settings, character and characterization, point of view, tone, plot and language in the six novels of study are examined. Using historical and stylistic approaches the study finds out that Tony Ubesie’s fame as a novelist is as a result of his mastery of the Igbo language usage. This makes his work easy to read and to understand. Ubesie is a very important Nigerian creative artist whose distinction as a writer lies in his stylistic innovation and thematic realism. He creates a fresh awareness to familiar themes and discusses them in relation to contemporary social and cultural issues in ways that demonstrate the author’s understanding of the varying themes that can suit contemporary environment. Ubesie’s use of creative language can be seen in two ways: his use of existing possibilities within a language and when he goes beyond the established possibilities existing in a language. Thus, he uses conformity and deviation to create beauty in his literary works. He presents his heroes and heroines in the third person point of view. Ubesie achieves a lot of aesthetics through both conformity and deviance from the norms of everyday use and delineation in prose. The study therefore submits that Ubesie is an accomplished Igbo prose writer who has achieved what Achebe achieved in English prose writing. He is indeed the eagle on the Iroko as far as the Igbo novel is concerned.
# TABLE OF CONTENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title page</td>
<td>i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approval page</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certification</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedication</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgement</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>vi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table of content</td>
<td>vii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.0 Background of study</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Statement of problem</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Purpose of study</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Scope of study</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 Significance of study</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5 Research methodology</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5.1 Data collected/Analysis</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.0 Preamble</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Theoretical studies</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.1 Novel</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.2 Romance</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.3 Setting</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.4 Character/Characterization</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.5 Point of view</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.6 Theme</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.7 Tone</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.8 Plot</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.9 Language</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Empirical studies</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER THREE: SYNOPSIS OF TONY UBESIE’S NOVELS</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER FOUR: SETTINGS THEMES, CHARACTERS/CHARACTERIZATION, POINTS OF VIEW, AND TONES IN TONY UBESEI’S SIX NOVELS

4.0 Settings in Ubesie’s Novels -- -- -- -- -- -- 25
4.1 Themes in Ubesie’s Novels -- -- -- -- -- -- 27
4.2 Character/Characterization in Ubesie’s Novels -- -- -- -- -- -- 33
4.3 Point of View in Ubesie’s Novels -- -- -- -- -- -- 45
4.4 Tones in Ubesie’s Novels -- -- -- -- -- -- 47

CHAPTER FIVE: PLOT OF UBESEI’S SIX NOVELS

5.0 Plot of Ubesie’s six novels -- -- -- -- -- -- 51
5.1 Elements of Plot in Ubesie’s six Novels -- -- -- -- -- -- 54

CHAPTER SIX:
Language in Ubesie’s Novels -- -- -- -- -- -- 57

CHAPTER SEVEN: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

7.0 Findings -- -- -- -- -- -- -- -- 67
7.1 Conclusion -- -- -- -- -- -- -- -- 69
Bibliography -- -- -- -- -- -- -- -- 70