

**The Grammatical Function of Conjunction in Adichie's *AMERiCANAH***

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**Abstract**

This paper explores Adichie's use of the device of conjunction to make obvious the causes, purposes, and or conditions of the various episodes in the narration of her reconstructed social realities in *AMERiCANAH*. Anchored on the concept of Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) as its theoretical framework, this paper explicates how the device of conjunction is deployed as a narrative strategy with which textual cohesion is configured in the novel. The various devices of conjunction deployed in the novel, at some point, function more than essential cohesive devices to denote what could be inferred from the relationships of the various episodes. Twelve (12) extracts which are purposively selected from the novel are subjected to discourse analysis. Deductions from the analysis indicate that the uses of conjunctive devices like additive, adversative, causal and temporal, have contributed immensely to the quality of textual cohesion in the novel. As a discourse strategy deployed by Adichie, the devices of conjunction have enhanced not only the cohesion of the various lexical and grammatical units in the novel into meaningful units of utterances but expatiate the causes, purposes and the various conditions for the episodes which give *AMERiCANAH* a unique textual configuration.

**Key Words:** Systemic Functional Linguistics, causal, adversative, temporal, textual cohesion

**Introduction**

The functions language performs in literature, and the influence of linguistics in literature has been one of the most widely discussed topics in literary criticism in recent times. Literary language is typically different, difficult and challenging with the potentials of making considerable demands on the reader and even greater demands on the critic (Jefferson and Robey 1988). These arguments have made it increasingly difficult for contemporary literary critics to ignore the form and functions of language in literary

discourse, especially now that linguistics studies have evolved in a direction that has increased its colossal explanatory prospects in literary studies.

The literary discourse uses language in ‘special ways’ to achieve literary effects which are absent or not given prominence in other forms of language use. These ‘special ways’ underline the demeanour literary discourse exerts on language it uses. It appears that, literature assembles arbitrary linguistic devices such as sounds, imagery, syntax, meter, and rhyme, and with diverse semantic properties and styles, among other forms of language resource for literary purposes of significations of social realities. The text, therefore, is a unified linguistic structure; and this unity is the source for the concept of textual cohesion. Apparently, grammatical cohesion, which is an aspect of textual cohesion, explicates the various grammatical means by which sentences and paragraphs are linked together to maintain a complete degree of continuity and semantic intact between one part of a text to another. The concern of grammatical cohesion is therefore with the connections in the semantic relation between words, phrases and clauses that compose the sentences and paragraphs that constitute the texts. Halliday and Hasan (1976) identify four kinds of semantic relation that generate grammatical cohesion in the texture of texts these include: reference, substitution, ellipsis and conjunction. Each of these components are further categorised into subsets depending on the particular referential role each category perform that generate grammatical cohesion in the texts. For the purpose of this analysis, analytical attention is only given to the grammatical functions performed by conjunctions such as additive, adversative, causal, and temporal cohesive devices towards enhancing of textual cohesion and creative credence in Adichie’s *AMERiCANAH* (henceforth referred to as *AH*). The import of this analysis is therefore to examine the creative authenticity and the semantic implications of these conjunctions on the narrative and textual network in the novel.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Conjunction is considered as the logical connections that exist between the grammatical figures that either adds, compares, specifies time or establishes the causes, purposes and conditions of different sequences of events in the field of social activity. Halliday and Hasan (1976) regard conjunctions as performing either general or specific functions in the logical relations radiating in discourses. They are of the opinion that, the grammatical relations prompted by conjunctions include expression of structural meanings that presuppose the occurrence of other sequence of events. Conjunctive relations systematically link, either within or between structures of the sentence, what is to follow into what has gone before in the text into coherent meaningful units by coordinating the relationship between linguistic elements that occur in succession.

Hoey (1991) observes that conjunctions contribute to the semantic organisation of the text thus standing on their own as a category covering the usage of adjunct-like elements in the sentences. Eggs (2004), on the other hand, submits that, conjunctions ‘... express the logical meanings of elaboration, extension and enhancement’ (162). Apparently, conjunction refers to the logical meanings that link figures of expression in sequences; an analytical situation which might have informed Lonyangapuo (2015) to define the concept as ‘words that are used to conjoin other words, phrases clauses and

even sentences' (48). Other discourse analysts such as Paltridge consider conjunctions as being cohesive in the sense that the coordinating and subordinating conjunctive elements facilitate a smooth unification of '...phrases, clauses or sections of a text in such a way that they express the logical semantic relationship between them' (Paltridge 139). Consequently, as a grammatical mechanism of accomplishing cohesion in textures of texts, conjunction connects by expressing certain meanings which presuppose the presence of other components in the discourse (Halliday and Hasan 226).

These conjunctive elements, either in additive, adversative, temporal or in causal form (Halliday and Hasan 1976, Halliday and Matthiessen 2004, Bloor and Bloor 2004), are regarded as being cohesive not in themselves but indirectly by the nature of the specific semantic trappings that make them to perform the grammatical function that presuppose the presences of other events in the discourse (Halliday and Hasan 226). As a discourse element, additive conjunction refers to the use of 'and'; as the grammatical device which connects series of events or units of arguments in a succession between or within the structure of the sentence. The lexical element 'and', according to Halliday and Hasan, coordinates the relationship between pairs of items functioning more or less anywhere in the structure of the language; these pairs may be nominal groups, verbs or verbal groups, adverbs or adverbial groups; or they may be clauses (234). These pairs, when joined by a conjunctive coordinator, 'and', function as a single complex structure.

An adversative conjunction, on the other hand, refers to grammatical elements that relate information either within or between sentences that is contrary to the expectations of what is being said. Systemic Functional Linguists, Halliday and Hasan (1976) and Halliday and Matthiessen (2004), observe that, the simplest form of an adversative conjunctive relation is established between sentences when the word 'yet' occurs at the initial position in the sentence, and in some other words like 'but', 'however' and 'though' which are also placed in the initial position of sentences also create adversative grammatical condition. However 'but' is said to set off a different kind of adversative conjunctive relation from 'yet' in sense that 'yet' combines with 'and' to prompt this relation, whereas 'but' does not. For this reason, there are grammatical sentences that begin with 'and yet' but never with 'and but' (Halliday and Hasan 250). Furthermore, the lexical element 'however' is said to establish an adversative grammatical condition that is different from 'yet' and 'but' in the sense that it can occur in the non-initial position in the sentence in which case it can co-occur with initial 'and' or 'but' but not with 'yet'. Furthermore, 'however' is used for emphatic stress, whereas 'yet' and 'but' are normally spoken as reduced syllables and are recognised tonal variants for the purposes of contrast (Halliday and Hasan 250 - 251). It is interesting to note that these differences rather reinforced arguments that adversative conjunctive elements perform different degrees of grammatical function by tying structural units into meaningful utterances.

Analysis of causal conjunction in Halliday and Hasan (1976) and Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) provides that, this grammatical situation establishes the consequence or effect of an action by setting off a grammatical condition that explicates why and how an event occurred and then draws conclusions or counter arguments either within or

between sentences. Causal conjunctive relation is established by words such as ‘so’, ‘thus’, ‘hence’, ‘therefore’, ‘consequently’, and with expressions such as ‘as a result (of that)’; which in some linguistic situations these elements are combined with ‘and’ in their initial-position to establish the consequence or effect of an action. Based on the functions causal conjunctions perform, Halliday and Hasan classify causal conjunction into general, specific ones, reversed, conditional and respective causal subcategories. On the one hand, these divisions are however not distinguished in the simplest form of expressions with ‘so’, which means ‘as a result of this’, ‘for this reason’, and ‘for this purpose’ (257- 259). However, when expressed as prepositional phrases, on the other hand, they tend to be distinct and perfectly perform the grammatical function of textual cohesion.

Temporal conjunctive relation, on the other hand, occurs when the sequence of events in sentences or between sentences are related and reflected in terms of time; that is to say that an event that occurred is followed by another in a sequential order. Temporal conjunction links, and or creates grammatical cohesion by signalling of time and sequence of events in texts. This connection is in terms of time, is expressed by its simplest form ‘*then*’, ‘*next*’, ‘*after that*’, ‘*next day*’, ‘*until then*’, ‘*at the same time*’, ‘*at this point*’, ‘*later*’, or with numeral like: ‘*firstly*’, ‘*secondly*’ or ‘*thirdly*’. The markers like: ‘*then*’, ‘*next*’, ‘*after that*’, ‘*the next day*’, ‘*at this point*’... are temporal conjunctive categories that expresses sequences of events in terms of time while the numerals like: ‘*firstly*’, ‘*secondly*’, ‘*thirdly*’, rather itemise the various stages of events in the text (Halliday and Hasan 261- 273). In this analysis, only additive, adversative, temporal and causal types of conjunction are used to examine the selected extracts in attempts to ascertain the textual configurations in Adichie’s AH.

### **The cohesive grammatical functions of Additive, adversative, temporal and causal conjunctions in *AMERiCANAH***

The very first sentence in this novel is laced with an additive conjunction which Adichie uses to stock pile information and build up the narrative system of the story. The first sentence of AH:

Extract [1]: Princeton, in the summer, smelled of nothing, and although Ifemelu liked the tranquil greenness of the many trees, the clean streets and stately homes, the delicately overpriced shops and the quiet, abiding air of earned grace, it was this, the lack of a smell, that most appealed to her... (*AMERiCANAH* 3)

The sentence in the above extract [1] can be segmented into four different clauses that are discussing how Ifemelu feels Princeton smell in the summer: [a] ‘...smelled of nothing’, [b] ‘...Ifemelu liked the tranquil greenness of the many trees, the clean streets’, [c] ‘...stately homes, the delicately overpriced shops’, and [d] ‘... the quiet, abiding air of earned grace ...the lack of a smell...’ The first clause ‘Princeton, in the summer, smelled of nothing...’ the second clause: ‘...although Ifemelu liked the tranquil greenness of the many trees, the clean streets...’, the third clause: ‘...stately homes, the delicately overpriced shops’ and the fourth clause: ‘...the quiet, abiding air of earned grace...’ is linked with the additive conjunction ‘and’ which serves as a source of additional

information to substantiate how ‘Princeton, in the summer, smelled of nothing’ though these other qualities ‘...most appealed to her...’

The following extract [2] demonstrates how the various strands of narration are developed through the application of additive conjunction.

Extract 2: [a] He had transferred from the University secondary school in Nsukka, and only days after, everyone knew of the swirling rumours about his mother. [b] She had fought with a man, another Professor at Nsukka, a real fight; punching and hitting, and she had won, too, even tearing his clothes, and so she was suspended for two years and had moved to Lagos until she could go back (*AMERiCANAH* 53).

For the purpose of analysis the above extract [2] is divided into two parts. The first part marked [a] which is the first sentence in the structure: ‘He had transferred from the University secondary school in Nsukka, and only days after, everyone knew of the swirling rumours about his mother ...; is further subdivided into two clauses. The first clause provides a useful clue ‘...had transferred from University secondary school in Nsukka...’, and the second part of it which is introduced by additive conjunction ‘and’ supply the much needed details as to why he had to transfer from ‘University secondary school in Nsukka’. The second sentence [b]: *She had fought with a man, another Professor at Nsukka, a real fight...and she had won, too,... and so she was suspended for two years and had to moved to Lagos...*. This second sentence can be segmented into three clauses. The first clause: ‘*She had fought with a man, another Professor at Nsukka*’ provides the information which is backed by the other clauses as additional information. In the second clause, the additional information accorded here is that ‘she had won, too,’ and the third clause ushers in the resultant effects of this action which was ‘two years’ suspension from the University’. The second sentence seems to provide substantive information as why Obinze had to transfer from University secondary school in Nsukka to Lagos.

It is characteristic narrative feature of Adichie to introduce a piece of information in the opening sentence and then use an additive conjunction to substantiate the information and build up the story in the narration. Just like in the above extracts, the following extract demonstrates this feat.

Extract 3: [a] During the week, Auntu Uju hurried home to shower and wait for The General and, on weekdays she lounged in her night dress, reading or cooking or watching television, because The General was in Abuja with his wife and children. [b] She avoided the sun and used creams in elegant bottles, so that her complexion, already naturally light, became lighter, brighter, and took on sheen. [c] Sometimes, as she gave instructions to her driver, Sola, or her gardener, Baba flower, or her two house helps, Inyang who cleaned and Chikodili who cooked, Ifemelu would remember Auntu Uju, the village girl brought to Lagos so many years ago, who Ifemelu’s Mother mildly complained was so parochial she kept touching the walls, and what was it with all these village people who could not stand on their feet without reaching out to smear

their palm on a wall? Ifemelu wondered if Auntie Uju ever looked at herself with the eyes of the girl she used to be. [d] Perhaps not. [e] Auntie Uju had steadied herself into her new life with a lightness of touch, more consumed by The General himself than by her new wealth (AMERiCANAH 74).

The above extract [3] is divided into five sentences offers something unique about Adichie's usage of additive conjunction. The first sentence [a] contains four clauses which are joined together by the additive conjunction 'and'. The first clause, situated in the first sentence [a]: *'During the week, Auntie Uju hurried home to shower...'* which introduces and raise the next information with the use of additive conjunction, 'and', the second clause in the first sentence [a]: *'wait for The General'* substantiates as to why she do hurry home during the week, and the third clause in the first sentence [a]: *'and on weekends, she lounged in her night dress, reading or cooking or watching television, because The General was in Abuja with his wife and children'* provides a further information as to what goes on during her weekends when 'The General' is in Abuja with his family. The insertion of 'and' in between 'wife and children' in the third clause of the first sentence [a] is worth noting; it stressed the fact that The General is not only having a wife, but children. The second sentence [b]: *'She avoided the sun and used creams in elegant bottles...'* comprises of two clauses which strengthened the information disclosed in the first clause of the first sentence [a] *'...Auntie Uju hurried home to shower...'* Apparently, the third sentence [c]:

Extract 4: Sometimes, as she gave instructions to her driver...or her gardener...or her two house help...Ifemelu would remember Auntie Uju, the village girl...who Ifemelu's mother mildly complained was so parochial she kept touching the walls, and what was it with all those village people who could not stand on their feet without reaching out to smear their palms on a wall? Ifemelu wondered if Auntie Uju ever looked at herself with the eyes of the girl she used to be (AMERiCANAH 74).

The sentence in above extract [4] offers very vital information that is not only linked together but substantiates the information provided in the preceding sentence but within it, the use of additive conjunction provides information that build up the various strands in the narration. Auntie Uju's past timid way of life in which she is refers to as a 'village girl' who has a parochial way of behaving comes up, and with additive conjunction, the second clause in the extract [4]: *'...what was it with all those village people who could not stand on their feet without reaching out to smear their palms on a wall?'*, comes in to give insights and further information not only about Auntie Uju's past way of life but the entire background where she comes from and as to why she is now behaving the way she is doing which makes *'Ifemelu wondered if Auntie Uju ever looked at herself with the eyes of the girl she used to be'*.

Furthermore, the insertion of adversative conjunction, 'but', to link clauses within sentences serves as a discursive means which qualifies and expresses a caveat regard to the main clause of the sentence. In the following extract [5], for instance, the

use of 'but' expresses the core meaning of adversative relation of contrary to expectation of what is being stated in the main clause.

Extract 5: Yemi had studied English at University and Obinze asked him what books he liked, keen to talk about something interesting at least, but he soon realized that, for Yemi, a book did not qualify as literature unless it had polysyllabic words and incomprehensible passages (AMERiCANAH 31).

The introduction of adversative conjunction, 'but', at the end of the second clause (...Obinze asked him what books he liked...) which cue in another clause (...he soon realized that, for Yemi, a book did not qualify as literature unless it had polysyllabic words and incomprehensible passages) creates contrary information to that which is contained in the main clause (Yemi had studied English at University). This sequential relation created by the use of adversative conjunction has enhanced grammatical cohesion of the various units of the sentence and at the same time expands the horizons of the narration.

The expanded features in extract [6] introduces a special feature in the use of adversative conjunction 'but' to expand the various details in the main clause by making it the head word of the sentence.

Extract 6: He said nothing; for a moment, he seemed lost, shrunken and lost. Ifemelu felt sorry for him. She asked him about the book placed face down on his lap, a familiar-looking book that she knew he had read before. She hoped he would give her one of his long talks about something like the history of China, and she would half listen as always, while cheering him up. But he was not in no mood for talk (AMERiCANAH 47).

The above extract [6] is divided into five sentences viz -a-viz:

[i] He said nothing; for a moment, he seemed lost, shrunken and lost.

[ii] Ifemelu felt sorry for him.

[iii] She asked him about the book placed face down on his lap, a familiar looking book that she knew he had read before.

[iv] She hoped he would give her one of his long talks about something like the history of China, and she would half listen as always, while cheering him up.

[v] But he was in no mood for talk.

The head-word position being occupied by the adversative conjunction 'but' as the fifth sentence [v] makes its usage in this instance as a unique conjunctive feature; different from its previous usages thus rendering another instance of inert-sentential link in the texture of texts. In the previous instance [extract 5], the adversative conjunction 'but' occurs between the sentences but in extract [6] it is the head word which introduces the sentence that contains contrary information to the concern raised in the preceding four sentences. The first sentence in extract [6] [i], which equates the theme of the discussion: 'He said nothing...' calls for the actions expressed in the second sentence in [6] [ii]: 'Ifemelu felt sorry for him', and subsequent actions in the third sentence in [6] [iii]: 'She asked him about the book placed face down on his lap, a familiar looking book that she knew he had read before', and then '...hoped that he would give her one of his long talks about something like the history of China, and she would half listen as always, while



*cheering him up*'. The fifth sentence in [6] [v], which introduces an adversative conjunction 'but' strengthens the connection between it, [6][v], and the first part of the thesis statement [6] [i]: '*He said nothing*', and even after probing him in sentence [6] [iv] yet he was not interested, which is confirmed by the insertion of adversative conjunction 'but' in the next sentence [6] [v]: '*But he was in no mood for talk*'.

Similarly, the use of conjunction 'but' in the next extract [7] has again signals another cohesive function performs by the adversative conjunction in facilitating textual cohesion in Adichie's AH.

Extract 7: [i] At least he still did not go to church. [ii] Ifemelu used to come home from church with her mother and find him sitting on the floor in the living room, sifting through his pile of LPs, and singing along to a song on the stereo. [iii] He always looked fresh, rested, as though being alone with his music had replenished him. [iv] But he hardly played music after he lost his job. [v] They came to find him at the dining table, bent over loose sheets of paper, writing letters to newspapers and magazines. [vi] And Ifemelu knew that, if given another chance, he would call his boss Mummy (*AMERiCANAH* 48).

Like in the previous extract [6] above, the adversative conjunction, 'but', occupies the head-word position to introduce a new sentence. And in this instance, it has not only introduced contrary information, but has served as an inter-sentential link between the first and the second phases of this exposition. To illustrate this further, this six-sentence extract can be divided into two major segments. The first segment comprises three sentences:

[i] At least he still did not go to church.

[ii] Ifemelu used to come home from church with her mother and find him sitting on the floor in the living room, sifting through his pile of LPs, and singing along to a song on the stereo.

[iii] He always looked fresh, rested, as though being alone with his music had replenished him.

[iv] But he hardly played music after he lost his job.

The second segment consist two sentences:

[vi] They came to find him at the dining table, bent over loose sheets of paper, writing letters to newspapers and magazines.

[vii] And Ifemelu knew that, if given another chance, he would call his boss Mummy.

The sentence labelled as [7iv] (*But he hardly played music after he lost his job.*) which have an adversative conjunction 'but' does not only introduce contrary information, but has linked the information contained in the first three sentences [7], [i], [ii] and [iii] with that which is supplemented in the last two sentences [7], [vi], and [vii] creating some sort of inter-sentential tie. The occurrence of additive conjunction 'and', in the initial position in [7vii] serves as an inter-sentential or the feature of adding arguments in sentences.

The conjunctive features examined in the following extracts designated [8i, ii and iii], demonstrate Adichie's use of temporal conjunctive time relation markers to unite



the various strands of in her narration seems to cue in more elaborate and definite conjunctive markers as she links the various episodes in her narration into a time frame.

Extract 8[i]: One day, the year Ifemelu turned ten, her mother came home from work looking different (*AMERiCANAH* 39).

[ii] ...that afternoon Ifemelu watched her mother's essence take flight...then, on Easter Saturday, a dour day, the first quiet Easter Saturday in Ifemelu's life, her mother ran out of the kitchen and said, 'I saw an angel' (*AMERiCANAH* 42).

[iii] God became genial and did not mind being commanded. Every morning, she woke the household up for prayers, and they would kneel on the scratchy carpet of the living room... Every morning, Ifemelu prayed for The General... (*AMERiCANAH* 44).

The above extracts in [8] marked as: [i], [ii] and [iii], also reveal how series of events are neatly woven together with the aid of temporal conjunctive markers. The extracts above demonstrate the use of general or non-specific time relation marker: '*one day*' [8i] and a more specific time marker: '*that afternoon*' [8ii] to build up the tempo of events and with the insertion of frequency time marker to: '*every morning*' [8iii]; the series of events to cohere into a meaningful unit.

The following eight extracts in [9] also display the functions of temporal time relation markers in facilitating grammatical cohesion in the novel.

Extracts 9 [i]: During the week, Aunty Uju hurried home to shower and wait for The General and on weekends, she lounged in her nightdress, reading or cooking or watching television, because The General was in Abuja with his wife and children (*AMERiCANAH* 74).

[ii]: The first time Ifemelu saw Aunty Uju's house in Dolphin Estate, she did not want to leave. The bathroom fascinated her, with its hot water tap, its gushing shower, and its pink tiles. The bedroom curtains were made of raw silk ...the living room had glass doors that slid noiselessly open and noiselessly shut. Even the kitchen was air-conditioned. She wanted to live there. It would impress her friends...and so she asked her parents if she could stay with Aunty during the week... it's closer to school, I won't need to take two buses. I can go on Mondays and come home on Fridays ...' "My understanding is that Uju has sufficient help", her father said. "It is a good idea", her mother said to her father... "She can visit Uju after school and on weekends. But she is not going to live there", her father said. For days, Ifemelu sulked... (*AMERiCANAH* 74-5)

[iii]: On the day of the coup, a close friend of The General's called Aunty Uju to ask if she was with him (*AMERiCANAH* 75).

[iv]: ON A MUSLIM HOLLIDAY, one of those two-day holidays when non-Muslims in Lagos said "Happy Sallah" to whoever they assumed to be a Muslim, often gatemen from the north, and NTA showed footage after footage of men slaughtering rams, The General promised to visit; it would be the first time he spent a public holiday with Aunty Uju (*AMERiCANAH*, 81).

[v]: ...the cake a driver delivered the next morning, with "I'm sorry my love" written on it in blue frosting... (*AMERiCANAH* 83).

- [vi]: AUNTY UJU'S PREGNANCY came like a sudden sound in a still night ...LATER, Ifemelu would think of the pregnancy as symbolic. It marked the beginning of the end and made everything else seem rapid, the months rushing past, time hurtling forward. There was Aunt Uju, dimpled with exuberance, her face aglow, her mind busy with plans as her belly curved outwards. Every few days, she came up with a new girl's name for the baby
- [vii] ...FOR DIKE'S FIRST BIRTHDAY PARTY, The General brought a live band...
- [viii] The General died the next week; in a military plane crash...it was a Saturday... (AMERiCANAH 83-87).

The extracts in [9] marked as [i], [ii], [iii], [iv], [v], [vi], [vii], and [viii] demonstrate the accuracy in sense of time relation which conveniently joins the various strands of events in the narration. This assertion is informed by Adichie's careful knitting of the various episodes into time frame in order to project the sequence of their occurrence. The above extracts which are drawn from chapter six of the novel; expanding from the opening of the chapter to its end. The events are tied with time in the sense of 'weeks' and which is then hastened into 'days'.

In this respect, chapter six (6) of *AMERiCANAH* begins with this brand of temporal marker '*during the week*' as in [9i]; from this time relative marker, Adichie recounts what goes on during the week in the lives of Aunt Uju, The General and Ifemelu and their families; the major characters in the narration. What is of particular note is the unveiling of activities during the days of the week and what goes on during the weekends. Given this time frame, Ifemelu's desire to stay with her Aunt is expressed as '*I can go on Mondays and come home on Fridays*'. The reaction to refusal of Ifemelu's father to allow her stay with her Aunt 'during the week' is simply captured in '*for days, Ifemelu sulked*' [9ii]. The insertion of this temporal time marker, '*for days*', [25(a)iii] usual of Adichie, marked the turn of events in the narration; from Ifemelu, Aunt Uju and The General to events surrounding the life of Ifemelu's father and mother. In a similar manner, the insertion of the temporal time relation marker, '*on the day of the coup*' [9iii] later in the narration marked the introduction of a different phase of events which are however neatly tied with the preceding events.

'*ON A MUSLIM HOLIDAY, one of those two-day holidays...*' [9iv] is another instance of temporal time relation marker which Adichie includes to introduce another phase of events in the narration to embrace the preparation to host The General on a day like this by Aunt Uju. And usual of Adichie, the day's event come to a close with a sharp inclusion of a conclusive temporal conjunctive marker: '*Aunt Uju did not come downstairs until evening, when Adesuwa and Uche came to visit*', then '*the cake a driver delivered the next morning...*' as marker that opens and serve at the same time as a conclusive conjunctive marker that signals the end of activities of the phase of those events.

The nature of grammatical cohesion which Adichie achieve through her use of temporal conjunctive markers is introduced to announce 'Aunt Uju's pregnancy which

'came like a sudden sound in a still night' [9vi] which '*later, Ifemelu would think of the pregnancy as*. Dike's birth is also captured in sequences reflected in temporal time relations: '*FOR DIKE'S FIRST BIRTHDAY PARTY, The General brought a live band*' [9vii]. Time markers are simply the dice with which Adichie tells her story. The General is simply said to have '*...died the next week*' [9viii]. 'Next week' here relates with time captured in the 'first birthday party'. And to give the exact time of the event, Adichie adds '*...Saturday afternoon*'. This coheres with the preceding events consequently brings the entire sequence of events into one meaningful unit. Temporal relations as expressed in Adichie's narration in *AMERiCANAH* therefore do not only signal sequence in real time but they also reflect the various stages in the sequence of events in the narration.

There are also instances that indicate the use of the reversed brand of the causal-effect relation marker 'because' to unite and build the various strands of her narration into a meaningful whole. The very first beginning of *AH* elucidates this assertion:

Extract [10]: Princeton, in the summer, smelled of nothing, and although Ifemelu liked the tranquil greenness of the many trees, the clean streets and stately homes, the delicately overpriced shops and the quiet, abiding air of earned grace, it was this, the lack of a smell, that most appealed to her, perhaps because the other American cities she knew well had all smelled distinctly (*AMERiCANAH* 3).

The above extract [10], which is in a single sentence, contains four clauses: [a] '*Princeton, in the summer, smelled of nothing*' [b] '*...and although Ifemelu liked the tranquil greenness of the many trees, the clean streets and stately homes, the delicately overpriced shops and the quiet, abiding air of earned grace, it was this,*' [c] '*...the lack of a smell, that most appealed to her*', [d] '*... perhaps because the other American cities she knew well had all smelled distinctly*'. Each of the four clauses contain a very useful information to either sustain the claim that 'Princeton, in the summer, smelled of nothing', or to bring out some of its other features that make it 'smelled of nothing'. And each of these clauses is tied to one another by a conjunctive device, especially the punctuation mark, the insertion of the reversed causal relation marker 'perhaps because' which introduces the cause of this comparison further strengthen the intra-grammatical bound between these clauses.

In the following extract [11], instead of the usual intra-sentential bound, it is observed that Adichie has employed the causal relation marker to enhance inter-sentential relation to indicate the cause-effect relations of the various sentences:

Extract 11: [a] That first summer was Ifemelu's summer of waiting; the real America, she felt, was just around the next corner she would turn. [b] Even the days, sliding one into the other, languorous and limpid, the sun lingering until very late, seemed to be waiting. [c] There was a stripped-down quality to her life, a kindling starkness, without parents and friends and home, the familiar landmarks that made her who she was. [d] And so she waited, writing Obinze long, detailed letters, calling him once in a while – calls kept brief because Aunt Uju said she could not waste the phone card – and spending time with Dike (*AMERiCANAH* 111).

Extract [11] above is made up of four sentences; viz:

[a] That first summer was Ifemelu's summer of waiting, the real America; she felt, was just around the corner she would turn.

[b] Even the days, sliding one into the other, languorous and limpid, the sun lingering until very late, seemed to be waiting.

[c] There was a stripped-down quality to her life, a kindling starkness, without parents and friends and home, the familiar landmarks that made her who she was.

[c] And so she waited, writing Obinze long detailed letters, calling him once in a while – calls kept brief because Auntie Uju said she could not waste the phone card – and spending time with Dike.

The above four sentences [a-c] have grammatically cohered with each other due to the insertion of 'and so'; a causal relation marker, in the fourth sentence, which has shown the cause-effect, ties the four sentences into a meaningful unit. There are two causal relation markers: the general causal marker 'and so' and the reversed causal marker 'because' in the above sentences which are all in the fourth sentence. The grammatical feature 'waiting' present in the first and the second sentences: [a] *The first summer was Ifemelu's summer of waiting, the real America, she felt, was just around the corner she would turn.* [b] *Even the days, sliding one into the other, languorous and limpid, the sun lingering until very late, seemed to be waiting.* have made the presence of the general causal relation marker 'and so (she waited)' to cohere with the preceding three sentences. This inter-sentential cohesive marker 'and so' is further strengthened with the presence of the reversed causal relation marker, 'because' which act as an intra-sentential marker to instantiate 'scanty calls'; the reason for the introduction of the second clause in the fourth sentence. Consequently, while 'and so' functions as an inter-sentential link, which unites the preceding three sentences, the reversed causal relation marker, 'because' connects the two clauses in the fourth sentence.

Similarly, conjunctive indices in extract [12] also demonstrate how the insertion of the causal relation marker facilitates the attainment of grammatical cohesion in the narration:

Extract 12: [i] The toilets were not bad, some urine outside the urinal, some unfinished flushing; cleaning them was much easier than it must have been for the cleaners of the campus toilets back in Nsukka, with the streaks of shit smeared on the walls that had always made him wonder why anybody would go to all that trouble. [ii] And so he was shocked, one evening, to walk into a stall and discover a mound of shit on the toilet lid, solid, tapering, centred as though it had been carefully arranged and the exact spot had been measured ( *AMERICANA* 236-237).

The extract above consists of two sentences: [a] *The toilets were not bad, some urine outside the urinal, some unfinished flushing; cleaning them was much easier than it must have been for the cleaners of the campus toilets back in Nsukka, with the streaks of shit smeared on the walls that had always made him wonder why anybody would go to all that trouble.* [ii] *And so he was shocked, one evening, to walk into a stall and discover a*

*mound of shit on the toilet lid, solid, tapering, centred as though it had been carefully arranged and the exact spot had been measured.* The inter-sentential causal conjunction marker ‘and so’ in the second sentence in extract [12ii] introduces the result stated in the previous sentence. With this cohesive relation between sentences the events in the narration are reflected in a typical sequence.

### Conclusion

The above extracts demonstrate Adichie’s use of the device of conjunction to relate the various episodes in her work into meaningful coherent units. The use of temporal conjunction, seem to set a stage in the narration of events equivalent to exposition which conforms with the traditional style of story-telling. Apparently, the insertion of the temporal conjunctive device at various points create a linked to exposition which leads to climax, hence the tempo of the story seems to rise with their inclusion, and then to come to denouement or resolution. These narrative strategies of exposition-climax-denouement are the three axis of the traditional pyramidal mode of narration. For instance, the temporal conjunctive marker: ‘*during the week*’ in [9i] (*AMERiCANAH*, 74); recounts what goes on during the week in the lives of Auntie Uju, The General and Ifemelu and their families, the major characters in the narration. What is particularly interesting is how activities during the days of the week ascend to reveal what goes on during the weekends. The use of the device conjunction has indeed enhanced the sprouting of structural configurations that have piloted the attainment of textual cohesion in Adichie’s *AMERiCANAH* to give the work its artistic uniqueness.

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