

THE ELOQUENT WOMAN: A CONTEMPORARY FEMININE RHETORICAL  
ANALYSIS OF SELECTED SPEECHES BY CHIMAMANDA NGOZI ADICHIE.

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Clarina Mabuku Museta

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SUPERVISOR: Dr T. C. Smit

## ABSTRACT

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie is best known for her literary works and literary achievements. The Nigerian novelist is also a public rhetor whose orations are easily accessible on the internet, YouTube and other sites. Adichie's public speaking gained much recognition after her TED (Technology, Entertainment, Design) talk titled "The danger of a single story," in which she openly discussed stereotypes and their power to dehumanise and malign people. She has since then delivered talks in Africa, America and Europe. This study is qualitative in nature and studied nine selected speeches by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie found on the internet, YouTube. The nine speeches studied were purposively sampled in order to carry out an in-depth analysis on feminine rhetoric. The study employed Campbell's five characteristics of feminine rhetorical theory as a checklist for the analysis of the selected speeches. The study, furthermore, utilised Aristotle's rhetorical proofs (*ethos*, *pathos* and *logos*) to shed light on the author's choice of rhetorical strategies. From the analysis conducted in this study, it was found that Adichie's speeches reflected the feminine style because each of the five characteristics was present in the selected speeches. The analysis of Adichie's speeches also found that the rhetor had employed Aristotle's rhetorical proofs (*ethos*, *pathos* and *logos*) in her orations. Adichie, furthermore, used rhetorical devices such as metaphors, imagery, allusions, pronouns and rhetorical questions as rhetorical strategies in an attempt to persuade her audience. In addition to the literary devices, supra-segmental and paralinguistic features, such as tone, pitch and intonation, were explored in the selected speeches. The study found that Adichie used a relaxed tone and that the intensity of her voice expressed her emotions at the time the speeches were delivered. It can be concluded that Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie is a feminine speaker because her oration exemplifies the feminine rhetorical style.

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**DEDICATION**

In loving memory of my dear Grandmother, Regina Sepiso Kwala.

Forever rest in peace kuku, till we meet again.

## DECLARATIONS

I, Clarina Mabuku Museta, declare hereby that this study is a true reflection of my own research, and that this work, or part thereof has not been submitted for a degree in any other institution of higher education.

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Clarina Mabuku Museta

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### **Introduction**

This study is an analysis of selected speeches by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie to determine how the author persuades her audience. This chapter looks at the orientation of the study, statement of the problem and research questions. Furthermore, it looks at the significance and limitations of the study.

It presents a layout of chapters comprising this thesis. Finally, it presents a summarising conclusion to the chapter.

#### **1.1 Orientation of the study**

In a careful analysis of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's speeches the study employs Kalyn Kohrs Campbell's theory of feminine rhetorical style as the study seeks to determine how Adichie uses the feminine style as a method of persuasion. In order to qualify as 'feminine style', Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's speeches should possess characteristics proposed in Campbell's theory of feminine rhetorical style, also known as the feminine style. These characteristics are discussed first in Campbell's (1973) essay titled *The rhetoric of women's liberation: An oxymoron*. The theory is further described in her book *Man cannot speak for her. Volume 1* (Campbell, 1989). The characteristics of feminine style include the use of personal tone, inductive reasoning, and attempts to invite audience participation, speaking from the perspective of a peer, as well as create identification with the audience.

Over the past forty years feminist analysis has transformed the field of rhetoric. Aldoory and Toth (2012) summarise feminist contributions to the field of rhetoric by identifying nine research agendas that have been taken up by feminine scholars in the forty years since

Campbell's (1973) ground breaking essay. These agendas include among others identity, media representation, and rhetoric and workplace issues. Similarly, Meyer (2007) assesses feminist contributions to the field of rhetoric by examining how feminism has reframed scholarly approaches to rhetoric. In the current study the contributions of feminist rhetoric to communication are highlighted and an agenda for future avenues of research is suggested. This includes the incorporation of power feminism through the use of intentional ambiguity, as well as expansions of inter-rhetorical reflexivity in feminist work and strategies for alliance building in classrooms and scholarly social communities.

Furthermore, Meyer (2007) notes that many scholars use Campbell's theory (1973) discussed in the essay *The rhetoric of women's liberation: An oxymoron* as the beginning for critical discussions of feminist rhetoric because it draws attention to women as communicators within the rhetorical frames. The feminist movement as a historical event contributed to the inclusion of women's voices in the field of rhetoric. Campbell (1989) notes that women were prohibited from speaking a prohibition reinforced by such powerful cultural authorities as Homer, Aristotle, as well as the Christian Scripture. Similarly, Glenn (1997) in her book *Rhetoric retold: Regendering the tradition from antiquity through resistance*, notes that in western culture the ideal woman has been disciplined by cultural codes that require a closed mouth, a closed body and a closed life. Doran (2010) adds that the women's exclusion from the rhetorical tradition initiated the emergence of feminine scholarship. Meyer (2007) notes that the essence of feminism is a rejection of domination, oppression and a critique of social systems or practices that assert power over particular individuals. When women began to reject domination and oppression, they gained a voice that professed itself in their rhetoric; hence, this study is significant as it studied the discourse of Adichie to show how Adichie professes her feminine views through the use of rhetoric.

Feminism is the theory of the social, political and economic equality of the sexes (Merriam Webster dictionary) as demonstrated in Beyoncé's (2013) track "Flawless". Contemporary feminist, Watson (2004) voiced the same idea when she delivered a speech at the United Nations' address on gender equality in which she demonstrated the need to bring men into feminism. She also argued that the unity of the two genders would lead to a better world for everyone.

According to Powers (2014) feminist rhetoric is the study and practice of feminist discourse in public and personal life by applying principles of rhetoric. Powers (2014) elaborates that feminine rhetoric is appropriate to express feelings and maintain harmony in groups of people parallels of the sexes and ornamental feminine identity. It is not merely an expression of feminine identity or exclusive to women, but a tool that can be used by men and women who seek to soothe, please, garner respect and unify addresses to each other. Foss and Foss (1991) argue that viewing women as communicators expands the definition of rhetoric to include activities or artefacts by women previously viewed as non-rhetorical. Similarly, Frederick (2009) argues that many contemporary rhetorical scholars have moved beyond focusing exclusively on public discourse, but include a cultural approach consisting of such media as photographs, statues and works of art as rhetorical. This study, therefore, analysed feminine speeches by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie found on the internet, YouTube and by so doing explored modern ways of communication on digital artefacts.

Frederick (2009) argues that the rhetorical critic recognises the potential for a rhetor to affect social change with her discourse. This trait proposed by Frederick (2009) is reflected in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's speeches. Adichie takes risks and is willing to be a voice for the voiceless. This fierce lady approaches public speaking from her stance as a fiction writer and believes in the power of discourse in humanising the story. Having lived partly in

America and Africa, it can be seen that Adichie uses her experiences of both these worlds to shape her speeches.

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie is one of the most celebrated young feminist writers and orators today. Anasuya (2015) argues that this Nigerian author is also one of the most accessible contemporary public intellectuals of our time, who has been giving compelling public lectures for years. Her speeches, lectures or talks (as they are sometimes referred to), reflect feminist views in the contemporary world which call for the participation of both men and women in gender matters such as the equality of the sexes. Adichie's speech on the necessity of feminism "We should all be feminists" delivered in 2013, was seen by over 8.4 million people on You Tube and is referred to in Beyoncé's single 'Flawless'. Furthermore, Adichie uses personal anecdotes, metaphors and personal experience to illustrate her point and persuade her audience in her talks. In her speech, "We should all be feminists," Adichie demonstrates the need to reclaim the word 'feminist' and to practise it in order to advocate for gender equality. Furthermore, Adichie talks about the importance of the intersection of oppression, racism and sexism, instead of silencing one for the benefit of the other. She narrates through a personal anecdote in the speech that "I was once talking about gender and a man said to me, 'Why does it have to be you as a woman? Why not you as a human being?' This type of question is a way of silencing a person's specific experiences. Of course I am a human being, but there are particular things that happen to me in the world because I am a woman. This same man by the way, would often talk about his experience as a black man."

Adichie is not only a literary icon, but a marvellous orator who uses discourse to speak openly and fearlessly on issues such as the portrayal of Africa through the global lens, gender roles and feminism. Adichie also advocates for human rights through her speeches, and presents to Africa and the world at large insight on gender matters that affect both men and women.

This study did not only analyse selected speeches by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie from a feminine approach, but also utilised the traditional rhetorical style by adopting Aristotle's rhetorical proofs of persuasion. Campbell, (as cited in Frederick, 2009) studied the role of rhetoric and applied Aristotle's tenets to political discourse. Campbell continued to adopt this method in studying the rhetoric of women because content remains significant to the speaker's style and language; therefore, Aristotle's rhetorical proofs were adopted in order to understand the different rhetorical proofs adopted by the speaker.

## **1.2 Statement of the problem**

Studies carried out by scholars on Adichie largely examined her authored texts consisting of novels and short stories. Mbakogu (2014), Wood (2013) and Simmonds (2014) analysed Adichie's speech "The danger of a single story" on the digital platform. However, there is a gap that exists here in the sense that scholars have explored only the authorial aspect of Adichie. Furthermore, studies that have been carried out on her speeches do little justice to her as an orator. Mbakogu (2014), Wood (2013) and Simmonds (2014) merely highlight some rhetorical proofs that the speaker utilised in the speech "The danger of a single story" on their internet blogs.

The trio found that Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie gave a persuasive speech on what she called 'The danger of a single story'. Adichie further explained that this danger had the power to start and fuel the vicious cycles of prejudice, racism and stereotypes that stole dignity from individuals, as well as specific groups of people. It was further found that Adichie employed Aristotle's proofs in her speech. She used *logos* and *pathos* when she employed real life situations and personal examples, as well as quotes from people such as John Locke to support her arguments and provide evidence. *Ethos* was present when Adichie used humour by telling personal stories.

These studies mentioned were presented on internet blogs. Works on internet blogs are not entirely academic. The current study, therefore, is different from the rhetorical analysis done by Mbakogu (2014), Wood (2013) and Simmonds (2014), as it is an academic work and not an analysis on the internet blog that serves to entertain readers. The study examined not one, but nine selected speeches by Adichie and employed the Feminine rhetorical theory to shed light on her use of style and language to present her feminist voice.

### **1.3 Research questions**

In order to do a careful analysis of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's speeches, the study addressed the following questions:

1. What kind of linguistic, stylistic and rhetorical evidence is used by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie to present her message?
2. What does Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's selection of details say about her knowledge and experience on race, gender and human rights?
3. How does Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie use narratives as a tool for crafting her speeches?
4. How does Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's use of para-linguistic and suprasegmental features contribute to the effect of the speeches?

### **1.4 Significance of the study**

The study will contribute to the field of feminine rhetoric. Meyer (2007) notes that the field of rhetoric tends to be generally driven by white women. Examining the discourse of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, therefore, provides a starting point for future studies in which black feminine speakers (Africans in particular), can be examined. The study aimed to contribute further to existing knowledge on Kalyn Kohrs Campbell's (1973) feminine rhetorical style.

Adichie is not only an acclaimed writer and a winner of various literary prizes, she is also an orator. This study, therefore, contributes to the understanding of the work by Adichie, as well as serves as ground breaking for the study of Adichie's discourse through the rhetorical lens. In so doing, it aims to justify the importance of feminine rhetoric.

Furthermore, Kredátusová (2009) argues that each speech is built by language in spoken form. The study was, therefore, based on the analysis of feminine speeches by Adichie on the internet, YouTube. The study aims to contribute to the analysis of digital artefacts as a way of modern communication. Furthermore, Kredátusová (2009) notes that a speech does not only consist of spoken words, but also of semiotic system such as mimic, body language and sound. Through the analyses of para-linguistic and suprasegmental features in Adichie's discourse, the study contributes to the analyses of rhetoric through verbal and non-verbal means.

### **1.5 Limitations of the study**

This study was limited to the analysis of nine (9) selected feminine speeches by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie and did not go beyond the boundaries of this scope. The study used the feminine style of rhetoric, as well as that of Aristotle's rhetorical proofs as frameworks for analysis. These limitations of the study served as an advantage to focus the study and provide an in-depth analysis of the speeches under study.

Adichie is an Igbo speaker; correctly transcribing Igbo terms proved to be difficult for the researcher, as the researcher is not an Igbo speaker. The researcher was however, able to transcribe Igbo terms correctly with the aid of an Igbo dictionary available on the internet. Further research can be done on Adichie's discourse from her stance as an Igbo speaker with regard to how the Igbo language may provide rhetorical significance to the speeches.

## **1.6 Layout of chapters**

Chapter One introduced the study. In Chapter Two the researcher presents reviewed literature that informed the study regarding feminine rhetoric, justifications to its emergence, as well as the feminine style of rhetoric. Finally, the chapter discusses Aristotle's three rhetorical proofs and how they are employed for persuasion.

Chapter Three discusses the methodology that was used by the researcher in order to carry out the study. The methodology comprised the research design, population and sample. The methodology furthermore comprised the research instruments, procedure, data analysis and research ethics.

In Chapter Four the researcher discusses the presentation, analysis and a discussion of the results obtained from the analysis of selected speeches by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie. The feminine style of rhetoric and Aristotle's rhetorical proofs will be used to critically analyse the data.

Chapter Five summarises Adichie's use of the feminine style of rhetoric, as well as her application of Aristotle's rhetorical proofs of persuasion. As per the data collected and analysed in this study, it also relates the findings to the literature reviewed in Chapter Two. The chapter finally discusses limitations and gives recommendations for future research.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

#### **Introduction**

This chapter analyses relevant academic literature and studies carried out on feminine rhetoric from the feminine and rhetorical perspectives. The chapter further discusses the emergence of the feminine style of rhetoric as a theoretical framework for feminine discourse. It furthermore reviews studies that have applied the feminine rhetorical theory to feminine discourse.

The chapter also reviews Aristotle's three proofs of rhetoric (*ethos, pathos, logos*) and how they have been used as means of persuasion in the speeches studied. The chapter finally discusses rhetorical devices that can be employed by a speaker in order to persuade the audience.

#### **2.1 About the rhetor**

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie is a novelist, nonfiction writer and short story writer from Nigeria. She is originally from a town called Abba in the Anambra State of Nigeria. Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie was born in Enugu and grew up in Nsukka, a university town in south-eastern Nigeria. She studied Medicine and Pharmacy for a year and a half at the University of Nigeria before moving to the United States of America, where she studied Communications and Political Science at the University of Drexel in Philadelphia. She later transferred to Eastern Connecticut State University in order to live closer to her sister.

She received a Bachelor's degree from Eastern Connecticut State University, graduating summa cum laude in 2001. Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie completed a Master's degree in creative writing at John Hopkins University in 2003 and in 2008 she received a Master of Arts in African Studies from Yale University.

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie is a universally acclaimed and contemporary African writer. She has been referred to as the most prominent of the acclaimed young anglophone authors that are succeeding in attracting contemporary readers to African literature. She is furthermore an author of three novels: *Purple hibiscus* (2003), *Half of a yellow sun* (2006) and *Americanah* (2013) as well as a short story collection, *The Thing around Your Neck* (2009).

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's work has been translated into thirty languages and has appeared in various publications, such as *The New Yorker*, *Granta*, *The O. Henry Prize Stories*, *The Financial Times*, and *Zoetrope*. Her first novel, *Purple hibiscus* won the Commonwealth Writers' Prize and the Hurston/Wright Legacy Award. Her second novel, *Half of a yellow sun* won the Orange Prize and was a National Book Critics Circle Award Finalist, a New York Times Notable Book and a People and Black Issues Book Review Best Book of the Year.

Her latest novel, *Americanah*, has received numerous accolades, including winning the National Book Critics Circle Award for Fiction and The Chicago Tribune Heartland Prize for Fiction, as well as being named one of the New York Times Ten Best Books of the Year. A recipient of a MacArthur Foundation Fellowship in 2016, she was conferred an honorary degree - Doctor of Humane letters honouris causa at John Hopkins University. Adichie lives partly in the United States of America and Nigeria where she teaches writing workshops.

Although Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie is known for her work with the written word, the Nigerian author is also a public speaker and has delivered talks in Africa, America and

Europe. Adichie's discourse is easily accessible on media platforms such as YouTube, Facebook, Twitter and the internet at large. These talks have been seen by millions of viewers worldwide and have made Adichie a household name, because they feature the author's views on pressing social issues such as race, gender, equality and feminism. This study analysed selected speeches by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie available on the internet, YouTube.

## **2.2 Defining rhetoric**

There are as many definitions of rhetoric as there are rhetors or public speakers existing today. For one to understand the analysis of speeches, it is important to discuss the meaning of the term 'rhetoric'. Kangira and Mungenga (2012) explain that ancient scholars studied rhetoric. Plato defined rhetoric as the art of winning the soul by discourse and Aristotle, an ancient scholar of rhetoric, defined rhetoric as the faculty of discovering in any particular case all the available means of persuasion.

Furthermore, Kangira and Mungenga (2012) report that instead of defining rhetoric, Cicero, another important scholar of ancient rhetoric, identified five parts of rhetoric. To Cicero rhetoric was one great art which comprised five lesser arts namely: inventio, dispositio, elocutio, memoria and pronunciatio. In addition to identifying the five important parts of rhetoric, Cicero argues that rhetoric is speech designed to persuade. Kangira and Mungenga (2012) finally note that Quintilian, another great scholar of rhetoric asserts that rhetoric is the art of speaking well. Rhetoric is used for the sole purpose of persuasion and persuasion is demonstrated as the sole purpose of rhetoric by Alo (2012), Asemanyi and Alofa (2015), Basseer and Alvi (2012) Oluremi (2013), and Wilkinfeld and Moriarty (2011), to mention but a few.

In his definition of rhetoric, Burke (1969) notes that rhetoric is “the use of words by human agents to form attitudes or induce actions in other agents” (p. 41). With this said, users of rhetoric employ it to influence others to follow their good or bad ideas. Furthermore, Burke (1969) asserts that in rhetoric “a speaker persuades an audience by the use of stylistic identifications; his act of persuasion may be the purpose of causing the audience to identify itself with the speaker's interests” (p. 46). When one considers the above definitions of rhetoric from ancient scholars, persuasion seems to be its underlying purpose. Through persuasion rhetors are said to be using any techniques at their disposal, in order to influence the audience into adopting their views, or doing exactly what the rhetors want their audience to do.

Although rhetoric stems from ancient scholars such as Plato, Aristotle, Cicero and Quintilian, it is a practice that is still largely practised today. Asemanyi and Alofah (2015), contemporary scholars define rhetoric as the art of discourse; an art that aims to improve the capabilities of writers or speakers that attempt to inform, persuade or motivate particular audiences in specific situations. Malmkjaer (2002) on the other hand, notes that rhetoric originated from the theory of how best a speaker or writer could, by application of linguistic devices, achieve persuasion.

Cronick (2002), points out that the study of rhetoric is used to explore how people employ language to achieve certain goals; that is, to convince others, establish power structures and make people do what the speaker wants the audience to do. The views of Malmkjaer (2002) and Cronick (2002) are best illustrated in a study by Oluremi (2013). Oluremi (2013) argues that political speeches are made by leaders to persuade, inform, correct and manipulate the audience. Oluremi (2013) carried out a stylistic and rhetorical analysis on Obafemi Awolowo’s speech called “It is not life that matters” and found that Awolowo had employed the use of the English language as a strategy of persuasion to gain the support of his audience.

This particular finding suggests that language and style play very important roles in persuasion. Similarly, the current study attempts to establish what kind of rhetorical strategies are adopted by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie in her talks on YouTube.

Albashir and Alfaki (2015) state that a rhetorical device is the use of words in a certain way, to convey meaning or to persuade. It can also be a technique to evoke an emotion on the part of the reader or audience. Rhetorical devices have been used by rhetors as methods of persuasion. Some examples of rhetorical devices that are employed by rhetors or writers include irony, sarcasm, parody, hyperbole, pun and antonomasia. Albashir and Alfaki (2015) explored the use of rhetorical devices in Leila Aboulela's novel *The translator* and examined the use of different types of rhetorical devices and figures of speech in her work. Aboulela was found to possess a distinctive type of style in her writing. Albashir and Alfaki (2015), found that the author used rhetorical devices to evoke emotional responses in the readers. The authors (Albashir & Alfaki, 2015) concluded that rhetorical devices were used by the author, in order to construct sentences that were designed both to persuade the reader through emotions, and to provide rational arguments for persuasion and course of action. Other scholars that studied the use of rhetorical devices in rhetoric include Zhui-hui and Miao (2012), Kamwi (2014) and Dwivedi (2015).

According to Duchworth (2009), rhetoric in its broadest sense is the theory and practice of eloquence, whether spoken or written. It defines the rules that should govern all prose composition or speech designed to influence the judgement or feelings of people. Williams, Young and Launer (2012) on the other hand, note that rhetorical approaches to communication focus on the different relationships among the speaker, text, audience and situation. The current study adopted the definition of rhetoric by Duchworth (2009), as it sought to study the eloquence of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's discourse through a feminine rhetorical analysis.

Mshvenieradze (2013) argues that the goal of argumentative writing is to persuade an audience that the ideas of a writer are valid, or more valid than someone else's. From the above definitions of rhetoric by contemporary rhetoric scholars it is clear that the definition of rhetoric has been expanded to not only define rhetoric as the art of speaking as a discipline that deals with the use of spoken language, but also a discipline that includes written forms of language use that can be used to inform, persuade and motivate the audience. Both ancient and contemporary scholars of rhetoric have one common underlying definition of the term rhetoric, which is persuasion. Rhetoric is, therefore, the art of using different techniques to persuade an audience to adopt ideas or to influence the actions of the audience by the rhetor. Moreover, it can take the form of oral or written discourse.

Formerly women were not allowed to take part in public speaking. Because of this Foss and Griffin (as cited in Meeks, 2013) state that women simply have not had the same opportunities to speak and write that men have had. In addition, the ideas of women have not been treated with the same degree of seriousness as the ideas of men. Benson (as cited in Meeks, 2013) adds that it is important to recover the history of the ways in which women's voices were silenced. It is in contrast equally important to recover the history of those exceptional women who were able to be heard in the male public sphere. Feminine rhetorical scholars, such as Campbell (1989), Dow and Richards (1994), Foss and Foss (1983), and Frederick (2009) agree that women were formally excluded from participating in public speaking, be it for social, political or religious purposes. The exclusion of women from public speaking, as well as the experiences of woman at the hands of patriarchy, led to the emergence of feminine rhetoric.

### **2.3 Feminine rhetoric**

Foss and Foss (as cited in Meyer, 2007) assert that "viewing women as communicators expanded the definition of rhetoric to include activities or artefacts by women previously

viewed as non-rhetorical” (p. 1). Women were not always regarded as significant rhetors. However, the emergence of feminine rhetoric made it possible for women to be recognised in the sphere of public speaking.

According to Nordquist (2015), feminine rhetoric is the study and practice of feminine discourse in public and personal life by applying principles of rhetoric. Powers (2014) and Lamer (2009) argue that feminine rhetoric is appropriate to express feelings and maintain harmony in groups of people, parallels of the sexes and ornamental feminine identity. Powers (2014) and Lamer (2009) agree that feminine rhetoric is neither an expression of feminine identity nor, exclusive to women, but a rhetorical tool that can be used by both men or women when seeking to soothe, please, garner respect and unify addresses to each other.

Moreover, Lane (2015) defines feminine rhetoric as any written or spoken act about feminism with regard to feminine interventions. Lane (2015) explains that feminine rhetoric is rooted in the struggle of women to attain equal rights with men. Therefore, works by women, whether written or spoken with the purpose of advocating for the rights of people, gender equality and race, are some of the concerns of feminism resulting in the concerns of feminine rhetoric. Thornburg (2013) agrees with Lane (2015) by stating that the recognition of women’s importance has been a relatively recent occurrence in the history of rhetoric. Thornburg (2013) explains that for far too long what held for the male voice was thought to either hold for limit or dismiss the female voice. With the rise of feminism these old notions began to break. For the purpose of this study feminine rhetoric is defined as rhetoric by feminine public speakers. This kind of rhetoric came about because of the experiences women faced in a male dominated society, for countless number of years. Feminine rhetoric owes its existence to feminism, and offers a platform for female rhetors to speak on pressing issues that affect them within their private and public lives.

Feminine rhetoricians are seen to have been dismissed or regarded as inferior to their masculine counterparts. Campbell (1989) argues that women were prohibited from speaking and that this prohibition was reinforced by powerful cultural authorities, such as Homer, Aristotle and the Christian scripture. For instance, Campbell (1989) stresses that in *The odyssey* Telemachus scolds his mother, Penelope, by telling her that “Public speech shall be a man’s concern” (Homer, 1980, p. 9). Campbell (1989) also exemplifies Aristotle who argues in his book titled *Politics*, that silence is a woman’s glory. It is clear that feminine rhetoric was disregarded and excluded by classical, rhetoric scholars and this exclusion certainly caused feminine rhetoric to suffer in terms of growth.

### **2.3.1 Male view of feminine rhetors**

During the 19th century men were seen to be the intellectual sex, which unfairly gave their discourses more power and prestige when compared to women (Kirkham, as cited in Powers, 2014). Campbell (1995) argues that formerly women were prohibited from speaking in public because of their sex. Moreover, Lamer (2009) narrates that long ago male critics argued that women had small bodies and that using their brains to speak, debate or persuade would detract the small amounts of energy they had left from menstruation. Lamer (2009) further exemplifies Aristotle and Hippocrates noting that the two agreed that public speaking was difficult for women, and that it would damage their ability to conceive and give birth to strong children. Moreover, Lamer (2009) notes that exhibiting the lustful and ambitious attributes necessary to survive in politics would make women less pure and pious. Therefore, engaging in public speaking meant that the ability and capacity of women to reproduce would be affected; also public speaking would make women possess manly features that would in turn make them masculine and threaten their womanhood.

Furthermore, Lamer (2009) notes that many men, not only believed that political activity would weaken women, but also that effeminate speech would hurt society. Lamer (2009)

explains that men said that women's small brains and congenital, exclusive focus on progeny made them irrational. In addition, Lamer (2009) states that men argued that women's speech was derived from emotion, therefore it was excessive and disorganised. Hence, if women were allowed to be public speakers, they would corrupt social order, because it invited people to support judgments based on emotion rather than reason.

Lamer (2009) argues that men believed that even *The New Testament* in the Christian bible suggested that since women lacked reason to govern their speech and fortify their thoughts, the devil was able to penetrate them, making their messages seductive and sinful.

In addition, Lamer (2009) argues that men felt that women's speech was too personal to speak on behalf of institutions. For instance, lawyers spoke in the name of the law. For this reason female speech was thought to challenge institutions. A woman's place was therefore, in the home. If the woman spoke, she was often rejected for not being feminine enough and was therefore, required to be silent.

### **2.3.2 Positive arguments for feminine rhetoric**

Thomas (2015) in his article, *Rethinking pedagogy in public speaking and American address: A feminist alternative*, found that students of rhetoric rarely analysed rhetoric without using male-centred frameworks or approaches. Thomas (2015) argues that there is bias towards rhetoric that is predominantly a masculine practice and that analysis of feminine rhetoric practice is under-examined, because students of rhetoric still apply masculine frameworks to feminine discourse. Moreover, Campbell (1994) notes in her essay *Hearing women's voices*, that in public speaking textbooks women are underrepresented and that this underrepresentation undermines the very goals of public address and public speaking courses. Consequently, Smith (2014) advises that feminist critiques of society can provide an important contribution to rhetoric because of the multifaceted and diverse voices within this

area. Furthermore, critiquing feminine rhetoric emphasises an inductive logic that is based on the subjective lived experiences of the marginalised.

Poulakas (as cited in Powers, 2014), argues that rhetoric is grounded in the human experience rather than philosophical reflections. This argument situates rhetoric not only as masculine, but also as feminine. Rhetoric, being premised on persuasion and using any available means to convince or persuade audiences, suggests that anyone seeking to inform, educate, motivate or persuade an audience can be a public speaker or rhetor, as persuasion does not have preference with regard to gender, nor is limited to one sex.

In addition, Foss (as cited in Meyer, 2007) argues that feminine rhetoric redefined models and theories of communication based on masculine norms that tended to exclude women as potential rhetoricians. Feminine rhetoric gave rise to different approaches to the analysis and criticism of analysing women's discourse, be it in politics or in women's private lives. Frameworks for studying feminine rhetoric are essential in the sense that feminine rhetoric is important. It is different, therefore it cannot be evaluated nor examined by using masculine frameworks.

### **2.3.3 Women fighting back**

Despite the fact that women were excluded from participating in public discourse, there are traces of studies on the rhetoric of women in public discourse. Banset (2011), Davidson (2011), Powers (2014) and Wright (2013) are some feminine rhetorical scholars who have examined rhetoric in feminine discourse. Davidson (2011) describes a study which interprets textual analysis informed by a feminine perspective. This perspective was applied to films that were written and directed by female film makers in order to understand to what extent the rhetorical construction of motherhood was presented in the films. The study revealed that contemporary mothers rejected traditional mothering ideologies in an attempt to do away

with past ideologies of motherhood that limited the traditional mother, and enslaved her to her male counterpart.

Similarly, Wright (2013) examined sports feminism as a rhetorical discourse that engaged on-going feminist struggles for women. The study drew on new media rhetoric to analyse the role of wireless internet and social networking in the rhetorical practice networking. The study found that sport feminists took advantage of the internet and their status in sports to reach out to fellow women, by speaking on issues that affected women. Wright's (2013) study is relevant to the current study as it was not only a contemporary feminine rhetorical analysis, but it studied the internet as a platform for communication between women.

In contrast to the previous contemporary studies, Banset (2011) analysed feminine rhetoric in the novel *Shakti* and provided a discussion of the treatment of women in India. The study utilised the feminist theory to shed light on the experiences faced by women in India. It found that the women used rhetoric to rebel against traditions that had kept them enslaved by men in the contemporary world. This study employed feminist theory and showed that rhetoric by women could be analysed by using different frameworks.

Powers (2014), on the other hand, examined the use of Jane Austen's quotes on a social networking site, Pinterest, and explored the spread of Austen's work. The author used the social network Pinterest as it has a large female audience. The study found that the messages created and shared by women on Pinterest were important, as they reflected on the silent values and ideas shared by women. This study is contemporary and deals with how women communicate in the modern world. The speeches under study by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie are found on a media platform, YouTube; therefore, the study by Powers (2014) has informed the current study as it researched feminine rhetoric as presented on a networking site.

## **2.4 Feminine style of rhetoric**

Feminism as an approach to rhetorical criticism has its roots in the work of Campbell. Campbell (2009) argues that stylistically feminine rhetoric is unique in that it “is characterised by rhetorical interactions that emphasise affective proofs and personal testimony, participation and dialogue, self-revelation and self-criticism, and the goal of autonomous decision making through self-persuasion” (p. 568). The unique style in women’s discourse that was identified by Campbell (2009), and developed as a result of experiences faced by women, is coined as the feminine style. Campbell (1989) defines feminine rhetorical style as a mode of address that is consistent with traditional norms of femininity, but is also characterised by the ways in which oppressed groups of individuals respond to special conditions and experiences of oppression. The feminine style is characterised by knowledge that is based on experiences and is expressed through a personal and peer-like tone.

Foss and Griffin (1991) expand Campbell’s ideas on feminist criticism in their essay. It was affirmed that rhetoric is being understood as having the soul of persuasion, is patriarchal as it attempts to persuade, change and influence the beliefs, ideas and actions of the audience. Foss and Griffin (1991), therefore, proposed a new kind of rhetoric, called invitational rhetoric which extends an invitation to the audience to enter and be part of the rhetor’s world and to see this world as the rhetor does. This form of rhetoric is grounded in the feminine values of equality and self-determination. It also challenges the values of patriarchy that dominate women.

Doran (2010) argues that an important discovery in feminist scholarship is that women rhetors face the dual challenge of preserving their femininity, while meeting all the usual requirements of speakers. According to Campbell (1989), these requirements include

“demonstrating expertise, authority, and rationality in order to show her competence and make herself credible to audiences” (p. 12). These challenges Campbell (1989) stresses, have forced many women to adopt strategically what is today called a feminine style in order to cope with the conflicting demands of public speaking.

Since public speaking was an activity reserved for men, the exclusion of women or the female voice initiated the predominance of a stylistic form of rhetoric that was competitive, dominating and antagonistic (Lamer, 2009). The style of rhetoric by masculine rhetors was characterised by competition and domination. Campbell (1989) notes that these characteristics caused feminine rhetors to suffer when they entered public speaking because feminine speakers possessed different rhetorical traits. Campbell (1989) and Lamer (2009) agree that female speakers experienced hostility since they were entering a sphere that was previously reserved for men. Therefore, a different framework (feminine framework) was needed to assess feminine rhetoric instead of frameworks that were grounded in masculine paradigms. The importance of feminine paradigms for assessing feminine rhetoric are significant, as Frederick (2009) argues that traditional or masculine standards will always measure the feminine speaker as inadequate or falling short of meeting the expectation for good discourse.

Frederick (2009) further proposes that critical examination of female public speakers offers opportunities to consider alternative rhetorical strategies for feminine discourse. In addition, Foss and Foss (1991) contend that rhetorical criticism “is the process of analysing and assessing communication to discover such elements as the context in which it was created, its purpose within that context, its central ideas, structure and style and its impact on the communicator and the others who are reached by it” (p. 248). Analysing female rhetoric is vital in understanding rhetoric created by women. Frederick (2009) concurs with this

sentiment when stating that a critical study of feminine discourse contributes to a better understanding of women's perspectives and realities. These styles are evident in the realities of women today. The current study, therefore, explored the oration of Adichie in an attempt to understand the perspectives and realities of the author as they are reflected in her oration.

Furthermore, Frederick (2009) asserts that studying women's discourse expands the rhetorical critic's understanding of social roles to fit into the rhetorical makeup of the rhetor. Frederick (2009) adds that it is these role distinctions that produce women's unique voice. Feminine style of rhetoric, therefore, serves as a rhetorical framework for persuasion. The framework defines the feminine style as personal and is organised in such a way that it uses inductive reasoning, as well as relies on anecdotes and examples to convince and persuade. It also encourages identification between a speaker and an audience.

### **2.5 Feminine rhetorical style applied to public discourse**

The feminine rhetorical style is not new to the rhetorical scene. Women have used a feminine style for centuries primarily not to offend their listeners. The best examples of how the feminine style helped rhetors win over hostile audiences were the suffrage orators. The suffragettes were considered radical women who were rebellious to traditional roles of women.

In 1994 Campbell studied women suffrage activists, Dr Anna Howard and Lecretia Mott. Campbell (1994) found that these two feminists were not only able to convince, but also win their audiences over to adopting their beliefs and joining their cause. Campbell (1994) credits the success of the two orators to their feminine rhetorical style. Moreover, their oration was unique to women and included personal tone, speaking as a peer, as well as relying on examples, testimony and enactment as evidence. It had an inductive structure, as well as efforts to stimulate audience participation. Campbell (1994) credits the feminine style for

having allowed those who were without a voice, to convince thousands to listen and adopt their views.

The theory of feminine rhetoric has been used in political discourse in the analysis of television shows, the first and second feminist movement, presidential bids, and the study of first ladies and in the examination of women's sermons, as well as most recently in the study of modern evangelical women. Lamer (2009) asserts that women introduced feminine rhetoric into politics in the United States of America in 1920 when they were granted the right to participate in politics.

Lamer (2009) also examined the role of feminine rhetoric of male presidential discourse in achieving speech purpose. Lamer (2009) concludes that feminine rhetoric was introduced into politics by women who were struggling to communicate and succeed in a male dominated public sphere, a sphere characterised, not only by aggression, but also by competition. By contrasting the use of feminine rhetorical style by both masculine and feminine speakers, Lamer (2009) argued that feminine rhetorical style is a rhetorical tool that could be used by men and women to achieve many objectives necessary to prevail in politics. The study by Lamer (2009) is relevant to the current study, as it supports the idea that feminine style can be used as a tool to examine feminine discourse, which is exactly what the current study envisaged. Lamer (2009) further contributes to proving that there is a role for feminine language to be used by men and women in politics. Men can adopt feminine ways of communication in their oration to gain empathy and create identification with the audience.

Doran (2010) explored Barbara Bush's 1990 Wellesley College commencement address to establish how far Bush's rhetoric exemplified feminine rhetoric. Using Campbell's characteristics of feminine style as a check list, Doran, (2010) found that Barbara Bush's rhetoric exemplified the feminine rhetorical style because she developed a personal tone,

used inductive reasoning even if to a lesser extent, attempted to invite audience participation, partially spoke from the perspective of a peer and attempted to create identification with the audience. Doran (2010) explains that Barbara Bush's speech was filled with her personal tone that was primarily constructed through her use of narrative and humour. In addition, Barbara Bush complimented the graduating class and, at times, used inclusive pronouns to create the perception that she was speaking from the perspective of a peer rather than that of an outsider. Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie is one of the most acclaimed contemporary writers and has spoken at numerous graduation ceremonies. In three of the selected speeches under study available on YouTube, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie gives commencement addresses at Wellesley College, Kalamazoo College and Eastern Connecticut State University. Doran's (2010) study, therefore, informed the current study with regards to how the feminine style can be employed in graduation speeches.

Smith (2014) argues that it is no secret that women in power work differently from men in power. Moreover, Smith (2014) examined gendered rhetoric in floor speeches of the 113<sup>th</sup> senate and found that a feminine style of speaking lent more connections, which could evoke emotional responses from the audience. This could also be considered a more effective political speech, which is also why there is a shift in men's speeches to this more conversational style. Smith (2014) thus argues that the same style of speech, that many people characterise as weak, could also be seen as a strength when looked at through this lens.

Gagliardi (2009) studied the rhetoric of Sarah Palin in 2008. Gagliardi (2009) found that Palin's speeches were a perfect display of contemporary women's rhetoric. Moreover, Gagliardi (2009) revealed that Palin had a unique style which included humour, folksiness and feminine aspects that grabbed the attention of the voters during the 2008 presidential election campaign, taking attention away from Senator Barack Obama.

On the other hand, Rhode and DeJanee (2016) carried out a case study on Hillary Clinton's public intimacy through relational labour on new media, such as Twitter. Rhode and DeJanee (2016) argue that the feminine style may be employed advantageously on new media platforms even in comparison to television which is highly complementary to the feminine style because the self-disclosure and interactivity expected of celebrities on social media are inherently feminising. Rhode and DeJanee (2016) explain that by personalising political issues, the feminine style flourished because female political candidates can be considered feminine even while discussing political topics. The study revealed that Clinton used the Twitter platform and employed the feminine style to emphasise her personal experiences as a woman, mother, and grandmother. Similarly, the current study explored Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's use of feminine style in her talks on YouTube to shed light on how the experiences of the author as an African and as a woman shaped her speeches (Rhode & DeJanee, 2016)

In contrast to the previous study, Weaver (2013) examined the rhetoric in Obama's campaigns as a strategy to recast Michele Obama's identity and refute stereotypes, rumours and innuendo by focusing on her role as a happy housewife and mother. The study employed the feminine style to show how Obama delivered messages containing conflicting political ideologies. It was found that the case study revealed a disturbing trend regarding the use of the feminine style. Consequently, Weaver (2013) explains that typically the feminine style is a discursive tool women use to gain access and influence, whereas in this case it was forced upon Michelle Obama to usher her away from power.

Moreover, Foust (2004) studied feminine style in Judge Judy. Judge Judy is an American law-based reality court show that is premised on a retired Manhattan family court, Judge Judith Sheindlin. Foust (2004) expanded on the feminine style by employing mythological criticism to explore women's rhetorical invention and how it managed both aggressiveness and femininity. The study revealed that judge Judy's rhetoric evokes the

tough mother, a familiar cultural character that has emerged from the temperance movement. The study concludes that Judge Judy's rhetoric highlights the continued challenges for women's public discourse (Foust, 2004).

Matos (2015) argues that women who enter the public sphere through address are entering into a world constructed by patriarchal definitions of effective techniques. Consequently, Matos (2015) studied women's rights into public address from a feminist rhetorical approach and argues that women's rights are still a salient issue. Furthermore, Matos (2015) argues that women's rhetorical contributions are largely overlooked within rhetorical studies, and concludes that, as a rhetorical movement, there is little scholarship that analyses and critiques modern discourse by women. Matos (2015), therefore, studied Hillary Clinton and Emma Watson's speeches to investigate how these two orators employed feminine style in their discourse. This study contributes to the field of rhetoric as it evaluates and uncovers a contemporary rhetorical strategy used in feminine public discourse.

Feminine rhetorical style as a framework may be applied to the religious discourse of both male and female preachers; however, the framework has not been employed by many to study religious discourse. The researcher found that two scholars, Frederick (2009) and Meeks (2013) employed the feminine rhetorical style to examine contemporary, evangelical, feminine rhetors. Frederick (2009) explored oration by Joyce Meyer as a feminine speaker in her recent evangelical community address. Frederick's study showed that Meyer employed the feminine style in order to identify with her feminine audience on the pulpit. According to Frederick (2009), Meyer employed the feminine style by making herself vulnerable; she did this by confessing her sins and personal failings in her sermons. Meyer used her weaknesses as advice from a person who had lived through trials and tribulations and came out stronger. Frederick (2009) explains that Meyer created identification by using personal examples, empowering and encouraging her audience to press forward through their own struggles to

have the same kind of relationship with God that she has. The study analysed the oration of Meyer by using the theoretical framework of feminine rhetorical style and using the characteristics of feminine rhetorical style as a checklist to assess how far Meyer employed the feminine rhetorical style. The current study adopted the same framework and used the characteristics of feminine style as a check list to assess to what extent Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie employs aspects such as personal examples to empower and encourage audiences.

Similarly, Meeks (2013) examined five episodes of Beth Moore's "Wednesday with Beth". The study utilised Campbell's theory of feminine rhetoric to study Moore's episodes. Meeks found that Moore was a feminine rhetorician and that each of the characteristics of feminine rhetorical style appeared in each of her episodes. Meeks (2013) argues that Campbell's theory has generally been used to examine female political figures and how they relate to their audiences. Therefore, Meeks (2013) concludes that studying Moore through the religious lens, opens the door to use Campbell's theory outside of the political sphere. Meeks (2013) further explains that female rhetoricians do not have to be connected with feminist movements. A rhetor, who happens to be feminine can be studied to assess how she communicates and not necessarily about what she communicates. This study gives insight on the feminine rhetorical style as a tool to analyse the discourse of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie (Meeks, 2013). The current study will, however, explore how Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie communicates, as well as what she communicates in order to attain a holistic analysis of her discourse and do justice to her oration.

## **2.6 Characteristics of the feminine style**

This section focuses on describing the five characteristics of feminine rhetorical style that are outlined by Campbell (1989) in her discussion. Campbell's feminine style to rhetoric is not restricted to female rhetors but can be employed by any public speaker. Campbell (1989) claims that there is nothing biologically exclusive about the feminine rhetorical style.

According to Campbell (1989), male and female speakers who use a feminine style rely primarily on using personal experience, extended narratives, anecdotes and other examples. In so doing they create inductive arguments that lead to generalisations inviting the audience to participate in addressing the audience as peers, allowing their experiences to be recognised as authority, and creating identification with the experiences of the audience to accomplish the goal of the feminine speaker, which is to empower listeners.

### **2.6.1 Personal experience and extended narrative**

The first characteristic of feminine style has to do with the speaker using personal experiences as means of persuasion. By using a personal tone, the speaker discloses personal information about himself or herself to the audience. This information may include personal information about the speaker, his or her family life, as well as serves as evidence to support claims the speaker raises.

Campbell (1989) proposes that speakers rely on personal experiences by drawing the audience into the situation allowing for identification to occur; therefore, becoming more persuasive. Frederick (2009) adds that self-disclosure and the confessional style of the feminine speaker places the rhetor in a personal or intimate relationship with the audience. Speakers who adopt the feminine style in rhetoric make use of personal anecdotes and extended narratives to create empathy with the audience. By disclosing personal information through the use of personal anecdotes and extended narratives, a close relationship or bond is built between the speaker and the audience.

Doran (2010) explains that such personal tone may also include speech that uses visual descriptions and illustrations as primary evidence for supporting claims. All of these are intended to be dramatic, descriptive, evocative and detailed. Through visual descriptions, the speaker is able to evoke feelings within the listeners.

### **2.6.2 Inductive reasoning**

The second characteristic of feminine style is that of inductive reasoning. Speakers who use inductive reasoning base conclusions and theories on personal experience. Campbell (1994) claims that women advocates often structure their arguments inductively to give their audience style to an apprenticeship, more like crafts are learned bit by bit, instance by instance from which generalisations emerge. This means that feminine speakers use inductive reasoning or argumentation for a rhetorical purpose. Moreover, this also suggests that inductive reasoning is created from observations which result in generalisation. Doran (2010) notes that speakers who use inductive reasoning may base their conclusions and theories on lived experiences.

### **2.6.3 Invite audience participation**

According to Frederick (2009), a speaker who uses a feminine style creates a discursive relationship with the audience. Campbell (1989) notes that a feminine speaker invites the participation of the audiences and includes the audience in the process of testing their generalisations and experiences.

When using a feminine style, a speaker is able to become conversational, which makes it possible for interaction between the audience and the speaker. One way that a speaker can invite audience participation is by making use of rhetorical questions. Meeks (2013) notes that rhetorical questions are one way women can invite audience participation.

### **2.6.4 Addressing the audience as peers**

The fourth characteristic of feminine style requires the speaker to address the audience as peers. This kind of speaking helps create a personal tone in communication among women; it makes it possible for the development of closeness and connection between communicators. Hayden (1999) states that a rhetor, using the feminine style, does not assume a position of

authority or expertise, but rather appears as an equal to the audience. By speaking to the audience as peers, speakers abandon whatever status they hold, and align themselves with the speaker. The audience is more likely to be persuaded by a speaker who appears as an equal than one who appears to be powerful and who possesses expertise.

Frederik (2009) argues that the feminine style has the potential to create an intimate relationship with the audience. Frederik (2009) extends this idea by saying that the feminine relationship is built on the idea of empowering the other to feel confident and strong enough to overcome personal and social obstacles, because the feminine speaker understands and empowers the listeners to rise above their challenges.

#### **2.6.5 Identification and empowering audiences**

The fifth and final characteristic of the feminine rhetorical style requires a speaker to identify with the audience. Campbell (1989) concludes that the goal of the feminine rhetorical style is empowerment, a term that contemporary feminists have used to refer to the process of persuading listeners that they too, can be agents of change. It is not enough for a feminine speaker to create identification with an audience and not seek to create empowerment. Feminine speakers seek to identify with an audience, seek common ground and instil power, courage and determination in listeners. Frederik (2009) notes that the feminine speaker engages in a mutual appreciation of the struggles each faces and gives mutual support through empowerment. It is clear that the rhetorical goal of the feminine rhetor is to create identification and empower the audience.

The current study made use of the five characteristics of feminine rhetorical theory in the analysis of the oration of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie. The characteristics were employed as a checklist to assess how Adichie employed the feminine style in her oration.

## 2.7 Aristotelian proofs of rhetoric

The Greek philosopher and ancient scholar of rhetoric, Aristotle, wrote one of the most important works on rhetoric in the 4th century BC after Sophists. Aristotle's views on rhetoric were presented in a three part book called *Rhetorica*. Anderson (2008) states that Aristotle proposed that orators persuaded listeners by using three means of persuasion; he called the three means 'appeal forms'.

The three appeal forms are the rational appeal (*logos*), the emotional appeal (*pathos*) and the ethical appeal (*ethos*). These appeal forms make it possible for the orator to appeal to the audience's reasoning, emotions and admiration. Polansky (as cited in Ryden 2015) agrees with Anderson (2008) regarding the three rhetorical components as *ethos*, *pathos* and *logos*.

### 2.7.1 The *ethos* appeal

The first form of rhetorical appeal proposed by Aristotle is that of *ethos*. Polansky (as cited in Ryden, 2015) and Mshvenieradze (2013) note that *ethos* means credibility. The speaker aims to persuade the audience that he or she is trustworthy and reliable by using the right manners, words and actions. *Ethos* is an appeal that emphasises personality traits and the character of the speaker. According to Mshvenieradze (2013), *ethos* is employed to convince by using the character of an orator or speaker which then leads to persuasion. Mshvenieradze (2013) adds that *ethos* is the style of a speaker by which he or she appeals and tries to attract the attention of audience to earn their faith.

Murthy and Ghosal (2014) also define *ethos* as the audience perception of the speaker's credibility and authority over the subject which he or she is speaking about. Murthy and Ghosal (2014) explain that when a speaker presents his or her thoughts in front of an audience, the audience wonders whether they should believe him or her. Moreover, Murthy and Ghosal (2014) argue that the credibility of the speaker towards the audience can be

acquired through his personality, character, intelligence, virtue, goodwill, being just and sensitive, among others.

To the researcher, *ethos* is an argument that is based on the speaker's character. When a speaker employs *ethos* it means that the speaker appeals to the audience's sense of ethical behaviour. By so doing the speaker claims ethical attributes such as credibility, trustworthiness and honesty. Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie manifests *ethos* (credibility), as she is a well-known, audience grabber who captures and keeps the focus of her audience. She tells stories which her audience can relate to, beginning with herself as a child.

### **2.7.2 The *pathos* appeal**

The second form of appeal proposed by Aristotle is that of *pathos*. Murthy and Ghosal (2014) note that *pathos* describes the speaker's appeal to his audience's sense of emotions and their interests. When the speaker employs *pathos*, the audience recognises that the speaker understands their feelings and these are important to the speaker. This helps to build a relationship between the speaker and the audience. With the help of *pathos*, the speaker can become emotionally connected with his audience. The *pathos* appeal is therefore, persuasion by emotion and is based on feelings.

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie appeals to the audience's emotions with a strong sense of *pathos*. She tells personal stories to persuade her audience. For instance, she appeals to the audience's emotions by using humour to bring across the ridiculous nature of stereotyping, by telling the story of her room-mate who was American and who felt sorry for her even before she met her, simply because she was from Africa.

### **2.7.3 The *logos* appeal**

The last form of appeal proposed by Aristotle is *logos*. *Logos* is an argument that is based on facts, evidence and reason. Murthy and Ghosal (2016) argue that *logos* refers to any appeal to

intellectual reason, based on logical proofs. Murthy and Ghosal (2016) note that these proofs come from assumptions derived from a collection of concrete facts and statistical data. Moreover, Murthy and Ghosal (2016) conclude that arguments that are constructed on the basis of *logos* have lasting impact on the memories of the audience, as the orators provide statistical data which appeal directly to intellectual reasoning.

Anderson (2008) explains that all knowledge and proof is acquired or achieved through deduction or induction. When a speaker uses *logos* as an appeal of persuasion, the speaker appeals to the audience's sense of what is logical; the speaker does this by providing facts and evidence to support claims.

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie makes use of situations that are of national debate, notable books, and well-known artists such as Mariah Carey to tell a story that others can identify with. Another example is that of Meyer, (see § 2.4), who makes use of her own experience and failures to connect with the audience. She employs *logos* through the arrangement of her ideas and experiences to add power to her message in a way that is appealing. She also supports her claims by using eloquent language and moving examples.

## **2.8 Rhetorical analyses by using Aristotle's rhetorical proofs**

The current study was interested in exploring how the three rhetorical proofs (*ethos*, *pathos*, *logos*) proposed by Aristotle were employed in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's discourse. Scholars of rhetoric have utilised Aristotle's appeals to study how public speakers, politicians and writers make use of the appeal forms to convince audiences and readers. This section explores studies that have been carried out using Aristotle's rhetorical proofs to study discourse.

Mshvenieradze (2013) examined *ethos*, *pathos* and *logos* in the political discourse of the 2002 and 2007 French presidential candidates, Jacques Chirac and Nicolas Sarkozy. It was

found that the discourse of the two politicians became more argumentative and had an impact on their audience. Mshvenieradze (2013) found that both the political discourses of the two politicians were logically constructed and ideologically correct. Also, both candidates used the same linguistic means for presenting themselves. They used personal and possessive pronouns to reveal their *ethos*. *Pathos*, or in other words emotional appeals, were also used to convey phrases expressing emotions, addresses, repetitions and stresses on values.

Basseer and Alvi (2012) examined Barack Obama's speech 'The great need of the hour.' The duo explored the use of rhetorical devices, and found that Obama used the elements of *ethos* and *pathos* in his speech. Basseer and Alvi (2012) concluded that Obama utilised the three rhetorical proofs as tools to persuade the masses to gather around him. Basseer and Alvi (2012) found that Obama applied *ethos* by telling stories. Obama applied *pathos* through the use of togetherness words such as 'we', 'us', and 'our', to appeal to the emotions of the audience. Obama used *pathos* when he appealed to authority. Obama acknowledged famous people that the audience could relate to. He acknowledged 'God' and also referred to Martin Luther King. Obama also used *pathos* by telling an emotion-stirring narrative about Jericho City. Obama explained that the walls of Jericho came tumbling down only at the chorus of the voices. This persuaded the masses to work together in unity. Obama was found to have used *logos*. By employing logical credible words and expressions to bring across his point of view, Obama selected logical data to prove that he could be trusted and that he believed in promoting unity among Americans.

Hansen and Hessellund (2011) analysed Barack Obama's speech entitled "A memorial service for the victims of the shooting in Tucson, Arizona." The study utilised Aristotle's three forms of appeal: *ethos*, *pathos* and *logos*. The speaker was found to have appealed to the character of the audience. Hansen and Hessellund (2011) found that *ethos* was present in

Obama's speech because of his personal image that was well-known to the audience. The audience's emotions were moved by the speaker's employment of *pathos*. Obama was found to have frequently used *pathos* in the speech. This is because the speech was a memorial speech and should therefore, evoke feelings in the audience. Obama used words to underpin the feelings and emotions that he wished to evoke in the audience. He did this by using charismatic terms such as 'free speech' and 'peaceful assembly'. The speaker also focused on showing, and attempting to show the accuracy of what was being said. Obama was found to have used *logos* through his choice of words. Hansen and Hessellund (2011) found that Obama used a neutral choice of words, an anonymous style put forward by a moderate and softened-down tone and physical appearance different from his normal stately addresses.

Asemanyi and Alofah (2015) examined the role of rhetoric in the famous Independence speech given by the first president of the Republic of Ghana, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah. Asemanyi and Alofah (2015) found that the speaker adopted the three means of persuasion, namely *ethos*, *pathos* and *logos*, to drive home the objective of his argument. Asemanyi and Alofah (2015) found that Nkrumah's *ethos* worked in his favour. The audience was aware of his educational background. The fact that he was a full Ghanaian made him a credible and honest speaker, and also played a role in appealing to the *ethos* of the audience. Nkrumah used *pathos* to appeal to the emotions of the audience by saying "We know we are going to have a difficult beginning". Nkrumah also used togetherness words such as 'we' and 'us'. The use of pronouns inspired a sense of belonging, togetherness and love so that the audience felt a shared experience (Asemanyi & Alofah, 2015).

Murthy and Ghosal (2014) explored Aristotle's *logos*, *ethos* and *pathos* in order to shed light on how the effectiveness of the three appeals of rhetoric improve the art of using words that can leave a positive impact on the minds of an audience. Murthy and Ghosal's (2014) study revealed that Aristotle's appeals are profoundly influential in making the audience realise the

facts of truths. Also, this rhetorical approach to speech is found to modulate ways of communication and gives fruitful results in convincing the audience. Therefore, Murthy and Ghosal' (2014) conclude that the three persuasive appeals of Aristotle's rhetoric can be applied in any field where language is used because of their versatility, provided that all the three appeals of rhetoric (*logos*, *ethos* and *pathos*) are treated as equally important. Furthermore, Murthy and Ghosal (2014) advise that the ideal ratio of all the three persuasive appeals of rhetoric has to be employed according to the situation to make the audience realise the truth.

Similarly, Murthy and Ghosal (2016) carried out a further study on Aristotle's rhetorical appeals applied to industrial communication. Murthy and Ghosal (2016) argue that the three proofs of Aristotle (*ethos*, *pathos* and *logos*) can be applied to industrial communication to improve the skill of speaking and writing of the personnel at industries. Murthy and Ghosal (2016) conclude that the ideal ratio, of all the three persuasive appeals of rhetoric, is to be employed according to the situation in order to make the audience realise the truth. Furthermore, rhetorical approach in communication at industries can be improved, thus Aristotle's ancient literary tools are still applicable to our modern times.

## **2.9 Linguistic rhetorical devices used in Adichie's rhetoric**

Zhu-hui and Miao (2012) argue that rhetorical devices are used frequently in daily communication for the sake of effective speaking, writing and the art of persuasion. Consequently, Fundell (2008) notes that rhetorical devices are used to emphasise something, persuade the audience, provoke negative or positive feelings or develop relationships.

In this section literary devices employed in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie in her discourse will be discussed.

### **2.9.1 Metaphors**

The origin of the word metaphor can be traced back to the Greek word *metapherein* which means to transfer. Charteris-Black (2014) states that a metaphor is a word or phrase that has a more basic concrete meaning than the one that it has in the abstract context where it is used. Furthermore, a metaphor changes the meaning of a given word or phrase (Charteris-Black, 2011). This change in meaning makes it possible for a metaphor to have power to change the emotional response that a given word generates (Charteris-Black, 2011).

Kangira, Mashiri and Gambahaya (2007) add that metaphors are used as substitution for direct words which would have been regarded as disrespectful, offensive or taboo by a cultural group. In other words, metaphors are the vehicles of indirectness; they are often used to talk about things in an indirect manner. Shutova, Teufe and Korhone (2012) argue that metaphors can span over long discourse fragments. These types of metaphors are called extended narratives. Extended metaphors are therefore, those metaphors that are evident in multiple sentences or sometimes run across an entire piece of work.

### **2.9.2 The use of personal pronouns**

Pronouns are used in an utterance or writing to substitute a noun in order to avoid monotony and boredom. Wales (as cited in Chimbarange, Takavarasha, & Kombe, 2013) refers to a personal pronoun as the substitution for a noun. Pronouns can be used to refer back to something, anaphora, and by so doing avoiding repetition. In speeches, personal pronouns are used to address or refer to the audience or to the speaker.

According to Karapetjana (2011), the use of personal pronouns can create either negative or positive images of speakers. Karapetjana (2011) suggests that the pronoun 'I' implies a

personal level and makes it possible for the speaker to show authority and personal responsibility as well as commitment and involvement. The author, Karapetjana (2011) also shows that the personal pronoun 'we' can be used by a politician if he or she wishes to share the responsibility, and also to create involvement with the audience. Bramley, (as cited in Hakansson, 2012) argues that politicians use the pronoun 'I' to present themselves as individuals and speak from their own perspective by highlighting their good qualities and accomplishments. The pronoun 'you' is used by the speaker to address the audience.

Proctor and I-Wen Su (2010) note that pronouns "us" and "we" are usually used to highlight the good qualities of the speaker, while "they" and "them" are often used in a negative context as a way to make the opposition seem less suitable leaders than the person who makes the utterance.

### **2.9.3 Repetition**

Repetition is a powerful stylistic device that has been used by orators since the times of ancient Greece. It gives cohesion to sentences. Alabi (2007) notes that repetition entails the repetition of the same word or phrase at the beginning of successive stages of the chosen pattern. Repetition is, however not limited to occurring at the beginning of patterns. Moreover, the repetition of words helps to establish rhythm in the sequence of clauses; this scheme is usually reserved for those passages where the author wants to produce a strong emotional effect.

Fundell (2008) describes four types of repetition, namely initial repetition, which is defined as a word or phrase that is repeated at the beginning of each one of a series of sentences or clauses; terminal repetition, repetition whereby a word or phrase is repeated at the end of a series of clauses or sentences; random repetition, where specific words or phrases are emphasised in a sentence or paragraph, and instant repetition, which is repetition where a

word or phrase is immediately repeated one or more times. Jones and Wareing (as cited in Dwivedi, 2015) argue that repeating certain phrases contribute towards making the ideas contained in them seem 'common sense'.

#### **2.9.4 Imagery**

Imagery is the use of images or sense pictures in a literary work. According to Croft and Cross (as cited in Damanhuri, 2011) imagery is language that is used in such a way that it helps people see, hear, feel and think about or generally understand more clearly or vividly, what is being said. Siswantoro (as cited in Damanhuri, 2011) opines that imagery is a mental picture, portrait or illusion created as a result of a reader's reaction in understanding literary work.

Furthermore, Perrine and Thomas (as cited in Damanhuri, 2011) expand the definition of imagery by stating that imagery refers to a mental picture, a kind of sense in the mind's eye. The two scholars further describe five types of imagery namely auditory, gustatory, olfactory, tactile and kinaesthetic imagery. Auditory imagery presents sound, olfactory imagery represents smell, while gustatory imagery represents taste. On the other hand, tactile imagery represents touch, such as hardness, softness, wetness or heat. Kinaesthetic imagery represents the cold and organic imagery has to do with internal sensations, such as hunger, thirst, fatigue or nausea. Finally, kinetic imagery deals with movement or tension in the muscles or joints.

#### **2.9.5 Rhetorical questions**

Rhetorical questions are generally defined as questions that require no answers. Abioye (2009) states that a rhetorical question is used to admonish, make a plea or request, commend or pay tribute, condemn or vilify. Abioye (2009) explains that rhetorical questions can be used to generate or end discussions, provide reasons or answers, constitute opposition or reach reasonable conclusions.

Ephrat (2008) explains that the use of rhetorical questions has been identified as one of the most effective means of engaging in rhetorical demagogy. Furthermore, it is an effective means of persuasion to acquire the approval and support of the listeners in political speeches by affecting their attitudes, emotions and psychology (Nguyen, 2010).

Abioye (2011) defines a rhetorical question as a figure of speech that is in the form of a question posed for its persuasive effect, without the expectation of a reply. For example “How can I ever thank you, Lord?” Abioye (2011) explains that rhetorical questions encourage the listener to reflect on what the implied answer to the question must be, but before he or she can come up with a solution, the answer is provided.

Abioye (2011) further explains that a rhetorical question is used by the speaker to assert or deny something obvious. The purpose of this figure of speech is not to secure a response, but to assert or deny a point implicitly. Therefore, a rhetorical question serves as a way of insinuating an idea that might be challenged by an audience if asserted directly.

## **2.10 Spoken language**

Spoken language is characterised by sound and paralinguistic features which are relied upon by the speaker when communicating. Kredátusová (2009) notes that a feature that is prominent in spoken language is that of emotiveness. This feature allows for the speaker to express his or her emotions by the intensity of voice, intonation, pitch and timbre.

Ladefoged (2006) notes that suprasegmental features are aspects of speech that involve more than single consonants or vowels. Clark, Yallop and Fletcher (2007) explain that suprasegmentals can be referred to as prosodic features or non-segmental features. Ladefoged (2006) and Clark, Yallop and Fletcher (2007) agree that suprasegmental features include stress, tone, and intonation. The study therefore, explored nonverbal aspects such as

stress, intonation and pitch in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's selected video speeches available on the internet, You Tube.

Another non-verbal feature of spoken language that the study explored was stress. According to Ladefoged (2006), stress is a suprasegmental feature of utterance; it applies not to individual vowels and consonants but to entire syllables. Ladefoged (2006) explains that when a syllable or a word is pronounced with more force than other syllables or words, it is stressed. The listeners can, therefore, hear that the stressed syllable in a word is louder, stronger and slightly higher than the rest or the unstressed ones. Wasala and Gamage (2007) note that a stressed syllable is pronounced with a greater amount of energy than an unstressed syllable. In spoken language, there are unmarked stress patterns and marked stress patterns in our speech. In marked stress patterns, the speaker adds extra stress or extra volume to a word in order to communicate more effectively. Words in unmarked stress patterns do not carry any added stress or extra volume.

Another feature of spoken language the study explored was pitch. Wasala and Gamage (2007) explain that pitch that varies over an entire phrase or sentence is termed 'intonation'. Wasala and Gamage (2007) state that intonation conveys the speaker's attitudes or feelings. Intonation allows the speaker to identify feelings such as anger, sarcasm or other different emotions. Intonation can also inform the listeners that a speaker has finished a sentence.

The last feature of spoken language the study explored is pitch. Wasala and Gamage (2007) define pitch as the frequency of vibration of vocal cords. The authors, Wasala and Gamage (2007) explain that variations of the frequency of vibration are heard by the listener as variations of pitch, the more frequently the vocal folds open and close, the higher the pitch. Lisshombe (2007) suprasegmental characteristics of speech such as pitch, rhythm and stress provide information in spoken language and can tell a listener the internal state of a speaker.

Suprasegmental features such as pitch, stress and intonation result in paralanguage. Lisshombe (2007) states that paralanguage is described as nonverbal communication in human interaction. Therefore, the features of spoken language in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's speeches were explored to shed light on the feelings and emotions the author felt at the time the selected speeches were delivered, and how these features were used in persuading her audience.

### **Conclusion**

In this chapter the emergence of the feminine style of rhetoric as a theoretical framework for feminine discourse was discussed. Furthermore, the chapter reviewed related academic literature of studies that applied the feminine style theory to feminine discourse.

The chapter also reviewed Aristotle's three proofs of rhetoric (*ethos, pathos, logos*), how were used as methods of rhetorical criticism. Moreover, the chapter also discussed other rhetorical devices that can be employed by a speaker, in order to persuade the audience.

The next chapter discusses the methodology used by the researcher to collect, analyse and interpret data.

## CHAPTER 3

### RESEACH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the methodology used by the researcher to collect, analyse and interpret data. The study first employed content analysis by analysing transcripts of the selected speeches by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie to find answers to the questions that framed the study.

The study further employed the feminine rhetorical style, as well as Aristotle's rhetorical proofs of persuasion, to shed light on Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's use of rhetoric in the selected speeches.

#### 3.2 Research approach and design

This study adopted a qualitative approach to establish how Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie used the feminine rhetorical style and Aristotle's rhetorical proofs: *ethos*, *pathos* and *logos*, as tools of persuasion in her oration. According to Yin (2011) research designs are logical blue prints that serve as logical plans. Yin (2011) explains that these logical blue prints involve the links among the research questions, the data to be collected and the strategies for analysing the data so that the study's findings will address the intended research questions. The logic also helps to strengthen the validity and accuracy of a study.

Kumar (2011) notes that qualitative research conceptualises an operational plan to undertake various procedures and tasks required to complete a study. Kumar (2011) argues that a research design ensures that these procedures are used to obtain valid, objective and accurate answers to research questions. Through research the design, a researcher is able to make, and communicate to others, decisions regarding what study design is proposed to be used, how

the researcher intends collecting information from respondents, as well as how the information collected is to be analysed.

A research design is a strategic framework for action that serves as a bridge between research questions and the execution or implementation of the research. Research design is therefore needed when conducting research because it facilitates the smooth running of different research procedures. It makes research efficient and makes it possible for the researcher to avoid wasting time and spending money. This study has a desktop design and will primarily examine the selected speeches by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie. The researcher will also refer to research books, journals and works by critics to shed some light in the interpretation of the texts under study.

### **3.2.1 Ontology**

Ontology is the philosophy of reality. According to Abimbola (2006), it is concerned with how nature and types of entities around the world are viewed, whether material, spiritual or both. Moreover, ontology relates to whether social facts are real or abstract.

Crotty (2003) defines ontology as the study of being. Ontology is concerned with “what kind of world we are investigating, with the nature of existence, with the structure of reality as such” (Crotty, 2003, p.10). Guba and Lincoln (as cited in Ahmed, 2008) note that ontological assumptions are those that respond to the question of what is there that can be known, or what is the nature of reality?

### **3.2.2 Epistemology**

The term, epistemology originated from the Greek word ‘episteme’, meaning knowledge. According to Babbie (2005), epistemology is the philosophy of knowledge, or the science of knowing and is concerned with how people come to know and what they claim to know about the social world or social reality (Trochim, 2000). Abimbola (2006) explains that

epistemology is concerned with questions about the theories of knowledge; what and how we know what we claim to know, as well as the roles of knowledge in day-to-day lives.

### **3.2.3 Methodology**

This study utilised qualitative methods as a basic technique in order to explore and analyse selected speeches by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie. According to Al-Faki (2014), the strength of the qualitative technique allows for a broader view to be taken and makes the research approach more flexible. Babbie (2005) believes that methodology is the science of finding out what we know or intend to know. It is widely accepted “by those who come from an ontological position which values people’s knowledge, values, and experiences as meaningful and worthy of exploration” (Byrne, 2004, p. 182). Thus, research methodology highlights the methods and tools that are used during the research process. The research design and methodology of this study aimed at addressing the research questions that framed it.

According to Abdullahi, Senekal, Van Zyn-Schalekamp, Amzab and Saliman (2012) the journey to understanding the complex nature of human society and human behaviour began with the positivism approach, which also gave birth to the quantitative research approach. Abdullahi, et al. (2012) argue that the quantitative method of investigation holds that the goal of knowledge is to describe the phenomenon under investigation; in so doing the object of study is observed independent of the researcher. Therefore, knowledge is verified through direct observations, data collection through figures or numbers and analysis, involving the attachment of numerical values to social characteristics.

The goal of a qualitative researcher on the other hand, is to describe a specific group in detail and to explain the patterns of actions (Amzat & Omololu, 2012). According to Abdullahi, et al. (2012) qualitative research involves a deeper examination from the point of view of the participants. Abdullahi et al. (2012) explain that the qualitative research method studies the

why and how of things such as disease, health and illness, and not just what, where and when. For this reason the qualitative approach is appropriate and essential in researches that requires explanations.

Abdullahi, et al. (2012) note that qualitative research focuses more attention on smaller rather than large samples to enable in-depth analysis. This strength of qualitative research is often viewed as a limitation by quantitative researchers. This sentiment is shared by Babbie and Mouton (2007) and Bryman and Bell (2007), who note that one limitation of qualitative research is that it does not use large samples as representatives of the targeted population. Qualitative research allows for a small number of participants to be reached in in-depth surveys and therefore, it does not need to larger samples.

A qualitative research project constantly builds a comprehensive, holistic picture, analyses words, reports detailed views of informants, and conducts the study in a natural setting (Creswell, 2007, p. 249). Abdullahi, et al. (2012) explain that a qualitative researcher explores underlying meanings that are attached to people's everyday lived experiences, because human actions are best understood when they are studied from the point of view of the subjects. Abdullahi, et al. (2012) further explain that qualitative researchers believe that human experiences, feelings, opinions and their existence are complex to present and therefore, cannot be represented in numerical terms, as portrayed in a quantitative, positivist paradigm. According to Greertz (as cited in Abdullahi, et al. 2012), thick descriptions are required in understanding human experiences, and only qualitative research can provide such thickness and informative analysis.

Qualitative research is also subjective: Gysels, Shipman and Higginson (2008) assert that "subjective dimensions such as cultural practices, motivations, intentions and freewill which have eluded quantitative researchers have become the primary focus of qualitative tradition;

the very reason why qualitative enquiry addresses meaning centred questions that are difficult to quantify (p. 2). A qualitative research method is by nature subjective because it relies heavily on the texts and discourses of the participants under study.

Yates (as cited in Abdullahi, et al. 2012) outlines some basic agendas in contemporary qualitative research. They include an in-depth and detailed description of a particular aspect of an individual or a group's experiences; an exploration of how individuals or members of a particular group give meaning to, and express their understanding of themselves or their worlds; the endeavour to discover and provide full detail of social events and explore the reasons as to why they unfold.

Marshall and Rossman (2013) state that in qualitative studies, the actions of humans cannot be understood unless the thoughts, beliefs, feelings, values and assumptions that preceded those actions are understood. The speeches studied in this research project were, therefore, informed by the experiences of the speaker.

### **3.3 Population**

Mc Millan and Schumacher (1997) define a research population as a group of elements or cases, whether individuals, objects or events, that conform to specific criteria, and to which the researcher intends to generalise the results of the research. This group is also referred to as the target population or universe.

Burney as cited in Strydom and Venter (2001) refers to population as a sampling frame, the totality of persons, events, organisation units, case records or other sampling units with which the research problem is concerned. Population is therefore, a large pool that contains cases and elements from which a researcher draws a sample of cases or elements to be studied. The target population for this study was all the thirteen speeches by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie that are available on YouTube.

### 3.4 Sample

The purpose of sampling in qualitative research is designed to either gain in-depth knowledge about a situation, event, episode, or to learn as much as possible about different aspects of individuals, on the assumption that the individual is typical of a group and hence will provide insight into the group (Kumar, 2011). Neuman (2003) echoes the same sentiments by stating that a qualitative researcher's concern is to find cases that will enhance what the researcher learns about the processes of social life in a specific context.

The sample of this study, therefore, focused on nine selected speeches by Adichie available on (the internet site) YouTube. The nine selected speeches are: 'The danger of a single story' (2009), 'Allow hope but also fear' (2009), 'We should all be feminist' (2012), 'To instruct and delight: A case of realist literature' (2012), 'Wellesley's 137 commencement speech' (2015), and 'Adichie at the University of Vermont' (2014) 'Lab of culture speech' (2011), 'Narratives of Europe, stories that matter' (2011), 'Celebration of speech' (2015), 'Key note Speech Part one and two' (2012), 'Adichie speaks at Harvard part one and two' (2008), 'Freedom to write lecture' (2015), and 'Commencement speech at Eastern Connecticut State University' (2015). The speeches under study were purposively sampled as they contain talks regarding gender, race and stereotypes from a feminist perspective.

According to Kumar (2011), researchers use purposive sampling to purposively select information and rich respondents who will provide the researcher with information needed. Mcmillian and Schumacher (1997) concur that the researcher selects particular elements from the population that will be representative or informative about the topic of interest. On the basis of the researcher's knowledge of the population, a judgement is made about which subjects should be selected to provide the best information to address the purpose of the research.

Neuman (2003) states that purposive sampling is appropriate in three situations. Firstly, a researcher uses it to select unique cases that are especially informative. Secondly, a researcher may use purposive sampling to select members of a difficult-to-reach, specialised population. Another situation for purposive sampling occurs when a researcher wants to identify particular types of cases for in-depth investigation. Yin (2011) concludes that samples are chosen in a deliberate manner. The goal for selecting the specific study units is to have those that will yield the most relevant and plentiful data for a specific topic of study.

The selected speeches under study were purposively sampled for analysis as they contain courageous, philosophical and critical issues. The selected speeches also give an insight into Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's use of the feminine style, as well as Aristotle's rhetorical proofs. The objective of this analysis was to demonstrate Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's use of the feminine rhetorical style and Aristotle's proofs of rhetoric: *ethos*, *pathos* and *logos* as tools to influence her audience. Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's speeches on YouTube are too many to be explored in this type of study, because of space and time; hence, the researcher selected 9 speeches. The analysis of the selected speeches enabled the researcher to carry out an in-depth analysis on the speeches under study.

### **3.5 Research instruments**

This study was a feminine and rhetorical analysis and therefore, made use of a feminine rhetorical analysis, as informed by the literature reviewed in chapter 2 to analyse the speeches under study. Research instruments that were required and necessary to conduct this study were derived and collected from secondary sources, and relied heavily on the use of printed materials such as books and articles, as well as the internet.

### 3.6 Procedure

The speeches under study are freely available on the internet site, YouTube. These speeches were studied in their original form as primary data for the study. The video versions of the speeches were transcribed by the researcher. A content analysis of the selected speeches by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie was done to identify how the author employed the feminine rhetorical style as a tool for persuasion in her speeches.

According to Berg (2004), in content analysis researchers examine artefacts of social communication. These are written documents or transcriptions of recorded, verbal communication. Similarly, Neuman (2003) notes that content analysis is a technique for gathering and analysing the content of a text. The content refers to words, meanings, pictures, symbols, ideas, themes, or any message that can be communicated.

The text is anything written, visual or spoken that serves as a medium for communication. It includes books, newspapers or magazine articles, advertisements, speeches, official documents, films or video tapes, musical lyrics, photographs, articles of clothing or works of art. This was followed by a rhetorical analysis of the same selected speeches to discover the use of Aristotle's rhetorical proofs: *ethos*, *pathos* and *logos* as persuasive strategies in the speeches. Furthermore, the linguistic, stylistic and rhetorical features of the transcribed speeches were analysed by employing the feminine theory and Aristotle's proofs of persuasion.

The selected speeches by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie were read several times to understand the general meaning of the speeches as they were given, as well as to realise the importance of the messages which might have been spoken because of certain political, social or personal reasons. The researcher analysed the transcribed versions of the speeches, as well as listened to the speeches, paying close attention to the author's use of spoken language. The researcher

explored Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's use of tone, pitch and intonation to give insight into the feelings of the speaker at the time in which the speeches were delivered.

After transcription, the selected speeches were also carefully read to familiarise the researcher with the speaker, as well as the important names and words used in the speeches in order to help the researcher understand the meanings of some of the issues that were discussed in the selected speeches. In order to provide findings from the analysis of the speeches under study, the researcher further conducted research the names and places that were mentioned in the selected speeches. This made it possible for the researcher to establish why the speaker mentioned the names or places in the speeches under study.

Since speeches are written to be delivered verbally, the analysis of the selected speeches by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie were based on both the written and spoken mode, (videos on YouTube as well as transcribed versions of the speeches under study.

### **3.7 Data analysis**

The current study carried out an in-depth analysis of the stylistic, linguistic and rhetorical components in the selected speeches by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie. The theory of feminine style was used to identify components such as the use of personal experience and extended narrative by the speaker; examine the relation in which the speaker speaks to the audience; assess whether the speaker creates inductive arguments and whether the speaker creates identification with, and empowers the audience (see § 2.6).

The style of the speaker was analysed by paying close attention to the use of imagery, metaphors, anecdotes, humour and experience employed to persuade the audience to accept her point of view. The occurrence of linguistic features, such as the type of language used, repetition and personal pronouns, were also examined. The three proofs by Aristotle, namely logos, pathos and ethos, were explored to further provide rhetorical insight with regard to the rhetorical devices used by the speaker to convince the audience of her point of view.

### **3.8 Presentation of findings**

All findings were presented in narrative form and were grouped according to themes that emerged from the analyses of the speeches and the reviewed literature. Verbatim quotations from the speeches illustrate points made in the analysis.

### **3.9 Research ethics**

According to Kumar (2011), in research, any dilemma stemming from a moral quandary is a basis of ethical conduct. Furthermore, Kumar (2011) explains that certain behaviours in research, such as causing harm to individuals, breaching confidentiality, using information improperly and introducing bias are ethical issues. Similarly, Neuman (2003) agrees by noting that ethical issues are the concerns, dilemmas and conflicts that arise over the proper way to conduct research. Thus, research ethics define what is or is not legitimate to do or what moral research procedure involves.

The speeches viewed or watched on YouTube were transcribed verbatim. The researcher was objective during the transcription, analysis and discussion and presentation process to avoid bias. Because the study makes use of a feminine approach, which is already biased, the researcher observed gender neutrality as far as possible.

### **3.10 Conclusion**

This chapter discussed the methodology that was employed by the researcher to collect, analyse and interpret data. The study first employed content analysis by analysing transcripts of the selected speeches by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie to find answers to questions that framed the study. Furthermore, it employed the feminine rhetorical style, Aristotle's rhetorical proofs of persuasion, as well as the linguistic rhetorical features on the selected speeches by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie to shed light on the author's use of rhetoric.

The next chapter provides a discussion and interpretation of findings with regard to the speaker's use of the feminine rhetorical style, the Aristotelian proofs of rhetoric, as well as the linguistic rhetorical devices.

## CHAPTER 4

### ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FEMININE RHETORICAL STRATEGIES EMPLOYED IN CHIMAMANDA NGOZI ADICHIE'S SELECTED SPEECHES

#### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an analytical discussion of the selected speeches by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie. In the first section, the use of the feminine style of rhetoric in the selected speeches is discussed, followed by a rhetorical analysis of these speeches, which is presented according to the themes that emerged from the analysis.

#### 4.2 Personal experience and extended narrative

##### 4.2.1 Personal experience

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's speeches are filled with personal experiences and extended narrative. Personal experiences and extended narrative are characteristics of the feminine rhetorical style, and their use in the speeches under discussion is evident through the author's use of personal testimony and anecdotes.

One feature of personal experience is the speaker's use of personal tone. Throughout the speeches studied, Adichie employs a personal tone in her narration. She tells stories about herself and this is evident through her use of personal pronouns, such as 'I', 'my', 'I'm'. In the speeches studied, Adichie employed personal pronouns in the following way to refer to herself: "*I wanted him to disagree with the substance of my argument, I am not usually known to be shy but I'm quite shy right now.*" By using a personal tone, Adichie appears to be truthful, as well as sincere, and speaks in a way that is compassionate to her audience.

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie is an author and because of this, her audience may have read her books. For this reason, her audience knows about her ability to tell stories and may expect to hear stories from her. In her speech, "The danger of a single story," Adichie starts the

Technology, Entertainment and Design talk by saying: *“I’m a storyteller. And I would like to tell you a few personal stories about what I like to call the danger of a single story.”*

Throughout all the studied speeches by Adichie, stories are told. These stories include personal stories, fictional and non-fictional stories and personal testimonies of friends and family.

In the speech “The danger of a single story” alone, Adichie tells more than six stories. These stories are used by the author as evidence and support for her claims as to what she calls the danger of stereotypes caused by having one single story about a particular place or people. The first two stories Adichie gives in this speech are personal ones. She tells a story about how she was an early reader and writer, that all the stories she wrote were influenced by the stories she read.

All my characters were white and blue-eyed, they played in the snow, they ate apples, they talked about the weather.

This little anecdote has a message of the single story, because as a young child, Adichie was exposed to British books, they influenced her to have a single view of writing and telling stories. Adichie confesses that *“Because all I read were books in which characters were foreign, I had become convinced that books by their very nature had to have foreigners in them and had to be about things which I could not personally identify.”*

Another story told in “The danger of a single story” that serves as evidence and support about stereotypes is an anecdote of how Adichie’s American roommate viewed Africa.

My American roommate was shocked by me. She asked where I had learned to speak English so well, and was confused when I said that Nigeria happened to have English as its official language. She asked if she could listen to what she called my ‘tribal

music', and was consequently very disappointed when I produced my tape of Mariah Carey. She assumed that I did not know how to use a stove.

By telling this personal story, Adichie is being real with her audience. Through her experiences the listeners are able to learn about the stereotypes in a natural way, without being forced to adopt the speaker's views. The listeners are able to make realisations of the truth about how one story can create a single world view which results in stereotypes. Some members of the audience can relate to the story and reflect on their own experiences with regards to the single story of Africa; thus, the audience comes to a realisation that it is important to have many stories instead of one, as many stories give different angles of reality.

In the stories shared by Adichie, a message is manifested to give her audiences insight on the matters being discussed. Through her lived experiences, Adichie confesses to her audience that she too would have been guilty of the single story about Africa, had she not grown up in Nigeria. She says,

If I had not grown up in Nigeria, and if all I knew about Africa were from popular images, I too would think that Africa was a place of beautiful landscapes, beautiful animals, and incomprehensible people, fighting senseless wars, dying of poverty and AIDS, unable to speak for themselves and waiting to be saved by a kind, white foreigner.

In sharing this confession, Adichie is able to connect with the audience and it helps them to know that they are not the only people guilty of stereotypes through the single story; it also shows them that they can overcome the struggles of the single story just as she did, by reading and exposing herself to as much stories about people and places as possible. They can do this by exposing themselves to different experiences and perspectives through interaction, reading or even keeping an open mind. Frederick (2009) shares the same view, noting that

stories support the feminine perspective, because they give the audience a chance to benefit or learn from one another's experience in a feminine nurturing way (see § 2.6.1). She adds that narratives instruct the listener without telling the listener what to do.

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie relies primarily on lived experiences as evidence and support for her ideas and arguments. She does this by disclosing her personal experiences to her audience in a way that one would to a close friend. In the speech "Narrative of Europe," Adichie narrates the experiences she faced while travelling Europe.

In Copenhagen, the officer assumed I was a prostitute when I produced my passport and he kept asking 'Are sure you are a writer?' as though to give me a chance to recant and confess that I really was a prostitute. In Frankfurt, the officer asked if I was a flight attendant otherwise why did I travel so often, he asked me, flipping through the visas in my passport.

Adichie makes use of her experiences at European airports to share with her audience the plight of African people in Europe. Adichie's audience can relate to the frustration she must have felt because of the stereotypes she experienced as a black, African, Nigerian, in Europe. Adichie's listeners also take home a lesson from this story that Africans are capable of being writers, travellers and many more, and that not all Africans flying to Europe are flight attendants or prostitutes.

The speaker draws the audience closer to her on an intimate level with her use of storytelling. In her speech "We should all be feminists," Adichie tells a personal story about her late friend Okuloma. She starts by saying: "*I would like to start by telling you about one of my greatest friends, Okuloma.*" By sharing a personal story, Adichie becomes transparent in the eyes of her audience. The audience is provided with a different view of Adichie as a woman, friend, one who is capable of feeling emotions and one who has lost a close friend.

Everyone in the audience has experienced friendship or has had a close friend like the friend Adichie had had in Okuloma. She narrates that:

Okuloma lived on my street and looked after me like a big brother. If I liked a boy, I would ask Okuloma's opinion. Okuloma died in the notorious Okuloma plane crash in Nigeria in December of 2005, almost exactly 7 years ago. Okuloma was a person I could argue with, laugh with and truly talk to. He was also the first person to call me a feminist. I was about 14, we were in his house, arguing, both of us bristling with half-bit knowledge from books that we had read. I don't remember what this particular argument was about, but I remember that as I argued and argued, Okuloma looked at me and said, "You know, you're a feminist."

This story serves to make Adichie appear human, with feelings and emotions, and also reveals the depth her relationships with others and her grief at the death of a friend. Often people view famous people as having perfect lives, without problems and being very happy. In sharing this personal story, Adichie's audience can relate to her as a vulnerable person, just like they are.

#### **4.2.2 Extended narrative**

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie does not only use personal stories of herself, but also of other people. In her speech, titled "Narratives of Europe", Adichie tells a story about a Nigerian woman who is married to a Belgian man, to shed light on how Europe seeks to erase the colonial history it had with Africa by not teaching the new generation about colonialism. She narrates that,

So let me start with a story about a Nigerian woman who is married to a Belgian and lived there for many years. She said once that she was shocked that her son while being taught Belgian history was taught nothing about Congo. She said 'they teach

my son in school that he must help the poor Africans, but they don't teach him about what Belgium did in Congo'.

Adichie makes use of this story as proof and support for the argument in her speech of how Europe seeks to wipe out the history it has had with the African continent. The audience is able to make realisations that in choosing which aspects of history to teach to Belgian children, what the Belgian education system does is to erase the mutual history of the two continents. Adichie is able to draw the audience to this realisation without explicitly pointing out her views to her audience.

Feminine speakers make use of both fictional and non-fictional stories as proof of their claims. In her speech "To instruct is to delight: A case of realist literature," Adichie draws support for her claims with a story about a Nigerian novelist, Ben Okri. Adichie narrates that:

The books gathered dust and from time to time he would say to his son 'Ben, dust the books but don't read them!' This, of course, made the books even more attractive to Ben Okri. And so, while dusting, he would read them and if he heard his father's voice, he would hurriedly return to dusting. As an adult he would recall this story and end with the words: 'Books still have this tension for me – the do and don't, the possibility of danger, of secret knowledge. It makes them very potent'.

This humorous story is told to illustrate the power books can have on people. Because Ben Okri was prohibited to read his father's books, he developed a yearning to read them anyway. In reading these books, he realised the potential that reading had on the minds of people.

According to White (2006), stories have the ability to disarm and defuse audience defensiveness, and in so doing, create characters with whom the audience can identify and laugh. Furthermore, White (2006) argues that stories can also provide concrete examples for

general, abstract ideas, and stories appeal to human emotions. Anderson and Sheeler (2005) are of the same view, suggesting that “Storytelling has an identity-defining and community-building function, identifying the teller as a part of the group and validating the nature of the community at large” (p. 50).

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie is a feminine speaker who relies on stories filled with personal experiences to illustrate her point. Adichie is a story teller and this is evident in her speeches as they are flooded with extended narratives based on her lived experiences, as well as experiences of others, which are used as evidence or proof in order to persuade her audience.

### **4.3 Inductive reasoning**

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie creates her arguments through inductive reasoning. She does this by using examples and narratives as proof for her claims and arguments. Adichie makes use of herself, friends, family, authors and authored texts as examples. In her speech “To instruct is to delight: A case of realist literature,” Adichie inductively reasons to draw the audience to conclusions. In stressing the importance of realist literature, Adichie starts by using an anecdote from her childhood about bagels.

I would like to start by talking about bagels. When I was growing up in Onsuksa, the university town in south eastern Nigeria, books were the centre of my world. I started reading when I was perhaps four years old. I read everything I could find. One day, I read an American novel in which a character ate something called a bagel for breakfast. I had no idea what a bagel was, but I thought it sounded very elegant, very exotic – I pronounced it “bah-gel.” I desperately wanted to have a bah-gel. My family visited the United States for the first time when I was nine. At the airport in New York, I told my mother that, as a matter of the gravest urgency, we had to buy a bah-gel. And she went to a café and bought one. Finally I would have a bah-gel. You can

imagine my disappointed surprise when I discovered that this bah-gel, this glorious bah-gel from the novel, was only just a dense doughnut.

This anecdote illustrates the power books have on the imagination, as this power of books created a sense of interest and yearning in young Adichie to eat bagels. According to Adichie, “*books are powerful forces that can change human behaviour;*” she, therefore, plants this seed in the minds of her audience by using this anecdote to illustrate that books should be written and read, keeping in mind that literature has the power to educate and entertain readers.

In this speech, Adichie continues to inductively address her audience with her use of examples. She exemplifies authors to stress the importance of realist literature to write stories that are true. Adichie makes use of the literary icon, Chinua Achebe’s *Things fall apart* and *Arrow of God*. She confesses that it was in reading the two novels that she came to know the truth as opposed to the ‘facts’ she considered the truth.

I may very well know the facts; I did not really know the truths. Bloodless words like ‘pacification’ and ‘amalgamation’ and ‘indirect rule’ were the facts, but the truths were in the human stories. A respected man being flogged publicly by agents of the colonial government. A priest, once resplendent in his pride and stubbornness, now reduced to sitting on a cold prison floor because he had dared to reject an offer from a British district officer. And in images such as these, I learned a great truth which the history books said nothing about: the loss of dignity.

Because books are powerful forces on the minds of the readers, Achebe sided with the colonisers, not knowing that he was the savage being referred to in the novels he read. Adichie used this anecdote to illustrate to her audience that books are indeed powerful and that they are even more powerful, depending on who writes them and how they are written.

With the aid of anecdotes about books, Adichie is able to draw her audience little by little to the conclusion that books, indeed, have a powerful effect on the mind of the reader and that writers are responsible for the minds of the readers and should, therefore, write literature that is not only true, but a delight. She ends her speech with a quote by Bessie Head. *In answering the question: Why do you write? Head had this to say: "I am building a stairway to the stars. I have the authority to take the whole of mankind up there with me. That is why I write."* In using the quote by Bessie Head, the speaker further appeals to the audience as she makes use of another author to illustrate to the audience that writers have a responsibility to educate humanity.

#### **4.3.1 The African reality**

Adichie stresses the power of literature through Chinua Achebe and his novel *Things fall apart*. She narrates that Achebe himself took sides with the colonisers when he first read some colonialist classics in secondary school. Achebe is quoted, confessing that: *I did not see myself as an African to begin with. I took sides with the white men against the savages. The white man was good and reasonable and intelligent and courageous. The savages arrayed against them were sinister and stupid or, at the most, cunning. I hated their guts.*

Throughout the speech, Adichie makes use of examples of authors and novels to illustrate and move from one idea to another in order to draw her audience to conclusions. She refers to Camara Laye's *The dark child*, *American psycho* by Don De Lillo, the philosopher, Diogenes the Cynic and Ben Okri, among others, to illustrate her points.

Furthermore, Adichie draws examples from a speech by former president of France, Nicolas Sarkozy delivered in Dakar, Senegal in 2007, as a basis to talk about stories that Europe likes to tell itself about its colonial history.

Adichie starts by using an extract from Sarkozy's speech in which he claims to be a friend of Africa. *"I have come to talk to you with the frankness and sincerity that one owes to friends that one appreciates and respects. I appreciate and respect Africa and the Africans"* Adichie does not think that Sarkozy is a friend of Africa and she draws her audience to the conclusion that Europe has developed a friendly story about its colonial history, a story that uses friendly language and seeks to erase the colonial history between Africa and Europe. She does this by drawing more extracts from Sarkozy's speech. Sarkozy is quoted saying: *"I have not come to deny mistakes or crimes. Mistakes were made, crimes committed. But no one can ask of the generation of today to expiate this crime, perpetrated by past generations. No one can ask of the sons to repent for the sins of their fathers."* Adichie refutes the arguments made by Sarkozy and draws her audience to believe that Sarkozy claims that *"colonisation is not responsible for all the current difficulties of Africa it is not responsible for the bloody wars between Africans, for the genocides, for the dictators, the fanaticism, the corruption, the prevarication, the waste and the pollution."* This draws the audience to the conclusion that Europe tells itself that it is not to be blamed for Africa's current situation. Through Sarkozy's speech, Adichie draws her audience to conclude on the stories Europe tells itself about Africa, namely that Europe is not to blame for the current state of Africa.

#### **4.3.2 On feminism**

In "We should all be feminists," Adichie starts by telling a personal story about her childhood friend Okuloma.

He was also the first person to call me a feminist. I was about 14, we were in his house, arguing, both of us bristling with half-bit knowledge from books that we had read. I don't remember what this particular argument was about, but I remember that as I argued and argued, Okuloma looked at me and said, "You know, you're a feminist."

Adichie further relies on examples based on her personal experiences and narratives which lead to her plea that everybody should be a feminist.

I know a woman who decided to sell her house because she didn't want to intimidate a man who might marry her. I know an unmarried woman in Nigeria who, when she goes to conferences, wears a wedding ring, because according to her, she wants all the participants in the conference to give her respect. I know young women who are under so much pressure from family, from friends, even from work to get married, and they're pushed to make terrible choices. A woman at a certain age who is unmarried, our society teaches her to see it as a deep personal failure. And a man, after a certain age isn't married, we just think he hasn't come around to making his pick.

Adichie inductively illustrates her arguments about gender with a series of personal examples, as well as examples of other women in her society, in an attempt to convince the audience to do away with gender inequality among women. Adichie is a feminine speaker, and in the selected speeches studied, the novelist created her arguments by relying heavily on narratives and illustrations to make her points clear to the audience.

#### **4.4 The audience**

##### **4.4.1 Audience participation**

Feminine speakers invite their audience to participate (see § 2.7.3). This is done primarily by using rhetorical questions to stir responses in the minds of the audience. According to Hayden (1999), a feminine speaker does not demand or insist, but rather suggests, invites and requests. Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's speeches are infused with rhetorical questions. In the speeches studied, rhetorical questions are used by the author as a suggestive but persuasive

strategy to invite her audience to participate in the creation of arguments. By asking questions, Adichie engages her audience in a discursive way.

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie employs rhetorical questions by slowly planting ideas in the minds of her audience with the aid of anecdotes, before presenting the audience with rhetorical questions. In “The danger of a single story”, Adichie tells anecdotes about what she calls the danger of a single story. After telling the anecdotes, Adichie presents the audience with a series of rhetorical questions.

So what if before my Mexican trip, I had followed the immigration debate from both sides, the U.S. and the Mexican? What if my mother had told us that Fide’s family was poor and hardworking? What if we had an African television network that broadcast diverse African stories all over the world? What the Nigerian writer Chinua Achebe calls “a balance of stories?” What if my roommate knew about my Nigerian publisher, Muhtar Bakare? A remarkable man who left his job in a bank to follow his dream and start a publishing house? Now, what if my roommate knew about my friend Fumi Onda?, a fearless woman who hosts a TV show in Lagos, and is determined to tell the stories that we prefer to forget? What if my roommate knew about the heart procedure that was performed in the Lagos hospital last week? What if my roommate knew about contemporary Nigerian music? Talented people singing in English and Pidgin, and Igbo and Yoruba and Ijo, mixing influences from Jay-Z to Fela to Bob Marley to their grandfathers? What if my roommate knew about the female lawyer who recently went to court in Nigeria to challenge a ridiculous law that required women to get their husband’s consent before renewing their passports? What if my roommate knew about Nollywood, full of innovative people making films despite great technical odds, films so popular that they really are the best example of Nigerians consuming what they produce? What if my roommate knew about my

wonderfully ambitious hair braider, who has just started her own business selling hair extensions? Or about the millions of other Nigerians who start businesses and sometimes fail, but continue to nurse ambition?

In this speech, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie makes use of one rhetorical question after another to illustrate her point that a single story creates stereotypes. In using a series of questions, Adichie does not expect her audience to provide answers to her questions. This act is purely rhetorical, because Adichie does not give the audience time to answer her questions.

Adichie argues in her speech that “The single story creates stereotypes” that stereotypes are untrue and incomplete, making one story the only story. In hearing a series of rhetorical questions beginning with ‘what if,’ after listening to the anecdotes on which they are based, the audience comes to the realisation that the totality of many stories matter, that stories can be used *to empower and humanise, stories can break the dignity of people but can also repair that broken dignity*. The rhetorical questions are used by the speaker to show the audience a balanced view of Africa. She paints a holistic picture of Africa, highlighting that Africans are capable of being lawyers, medical doctors, film makers and entertainers.

In the speech “Narratives of Europe” Adichie continues to use anecdotes and poses rhetorical questions which begin with the phrase stating ‘what if’ to lead her audience into making sound generalisations on how Europe seeks to erase its colonial history with Africa. Adichie has this to say about Europe’s erasure of African history.

Of course few will quarrel with the idea of a child being encouraged to help those in need and there are many, many, people in need in Congo and elsewhere in Africa, but why is there also this erasure of the past? Why is the boy not taught about the Belgian atrocities in Congo?

Adichie's audience is slowly led to realise that there is nothing wrong with Europe teaching its children to offer charity to Africa because there is need for charity in Africa, but these same children should be taught about Europe's colonial history in Africa, as this history is responsible for the current need for charity in Africa. The 'why' question serves a suggestive purpose and ensures that the audience are left to wonder whether Europe is not proud of its colonial past with Africa.

In the same speech, Adichie continues to appeal to the reasoning of her audience with the use of rhetorical questions.

What if I walked into an average classroom anywhere in the world, Europe and asked the students what comes to mind when I say Africa? If I asked those same students if there was a connection between their country and to this Africa? They would probably say no.

What Adichie does here brings out the power of rhetorical questions, as she lets the audience think about the questions before she offers them the answers, in so doing, making it easy for the audience to accept her answers. The audience can relate to Adichie's answers that the students would associate Africa with war, poverty, and aid and that they see no connection between Europe and Africa, because the media portrays Africa as a poor country with hunger, war and disease and that is what European children are exposed to believe.

Adichie employs more rhetorical questions to suggest to the audience that there is a link between the present state of Africa and Europe. She says that "*There is a link between the affluence of Europe and the poverty of Africa. Is it a simple, causative link?*" This rhetorical question allows the audience to think about the link between Africa and Europe. In addition to using a rhetorical question, Adichie uses an anecdote to provide an answer to the question.

I remember my friend, the brilliant Kenyan writer, Binyavanga Wainaina, and I once walking in the streets of London some years ago and as he walked past beautiful after beautiful buildings, he would point at one and say, 'This one was paid for by colonial loot from Kenya, and he would point at another and say this was paid for by colonial lute from Nigeria.

This anecdote provides insight into the rhetorical question posed by the speaker about whether or not there is a link between Africa and Europe. The anecdote suggests that the speaker is implying that there is a link between Europe and the current state of Africa as resources were taken from Africa by the colonisers to build Europe. She is, however, not adamant to assert the point; therefore, she uses a humorous anecdote to make her point. The way in which the speaker poses the question allows the audience to disagree, even though the speaker is not seeking for agreement from the audience, but is merely stating a fact.

Moreover, the speaker states that often, her novel, *Half of a yellow sun*, is referred to as a political novel. Adichie stresses her annoyance over this with a series of rhetorical questions.

Why must my character somehow represent something political? Why must I always have words like socio-political linked to my work? Why am I not asked about the interpersonal relationships between the characters, about love, about passion? About resentment, about hope and envy? About the personal motivation of the characters?

Although these questions are directed to the speaker and not the audience, the audience engage them in thinking, and consider what answer they would provide the speaker if given the chance. These rhetorical questions furthermore show her personal frustration of how her work is viewed as political allegory instead of work of art showcasing love, hate passion and so much more.

In “We should all be feminists,” Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie tells an anecdote to help her audience understand her views on gender and then goes on to pose the following rhetorical questions to the audience.

In secondary school, a boy and a girl, both of them teenagers, both of them with the same amount of pocket money would go out and the boy would be expected always to pay, to prove his masculinity. And yet we wonder why boys are more likely to steal money from their parents. What if both boys and girls were raised not to link masculinity with money? What if the attitude was not, “The boy has to pay,” but rather, “Whoever has more, should pay?”

Adichie poses these questions in order to let the audience think about the answer, but goes on to provide the answer that “*boys will no longer have the pressure of having to prove this masculinity.*” In telling the story before posing the rhetorical question, Adichie uses experience as a base for the questions. Through the use of the anecdote and rhetorical question, the audience is able to understand the speaker’s point of view and reach a conclusion.

In the same speech, Adichie offers statements before posing a question.

We teach girls to shrink themselves, to make themselves smaller. We say to girls, ‘You can have ambition, but not too much. You should aim to be successful, but not too successful; otherwise you would threaten the man. If you are the bread winner in your relationship with a man, you have to pretend that you’re not. Especially in public. Otherwise you will emasculate him.’ But what if we question the premise itself? Why should a woman’s success be a threat to a man? What if we decide to simply dispose of that word?

By offering argumentative statements, Adichie shows her audience that she is confident in the points she makes that society limits the girl child and in so doing, keeping her under the man. This is noticeable because the statements she makes engage the minds of the reader and help in answering the questions raised by the speaker. In this way, Adichie engages her audience in a discursive manner.

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie uses anecdotes to provide answers for the rhetorical questions she poses to her audience. *“What if, in raising children, we focus on ability, instead of gender? What if, in raising children, we focus on interest, instead of gender?”* The speaker asked these two questions and immediately gives the audience the answer with the rhetorical questions. She confesses that,

I know a woman who has the same degree and the same job as her husband. When they get back from work, she does most of the house work, which I think is true for many marriages. But what struck me about them is that whenever her husband changed the baby’s diaper, she said, ‘Thank you’ to him. Now, what if, she saw this as perfectly normal and natural that he should in fact care for his child?

What Adichie does here is to engage the audience mentally before providing them with an answer. There is, therefore, no time for the audience to answer the questions and they are directed by the speaker’s final statement to the question.

In posing rhetorical questions, Adichie makes her audience agree with her by providing alternative answers to ‘the why’ questions. She argues that *“Today, women in general are more likely to do the housework than men, the cooking and cleaning. But why is that? Is it because women are born with a cooking gene? Or because over the years they have been socialized to see cooking as their role?”* No, women are not born with a cooking gene and yes women have been socialised to see cooking as their role. Even though the audience do

not say these obvious answers they think about them and agree with the speaker, and therefore, Adichie is successful in getting her audience to agree with her through the use of rhetorical questions, as Frederick (2009) found that the feminine perspective encourages the audience to participate and draw their own conclusions (see § 2.7.3).

#### **4.4.2 Addressing the audience as peers**

Feminine speakers seek to address their audience as peers. According to Meeks (2013), speaking to the audience as peers is one way in which a speaker can relate to the audience. The goal of a feminine speaker is to speak to the audience in the most natural way, so that the audience can feel as though they are having a chat with close friends on a boys' night out or a girls' talk at a pyjama party.

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie speaks as though she is having a conversation or a discussion with her audience. She adopts this style throughout all the speeches studied. This characteristic of the feminine style is evident through her use of personal tone, and it seems as if she has a close relationship with her audience (see § 2.6.4). Her audience can relate to her through her use of personal tone because as she speaks, it seems as if she is speaking directly to the audience.

In her commencement speech delivered at Wellesley College, Adichie started off by greeting her audience as one would greet a friend. She said "*Hello class of 2012.*" 'Hello' is an informal way of greeting and is usually used among people who share a close relationship with one another. By greeting the audience with a 'hello', Adichie addresses her audience as peers. Adichie continues to address her audience as peers throughout her commencement speech delivered at Wellesley College. She uses phrases that young people can identify with such as '*ridiculously lucky*', '*truly, truly happy*', '*actually, she said.*' Addressing her audience as peers, Adichie chooses the words and expressions she uses to relate to her audience.

Similarly, Adichie addresses members of the audience by name. In the commencement delivered at Eastern Connecticut State University, she mentions '*President Nunez*', in the commencement at Kalamazoo College, she mentions '*Daye*' and at Wellesley College she mentions '*President Bottomly*.' This feature is also evident throughout the speech delivered by Adichie at Kwani's Tenth Anniversary in Kenya. In mentioning the names of members of the audience, Adichie creates identification with the audience as the audience knows the people being identified personally.

According to Frederick (2009), feminine speakers talk to their audience as equals (See Section 2.6.4). Frederick (2009) further explains that using personal tone or treating listeners as peers helps the audience to appreciate the speaker's unique position as valid and credible. Frederick (2009) asserts that a personal tone denotes a close relationship, one in which the closest of friends sit together in private and disclose personal fears, frustrations, giving advice and offering solace and comfort.

Feminine speakers often adopt a personal tone, because they usually talk about themselves or use their own personal experiences as proof or evidence to support their claims. In Adichie's commencement speech at Eastern Connecticut State University, she uses a personal tone to talk about her experiences at the university while she was still a student there. And this is what peers do; they share similar experiences with one another.

I graduated from Eastern almost fifteen years ago and just thinking about that made me realise how quietly I am moving away from being young. The last time I visited Eastern I was amazed at how beautiful the campus is. It felt as if they waited until I graduated and then boom, all the nice buildings came up and everything became nicer but despite the fact that Eastern looks wonderful now, it wasn't too bad when I was a student here. And most of all what mattered was the education I was fortunate to

receive. The small class sizes, the professors who all paid attention to the students and who were all keen to see the students succeeded, I will always be grateful to Eastern Connecticut State University for giving me a worthwhile education.

Adichie's casual approach and personal tone evoke a sense of belonging in the audience. By not assuming status, power and knowledge, Adichie speaks in a nurturing way. She does not speak as a literary author who knows it all, but as a woman, friend and one who seeks to educate and empower her audience in a natural way. Adichie does not impose or seek to force her ideas on her audience, but rather, she uses a personal tone and personal experiences to open up to her audience and, by so doing, gains their trust. Adichie shares her experiences to draw realisations in the audience to admit that they have been through similar situations. In sharing these personal details, a sense of equality, solidarity and belonging may be felt by members of the audience.

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie addresses her audience as peers through her use of inclusive pronouns such as 'we' and 'our'. In her commencement address at Eastern Connecticut State University, she uses the pronouns 'we' and 'our' when she justifies her reasons for speaking openly about social issues, such as gender equality and the rights of gay people that need addressing. She says, "*I think our time on earth is short and each moment that we are not our truest selves, each moment that we pretend to be what we are not, each moment when we say what we do not mean because we imagine that is what somebody wants us to say, then we are wasting our time on earth.*" Here, Adichie does not only share with her audience ideas that are universal, but also educates them. In using the pronoun 'we', Adichie implies that she and her audience are one and that they are equally responsible for discriminating others, thus, they equally have to change.

#### 4.5 Creating identification and empowerment

The goal of the feminine speaker is to create identification and to empower the audience. According to Campbell (1989), feminine speakers seek to identify their interests with those of the audience, or vice versa. Doran (2010) explains that feminine speakers use different strategies to create identification with their audience. Doran (2010) further elaborates that feminine speakers may make use of personal tone, invite audience participation, and speak from the perspective of a peer. They can also be perceived as attempting to identify with the audience because these characteristics value inclusivity.

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie identifies with, and empowers her audience through her use of personal stories and experiences. In her commencement speech delivered at Eastern Connecticut State University, Adichie tells a story about an experience her friend shared on advice she had received from her high school teacher, to swim in her own lane. Adichie narrates that,

The teacher's sole advice to this friend was 'just swim in your own lane' which confused my friend because she was not a swimmer, so the teacher told her that when he was a student, he had been on a swimming team at Stanford. His stroke was very good but he kept coming in second. And so his coach told him 'your problem is you keep looking around to see how the other guys are doing. Keep your eyes on your own lane. Swim your fastest and you will win.'

Adichie used this story to motivate her audience and by so doing empowers them. The message of Adichie's story is that her audience should not constantly look or compare themselves to other people, but to rather focus on their own goals and struggles, as comparing can be a distraction from achieving their own goals. Adichie further advises her audience on self-criticism saying "*I urge you to try to also criticise yourself.*" Adichie creates

identification with her audience as they can relate to the fact that one cannot be perfect, and that everyone has a weak point. Adichie expands her ideas on self-criticism by sharing a personal story.

After my second novel *Half of a yellow sun* was published, and I was lucky that it had become very successful. I decided to go back to graduate school. People asked me why? Especially as my novel was one of the class texts used in graduate school. And my answer was that I went back to school because I woke up each morning realising how little I knew and how much I wanted to know. Somewhere in the world, I know there is a person who writes better than I do. Who thinks more clearly, who has better insights.

Adichie's audience can relate to this confession as they know very well that she is a successful writer and that she is a knowledgeable person with several academic degrees to her name, and yet she is still wanting to learn more. This empowers the audience, because the advice given comes from one who speaks from experience and one who is a living example.

According to Adichie, the audience should always be willing to be wrong, to be willing to say 'I don't know' and to admit to a lack of knowledge, because self-criticism is a sign of strength and not weakness. Through Adichie's personal experience, the audience are motivated to keep learning, by so doing, they keep empowering themselves. The audience should never stop learning because learning never ends, and one cannot say that one knows everything. It is only by criticising oneself that one can identify weak points in one's own life which enables one to work toward being better.

In the commencement speech delivered at Kalamazoo College, she pleads with the audience saying,

Think about how little you know. Leave room in your mind to revise opinions, to avoid smugness, because it is very easy to become smug when you've gone to a good college like 'Kalamazoo' and have that gleaming diploma. I know from experience. Like you, I have been fortunate to have a good education and from time to time I find that smugness creeping up and I find myself having to shove it aside.

The author creates identification with the audience because she too has graduated from prestigious universities and has experienced some form of smugness, but was able to shove the smugness aside. Adichie discourages her audience from being smug and rather to be open to learning, and thus empowering themselves as knowledge is power.

In the same commencement speech to Kalamazoo graduates, Adichie urges her audience to avoid stereotypes. This same advice is given in several of the speeches studied, which includes "The danger of a single story", "We should all be feminists", "Narratives of Europe" and "Kwani at 10." With the aid of a personal story and experiences, she pleads with her audience to remember that there is never a single story about anything.

A well-meaning student had read *Purple hibiscus* and said that it was such a shame that Nigerian men were like the abusive father character in the book. And so I replied that I had just read a novel *American psycho* by Bret Easton Ellis and that it was a shame that all young Americans were serial murderers. Obviously I said this in a fit of irritation. But it would never have occurred to me to think that, just because I had read a novel about a young American character, that he was somehow representative of all Americans. And this is not because I am a better person than that student, which is a very unlikely prospect, but because I had read Mary Gaitskill and William Faulkner and Philip Roth and Anne Tyler. Because I had many stories of America. Please try as much as you can to have as many stories about the world as you can.

Identification is created through this personal story because the audience can relate to the logic in Adichie story. The experience of the author serves as a testimony of the single story, and the author provides a solution to the stereotype. In ‘The danger of a single story’, Adichie stresses that *the single story robs people of dignity. It makes our recognition of our equal humanity difficult. It emphasises how we are different, rather than how we are similar.* Adichie provides a solution to this single story in emphasising that many stories matter. She confesses that reading Mary Gaitskill, William Faulkner, Philip Roth and Anne Tyler Adichie exposed herself to different perspectives of America rather than the single story of America portrayed in the book, *American psycho*. Had the well-meaning student read different books by African authors, he would have had many stories about Africa. The audience is empowered when they are encouraged to read, as it creates ‘a balance of stories’. Adichie advises the audience to read books as “*Books are the best ways to truly come close to understanding complexity in our own very complex world.*”

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie continues to identify with her audience through personal experience and narrative. In several of the speeches studied, such as in the commencement address delivered at Eastern, Wellesley College. Adichie shares an anecdote about her choice of career. She narrates that,

When I was growing up in Nigeria I was expected, as every student who did well was expected, to become a doctor. Deep down I knew that what I really wanted to do was to write stories. But I did what I was supposed to do and I went into medical school. I told myself that I would tough it out and become a psychiatrist and that way I could use my patients’ stories for my fiction. But after one year of medical school I fled. I realized I would be a very unhappy doctor and I really did not want to be responsible for the inadvertent death of my patients. Leaving medical school was a very unusual decision, especially in Nigeria where it is very difficult to get into medical school.

The audience relates to this story as they are graduates who were once faced with a decision on what to study at university and know how difficult the situation can be. The lesson in Adichie's anecdote is that one should not give up on one's dream; one should not make a decision that will make one unhappy in the long run. She could have become a doctor to make society happy, but doing something she did not like would make her miserably unhappy. Adichie's choice might not have worked out, she might not have turned out into a successful writer, but the author emphasises that one should take a bold step to 'try.' This advice, to try, empowers the audience to go out into the world and not be limited by doubts, but rather try to achieve, doing something that will make a difference as opposed to doing nothing, or that which does not please them.

Tonn (1996) notes that speakers often direct praise to specific individuals in the audience. Chimamanda Ngozi creates identification with her audience in this way. In the speech she delivered at Kwani's tenth anniversary, Adichie offers praise to members of the audience. She says: *"I want to thank Tom Adhiambo, the only thing I want to say about him is that I think this continent needs many, many more professors of literature like him and I also want to thank the wonderful theatre group."* She further goes on to thank *"Professor Wanjiku Kabira because her grace reminds me of my mother, who herself is a brilliant university woman who is passionate about women."* Much of the speech is dedicated at praising Binyavanga Wainaina, Adichie's close friend. Adichie tells stories of how they met, their friendship and its influence in her life. She defines Binyavanga as *"The first of my truth tellers, the readers who read what I write and who say I like this or I don't like this but I know where you are coming from"*.

Furthermore, Adichie creates identification with her audience with her use of personal pronouns. Instead of addressing them individually with the use of 'you', she shifts to the use of 'we'. In the commencement speech delivered at Eastern Connecticut State University,

Adichie moves between first, second and third person: “*I urge you to try also to learn how to criticise yourself. You must be willing to be wrong; you must be willing to say I don’t know. I also believe that success is ultimately something we have to define for ourselves. We cannot let anybody else define success for us.*” Tonn (1996) explains that in order to create empathy and foster identification, speakers may move between first, second and third person as they participate in, and narrate the story. In using ‘we,’ Adichie creates identification with her audience by suggesting inclusivity through solidarity, unity and a sense of belonging.

Moreover, in the speech, “Allow hope but also fear,” Adichie identifies with the audience with her use of first person pronoun, “*I must confess that I am starting to feel stupidly emotional*”. She further makes use of the second person pronoun ‘you’ in the selected speeches. For instance, she addresses her audience in the same speech, saying,

You are amazing, class of 2009, you have probably done some drinking, you might have fallen in love, you’ve made friendships that will last a life time, you’ve read books you might have never read, you’ve done internships and most of all you’ve become more privileged than you were when I first met you four years ago.

In using the ‘you’ pronoun, the speaker makes the audience feel that she is addressing them directly and this helps in drawing their attention to her. (see § 2.9.2)

In the same speech, Adichie appeals to the emotions of the audience using an anecdote about her American friend who hasn’t eaten out at restaurants because of the economic downturn, and how this experience of her friend reminded her about her aunt, who had lost her shop because of the economic downturn. Adichie employs this anecdote to educate and evoke feelings of gratitude in her audience. She says “*We live in a world of inequality, with gross inequality, and while one person in one part of the world stops eating out at restaurants because of the economic downturn, another confronts the possibility of not eating at all.*”

Adichie employs this anecdote to remind her audience of their privileged lives because one's situation might always seem bad, but there is always someone else on the other side of the world who is going through even greater struggles. In using this anecdote, the audience is taught the great lesson of gratitude, gratitude for the little one has.

Moreover, at Kalamazoo College, Adichie speaks about current affairs to further create identification with her audience.

**This is the year** that the economic order of the world is coming apart at the seams; unemployment is the highest it has been in four decades. **This is the year** that the big banks of America took taxpayer money. **This is the year** that the major companies that we thought invincible are filing for bankruptcy. **This is the year** that the news has become about economic apocalypse. **This is the year** that the world is re-thinking the very institutions that are central to its sense of itself. And **this is the year** that you are graduating.

Adichie appeals to the logic reasoning of her audience as she repeats the phrase 'this is the year' to stress the fact that they are graduating in an inauspicious year and that finding employment may not be easy, because of the events that took place in 2009. In referring to actual events that took place, Adichie employs references to current political and economic affairs in order to convince her audience about how difficult the year 2009 had been for the US economy. She furthermore creates identification and brings out the power of repetition when she repeats the phrase 'this year'.

Similarly, in a speech Adichie delivered at the University of Nairobi, she creates identification when she takes back the audience to the conference of 1962 which was delivered at Makerere University where African writers "*gathered to argue and agree and disagree but really mostly to acknowledge and affirm one another.*" She makes use of a

historical illusion by referring to the African Writers Conference of 1962, which was the first gathering by African writers which discussed, among others, what constituted African literature, whether African literature was literature limited to literature written by Africans or literature that depicted the African experience, as well as whether African literature had to be written in African languages. Reference to this conference allows the audience to identify with the speaker and understand why she is honoured to be speaking at Makerere University, the same place the African Writers' Conference of 1962 was held.

In the same speech, Adichie employs nostalgia and collective memory as rhetorical methods used by authors and speakers to remind the audience of a time, place or feeling in the past, in efforts to evoke their emotions. In her introduction, Adichie takes the audience back to when she first met them four years back. She says,

I remember when I first came here to Kalamazoo, in the autumn of 2005 when you read my novel *Purple hibiscus* as your common book. You were freshmen and you were fresh in many ways, green in the best possible sense, trusting and naïve, forward-looking and secure that the universe would remain as you imagined it. I also thought you were open-minded and eager to learn and full of possibility. I had a really wonderful time interacting with you. And I have to say thank you again for that.

Adichie's audience go down memory lane as she describes their situation back then. They can relate and identify with what she is saying so much, that they are reliving those moments again. The audience also feels special because the speaker remembers the details of her visit to their university.

In all three commencement speeches analysed, Adichie praised her audience in an attempt to appeal to their emotions, by so doing, creating identification with the audience. She praised

them for having graduated from prestigious universities in the commencement speech delivered at Eastern Connecticut State University,

You are very fortunate, you are fortunate to have an education from Connecticut's public liberal arts university. You are fortunate to have benefitted from a wonderful liberal arts core curriculum. And it is also really cool to have a degree from one of country's most environmentally responsible colleges.

At "Wellesley College," Adichie praised both the students and the university noting that she has '*admired Wellesley, its mission, its story, its success.*' This evokes a feeling of pride in the audience, as a very important person has taken a liking in their school. The audience also feels that she is honoured to be in their presence. She also commends her audience for graduating from a university that might produce America's first female *president* "*And if the goddesses and gods of the universe do the right thing, then you will also very soon be the proud alumnae of the college that produced America's first female president! Go Hillary!*" Here, Adichie appeals to the audience by employing an appeal to authority with her use of "*And if the goddesses and gods of the universe do the right thing.*" Adichie's *ethos* is showcased in this line as she acknowledging that both genders have spiritual power.

In addition, she mentions how happy she is to be at Wellesley.

I'm truly, truly happy to be here today, so happy, in fact, that when I found out your class colour was yellow, I decided I would wear yellow eye shadow. But on second thoughts, I realised that as much as I admire Wellesley, even yellow eye-shadow was a bit too much of a gesture. So I dug out this yellow-yellowish-head wrap instead.

The audience is also impressed that the speaker was willing to go to great lengths to impress them, by so doing, creating identification. The audience feels loved and appreciated that

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie almost wore yellow make-up for them, even happier that the speaker put on the yellowish head wrap for them.

In the commencement speech delivered at Eastern Connecticut State University and Wellesley College, Adichie shares a personal experience about her father's kidnapping that serves to appeal to the emotions of the audience, thus creating identification with the audience:

Three weeks ago, my father was kidnapped near his home in Nigeria. And for a number of days, my family and I went through the kind of emotional pain that I have never known in my life. We were talking to threatening strangers on the phone, begging and negotiating for my father's safety and we were not always sure if my father was alive. He was released after we paid a ransom. He is well, in fairly good shape and in his usual lovely way, is very keen to reassure us all that he is fine.

Here, Adichie employs *pathos*, as the feelings of the audience are evoked with this sad story. The audience can also identify with Adichie and her family. The stillness in the room suggests that Adichie's audience feel the pain in her voice and that they sympathise with her and the family. The audience feels and understands the torment and anguish she and her family must have gone through. The audience is further relieved to learn that her father is alive, safe, and is with his family. Adichie employed the anecdote to instil values of gratitude in her audience. The anecdote serves to show the audience how the experience made the speaker rethink about what matters and what does not matter in her life. The speaker therefore appeals to the audience to think about what matters to them.

In the speech, "Kwani at 10" Adichie is overwhelmed with so much love from her audience that she confesses to being shy. *"I am not usually known to be shy but I'm quite shy right now. Thank you, I am shy, I am very happy to be here and I thank you for this warm*

*welcome.*” Adichie’s audience feels and reckons with her state of shyness. They are particularly happy to know that the speaker is shy because of their act of love and appreciation. Adichie further says that she is even happier to be with them because of the writers who have been at the University of Nairobi before her. She says: *“I feel happy to know that Chinua Achebe has been here, that Ngugi wa Thiongo has been here, Ayi Kwei Armah, Micere Mugo, so I feel their shadow somewhere and I am happily standing in their shadow.”* The audience understands why the speaker is overwhelmed with happiness, because they know that their university has hosted important prestigious African writers such as Ngugi wa Thiongo and Chinua Achebe.

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie created identification and empowerment by addressing her audience as peers and sharing personal experiences through stories. Therefore, instances where a speaker attempts to address audience members as peers may coincide with instances where a speaker also invites audience participation.

#### **4.6 Gender equality and feminism**

Adichie is known to be a feminist through her writing. In the selected speeches studied, she makes use of her credibility as an author and feminist to speak about gender equality. In the commencement speech delivered at Wellesley College, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie proudly says to her audience that her writing has given her a platform to talk about things she cares about.

I choose to talk about things that I care about - such as my deeply held belief that men and women are completely equal. I don’t speak to provoke. I speak because I think our time on earth is short and each moment that we are not our truest selves, each moment we pretend to be what we are not, each moment we say what we do not mean

because we imagine that is what somebody wants us to say, then we are wasting our time on earth.

Her audience identifies with her as they know of her authorial and feminist status. Adichie gives her audience the reason why she writes and speaks about feminism because she stands by and supports what she believes. She does this in an attempt to persuade the audience to take action on matters close to their hearts. She pleads with the audience saying, *“Please don’t waste your time on earth, but there is one exception. The only acceptable way of wasting your time on earth is online shopping.”* In using her ethos, Adichie indirectly appeals to her audience to be more like her, to speak openly for what they believe.

Moreover, Adichie pleads with her audience not to waste time on anything except on online shopping. Here, Adichie employs humour to appeal to the emotions of her audience. In the same vein, she appeals to the emotions of the audience by speaking about ‘shopping’. By speaking about ‘shopping’ the speaker makes use of an allusion of popular culture, in order to appeal to the emotions of her audience. Shopping is a fun and enjoyable activity that everyone loves, especially women, and so the speaker encourages the audience to also ‘waste’ time doing something they love and enjoy.

#### **4.6.1 Allusion**

Khaden and Dastjerdu (2012) state that an allusion is a reference to another work of literature, to a person, an event etc. Khaden & Dastjerdu (2012) explain that allusions are mostly used to help authors to simplify persuading their readers to accept the message they want to convey. Types of allusions include historical, literary, biblical and popular culture and the arts (Kirillove as cited in Khaden and Dastjerdu, 2012). Adichie further makes reference to her famous speech, “We should all be feminists” that was used in the song “Flawless’ by the famous singer, Beyoncé, *“I asked myself after excerpts of my feminism speech were used*

*in a song by a talented musician whom I think some of you might know. I thought it was a very good thing that the word 'feminist' would be introduced to a new generation.*" Adichie makes use of the allusion to popular culture, referring to the singer Beyoncé, in relation to her speech "We should all be feminists" to show her gratitude that the singer Beyoncé took a liking and interest in her speech and used the speech in her song 'Flawless' to educate and create awareness on what feminism is and what feminists actually stand for.

In the same speech, Adichie makes use of the allusion of popular culture to talk to her audience about makeup.

I wasn't very interested in makeup until I was in my twenties, which is when I began to wear makeup. Because of a man. A loud, unpleasant man. He was one of the guests at a friend's dinner party. I was also a guest. I was about 23, but people often told me I looked 12. I argued that it would be better if that honour was based on achievement rather than gender, and he looked at me and said, dismissively, 'You don't know what you are talking about, you're a small girl'. I wanted him to disagree with the substance of my argument, but by looking at me, young and female, it was easy for him to dismiss what I said. So I decided to try to look older.

In speaking about makeup, Adichie creates identification with the audience as she speaks about a familiar topic in today's society. The audience can relate to Adichie's anecdote about makeup as they know of the power of makeup to make temporary transformations with regards to beauty and age. This anecdote also serves to illustrate gender injustice as far as the feminine voice is concerned. Because Adichie was female and young, her voice or point of view was silenced and she had no say in the discussion at the dinner party she attended.

In “We should all be feminists,” Adichie makes use of literary allusion and refers to an article she had written that was thought to be an angry article. Adichie confirms to the audience stressing that her article was indeed an angry one:

Of course it was angry. I am angry. Gender as it functions today is a grave injustice. We should all be angry. Anger has a long history of bringing about positive change, but in addition to being angry, I’m also hopeful because I believe deeply in the ability of human beings to make and remake themselves for the better.

In referring to an article she had written, Adichie appeals to the emotions of the audience by displaying her own anger towards gender injustice. The audience identifies with the speaker because the speaker shows her own emotions on the subject, even more so as the speaker pleads with the audience also to be angry, as anger is an agent of change. She also encourages the audience to have hope in the ability of human kind to change for the better.

#### **4.6.2 Inclusive pronouns**

Moreover, in the speech “We should all be feminists” Adichie employs *ethos* to talk about the morals regarding gender that parents teach their children. She openly talks down gender divisions in society with regards to how children are raised. She says,

**We** must raise our daughters differently. **We** must also raise our sons differently. **We** do a great disservice to boys in how **we** raise them. **We** stifle the humanity of boys. **We** define masculinity in a very narrow way. Masculinity becomes this hard small cage and **we** put boys inside the cage. **We** teach boys to be afraid of fear. **We** teach boys to be afraid of weakness, of vulnerability. **We** teach them to mask their true selves because they have to be. In Nigeria **we** speak of a hard man.

Adichie’s *ethos* is displayed in these lines as she openly discusses gender norms in society that create gender inequality. The speaker also provides advice to how the boy and girl child

should be raised. Adichie's advice to the audience shows that she is a just person who believes in the fair and equal treatment of both men and woman, as far as gender is concerned.

Still on gender matters, Adichie employs the following metaphorical utterance to educate her audience on gender injustice: "*We teach boys to mask their true self because they have to be a 'hard man'.*" With this utterance, the speaker suggests that boys are taught not to cry and show their emotions as crying is regarded as a sign of weakness, and so, being macho and masculine shows that men are strong, which is not right, because it is human to be vulnerable, to be weak and to cry.

In addition, the speaker draws the attention of the audience by employing the inclusive 'we' pronoun. The speaker makes use of together words to suggest inclusivity which means that the audience and the speaker are one and are faced with the same battle at hand, which is to fight gender inequality in society. Kangira and Mungenga (2012) contend that together words show that the speaker and the audience share beliefs and values. Adichie, therefore, draws her audience to the norms that society teaches both girls and boys and how these contribute to gender inequality. She aims to create an understanding in them that gender is a worldwide problem that needs to be addressed in solidarity and unity among world citizens.

One noticeable rhetorical device employed by the speaker is repetition. Adichie repeats the pronoun 'we' nine times in the quoted section above. This is done to emphasise the bad norms that society teaches the boy child. In repeating the inclusive pronoun, 'we', Adichie arouses emotions of guilt in the audience with regards to how their children are raised. Repetition is a powerful rhetorical device used by speakers to emphasise ideas, which Adichie skilfully employs (see § 2.9.3).

Furthermore, Adichie argues that “*We praise girls for virginity, but we do not praise boys for virginity and it’s always made me wonder how exactly this is supposed to work.*” Adichie continues to appeal to the emotions of her audience by making them aware of how the girl child is treated in society. In saying these words, Adichie is able to appeal to the audience’s emotions as she also makes use of humour to convince them that it is unfair to preach virginity to girls and not to boys. Adichie is able to employ humour while speaking about the serious issues of gender.

Similarly, in the commencement speech delivered at Wellesley College, Adichie employs *ethos* to appeal to her audience. She does this by sharing an anecdote about an experience she had with a feminist organisation.

Recently a feminist organisation kindly nominated me for an important prize in a country that will remain unnamed. I was very pleased. I’ve been fortunate to have received a few prizes so far and I quite like them, especially when they come with shiny presents. So to get this prize, I was required to talk about how important a particular European feminist woman writer had been to me. Now the truth was that I had never managed to finish this feminist writer’s book. It did not speak to me. It would have been a lie to claim that she had any major influence on my thinking. The truth is that I learned so much more about feminism from watching the women traders in the market in Onsuksa where I grew up, than from reading any seminal feminist text. But I could have said that this woman was important to me, and I could have talked the talk, and I could have been given the prize and a shiny present. But I didn’t.

In sharing this experience, Adichie’s audience are persuaded by her character as the story displays the speaker as an honest and credible person. She could have invented a lie in order to obtain the prize offered by the feminist organisation, but she did not. This is likely to make

her loyal, credible, respectable and admirable to her audience. Adichie makes use of this anecdote to convince the audience indirectly to be like her.

Adichie appeals to the emotions of her audience in “We should all be feminists.” She makes use of *pathos* to make the male members of the audience aware of the ways in which women are treated in society. Adichie argues that this treatment is,

By far the worst thing we do to males, by making them feel that they have to be hard, is that we leave them with very fragile egos. The more “hard man” a man feels compelled to be, the weaker his ego is. And then we do a much greater disservice to girls because we raise them to cater to fragile egos of men.

Adichie further appeals to the female audience by arousing feelings of guilt with the way in which the girl and boy child are raised, while the male members of the audience are made to feel guilty with regards to how women are treated in society. The feelings evoked by Adichie may allow for change in the way the audience raises their children and, in so doing, create action to take place. According to Adichie, this change will result in “*A fairer world. A world of happier men and happier women who are truer to themselves.*” Here, Adichie employs imagery as a rhetorical tool to appeal to paint a graphic picture to the audience. With the help of imagery, the audience can envision a world full of happy smiling faces of both men and women. Imagery, therefore, serves to make the speech understandable and more persuasive (see § 2.9.4).

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie employs the *logos* appeal in the way she arranges her ideas and experiences in the speeches studied. She supports her claims by using one example after another and situations that are debated nationally and worldwide, as well as books of well-known authors and poets. She also makes use of her own experiences and experiences of

friends and relatives to support her claims and to appeal to the logical reasoning of her audience.

In “We should all be feminists”, Adichie appeals to the logic of the audience by using the “*Lilly Ledbetter Act*,” an actual law that exists and was passed in 2009 to guard against pay discrimination with regards to gender in America. Adichie makes use of this law to illustrate that women were once paid less, compared to men, for doing the same job. The audience can relate to the speaker as she uses facts to support her claims. She continues to appeal to the logic of her audience with the use of,

We have different hormones, we have different sexual organs, we have different biological abilities; women can have babies, men can't, at least not yet. Men have testosterone, and are in general physically stronger than women. There are slightly more women than men in the world, about 52% of the world's population is female. But most of the positions of power and prestige are occupied by men.

Adichie appeals to the audience by stating biological differences that exist between men and women to suggest to the audience that the two genders are different. In addition, she makes use of statistical data of ‘52%’ to suggest that there are more women than men in the world, and yet a gender imbalance exists with regards to what kind of jobs are occupied by men and women, with more prestigious jobs reserved for men while women occupy less prestigious jobs.

Adichie further employs logic to appeal to the audience by making use of a notable quote by the late Kenyan Nobel Peace Laureate, Wangari Maathai, which says, “*The higher you go the fewer women there are.*” The speaker makes use of this historical allusion to show the audience that although there are more women compared to men in the world, they do not occupy the high-ranked positions in societies and in the job market. She also quotes the

Meriam Webster Dictionary, saying that a feminist is “*A person who believes in the social, political and economic equality of the sexes.*” Adichie also appeals to her audience through character in quoting the Meriam Webster Dictionary as she appears to the audience as a person who does not want to mislead people or say things that are not true but rather gives them proof.

In the speech, “We should all be feminists,” Adichie makes use of the adage “*Men rule the world*” to point out that in the past, power was linked to physical ability, but not anymore. In addition, Adichie makes use of the metaphor that “*We teach girls to shrink themselves.*” This suggests that girls are taught to limit themselves, to have little ambition and to be only a little successful when compared to boys. This limits the girl child and puts her under the men in all spheres of society.

Moreover, Adichie argues in “We should all be feminists,” making use of the metaphor “*Gender colours the way we experience the world*” to suggest that women and men are treated differently, with men gaining more respect than women. The speaker also means that gender prescribes the ways in which men and women are treated in society, based on their sex. By making use of this metaphor, Adichie creates a vivid picture in the minds of the audience as they are made to envision how gender prescribes roles in societies. Consequently, this metaphor is also used as personification in the speech as gender is given the human ability to colour the world. Personification is a literary device that accords human qualities to inanimate things, and serves to make the audience understand the speaker’s arguments better.

Adichie discusses gender expectations with the graduating class of Wellesley College, arguing that “*All over the world, girls are raised to make themselves likeable, to twist themselves into shapes that suit other people.*” Adichie makes use of this visual imagery to

appeal to her audience, as the audience can visualise how girls all over the world try so much to change the way they look in order to be accepted by their peers. She calls the audience to action, pleading with them,

Please do not twist yourself into shapes to please. Don't do it. If someone likes that version of you, that version of you that is false and holds back, then they actually just like that twisted shape, and not you. And the world is such a gloriously multifaceted, diverse place that there are people in the world who will like you, the real you, as you are.

What Adichie does here is not only call the audience to action, but also to motivate them to remain true to themselves by giving them words of encouragement.

In the same vein, the speaker talks down beliefs about love that are instilled in the girl child: *“Now girls are often raised to see love only as giving. Women are praised for their love when that love is an act of giving. But to love is to give and to take.”* Adichie argues that girls are taught to show love by just giving without receiving, whereas love is reciprocal in nature. According to the speaker, it is a give-and-take situation. She therefore, calls the audience to action by pleading with them to *“Love by giving and by taking. Give and be given.”* This call for action appeals to the emotions of the audience as they can identify with the fact that they might have loved and not received love in return. This further creates interest in the audience to experience the give-and-take love expressed by the speaker.

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie calls her audience to action to fight gender discrimination and gender imbalance in society in the commencement speech delivered at Wellesley College. She does this by pleading with the audience to go out and make changes in the world.

**Write** television shows in which female strength is not depicted as remarkable but merely normal. **Teach** your students to see that vulnerability is a human rather than a female trait. **Commission** magazine articles that teach men how to keep a woman happy. Because there are already too many articles that tell women how to keep a man happy. And in media interviews **make** sure fathers are asked how they balance family and work. In this age of ‘parenting as guilt,’ please **spread** the guilt equally. **Make** fathers feel as bad as mothers. **Make** fathers share in the glory of guilt. **Hire** more women where there are few. But remember that a woman you hire doesn’t have to be exceptionally good. Like a majority of the men who get hired, she just needs to be good enough.

Adichie employs directives ‘write, teach, commission, make, spread, hire’ to instruct the audience on how to be the change in the world as far as gender equality is concerned. She does this by acknowledging that the audience are graduates who will join the workforce and have a chance to make a change and difference through the decisions they take. This is particularly to break the norm on cultures that have previously dominated women in society. In so doing, the speaker appeals to the logical reasoning of the audience by referring to current norms in society and the audience can see the need to defy these norms.

In “We should all be feminists” Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie stresses how she experienced misconceptions of her being labelled as a feminist; she expresses this by sharing anecdotes of her experiences.

A journalist, a nice well-meaning man told me he wanted to advise me that people were saying that my novel was feminist and his advice to me was that I should never call myself a feminist because feminists are women who are unhappy because they cannot find husbands. So I decided to call myself a ‘happy feminist.’ Then, an

academic, a Nigerian woman, told me that feminism was not our culture, that feminism wasn't African, and that I was calling myself a feminist because I had been corrupted by Western books. I decided I would now call myself a happy African feminist. At some point I was a happy African feminist who does not hate men and who likes lip gloss and who wears high heels for herself but not for men.

Being labelled as a feminist created misconceptions that suggested a feminist was a person who could not find a husband and that feminism was 'unAfrican.' Adichie, therefore, redefined herself as *a happy African feminist who does not hate men and who likes lip gloss and who wears high heels for herself but not for men*. Due to these misconceptions about feminism, Adichie quotes the *Meriam Webster Dictionary* to clarify what feminism is all about. According to the Merriam Webster Dictionary, "*a feminist is a person who believes in the social, political, and economic equality of the sexes*" This definition does not limit feminism to only those women who cannot find husbands or those women who are angry. Adichie, therefore, redefines a feminist, noting that "*A man or a woman who says, 'Yes, there's a problem with gender as it is today, and we must fix it, we must do better.'*" This definition includes everybody in the world, as the speaker makes use of the inclusive pronoun 'we' to affirm this.

Moreover, in the commencement speech delivered at Wellesley College Adichie talks down preconceptions about what people think feminism is, arguing that,

It was as though feminism was supposed to be an elite, little cult, with esoteric rites of membership. But it shouldn't. Feminism should be an inclusive party. Feminism should be a party full of different feminisms. And so, class of 2015, please go out there and make feminism a big raucous inclusive party.

What Adichie does here is to extend the definition of feminism by including every member of society whether male or female, as gender affects everyone everywhere in the world. She therefore, makes a call to the audience to go out into the world and “*make feminism a big raucous inclusive party.*” The speaker’s use of “*make feminism a big raucous inclusive party*” is used as imagery that appeals to both sight and sound as the audience can visualise feminism as this big party that makes a sharp, loud and disturbing noise about social issues; in so doing, become agents of change in society. She further actions them when using visual imagery, “*Don’t silence that voice. Dare to take.*” The speaker makes use of the imagery to encourage the audience to have a voice and not be afraid to receive love.

The title of the speech “We should all be feminists” serves as a plea to the audience to be agents of change as far as gender is concerned. Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie is a feminist who wants to see and live in a world where men and women live together in harmony, a world free of gender roles prescribed by culture. In using her personal experiences on gender matters and feminism, the speaker appeals to the audience to be agents of change as far as gender is concerned, by showing them how gender injustice affects both men and women in society.

#### **4.7 Stereotypes and narratives**

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s talks contain the theme of ‘the danger of a single story,’ which means the danger of stereotypes. In the speech, “The danger of a single story,” Adichie starts by telling the audience that she is a story teller: “*I’m a storyteller. And I would like to tell you a few personal stories about what I like to call “the danger of the single story.”*” In saying this, Adichie establishes credibility with her audience through *ethos* as she is a published writer and she writes for a living. Adichie’s audience can trust her because she is an experienced writer. They can also trust her in believing the many stories she tells about what she calls the danger of stereotypes. The title of the speech “*The danger of a single story*” is

in itself a phrase the author coins to mean that stories are powerful, and can be used to dehumanise and malign people and therefore, knowing one story is dangerous.

In the same speech, the speaker employs the phrase “*A balance of stories*” which is used to refer to multiple stories about a certain place or people in order to paint a holistic picture as opposed to one story. This phrase, “*A balance of stories*” is also a literary allusion from Chinua Achebe’s collection of three lectures delivered at Harvard in 1997. The speaker makes use of this literary allusion to show the audience that the literary icon, Chinua Achebe, saw the danger of stereotypes through narratives; hence, he coined the phrase ‘a balance of stories’. In the “The danger of a single story,” Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie repeats the title of the speech multiple times to emphasise to the audience that stereotypes are dangerous. Adichie argues that “*The single story creates stereotypes, and the problem with stereotypes is not that they are untrue, but that they are incomplete. They make one story the only story.*” In using personification through “*The single story creates stereotypes,*” Adichie implies that telling one story about a particular place or people over and over again creates stereotypes, as what is told appears to be the only story and truth, which may be but may also not be the only truth.

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie makes use of allusions of literary works and authors to support and illustrate her claims. In the speech “The danger of a single story” she makes use of a quote from John Locke who referred to Africans as “*Beasts who have no houses,*” “*They are also people without heads, having their mouths and eyes in their breasts.*” Adichie argues that John Locke’s writing marked the beginning of a tradition of telling African stories in the west, “*A tradition of Sub-Saharan Africa as a place of negatives, of difference, of darkness, of people who, in the words of the wonderful poet Rudyard Kipling, are ‘half devil half child’*”. Here, Adichie makes use of a contemporary allusion by referring to Rudyard Kipling to show to her audience how the literary figure is guilty of creating stereotypes in the minds

of the readers and how he orchestrated the beginning of a single story about Africa in literature.

Similarly, Adichie makes use of contemporary allusions in the speech “To instruct is to delight: A case for realist literature,” she refers to colonialism classics such as, *Heart of darkness*, *Mr Johnson*, *King Solomon’s mines* as books written by Europeans about Africa, “*Books in which Africa was often portrayed as a place without history, without humanity, without hope.*” In making reference to colonial classics written about Africa, Adichie draws her audience to the single story that these books create about Africa, portraying Africa as a place without humanity, hope and history. The speaker makes use of these books to show her audience how they tell the same, single story of Africa and how this story creates stereotypes that dehumanise and malign the people of Africa.

In the speech delivered at Harvard, Adichie tells an anecdote about how a professor at John Hopkins University told her that her novel *Purple hibiscus* was not authentically African, because her *characters were educated and middle class, they drove cars and were not starving and in so many ways were not authentically African.* Because Africa is viewed as *nature, sex, lust rhythm, spatiality, happy smiling faces not bothering about modern stuff and wealth*, anything contrary to that is viewed unAfrican. And so Adichie’s characters were not African enough. Adichie makes use of this anecdote to illustrate how stereotypes have made it impossible for Africa to be seen in complex ways.

Africa has a long history of being maligned, speaking at Harvard, Adichie expressed her views on the stereotypes on Africa. She argues that “*The case with Black Africa is that the stereotype is anything but benign and Africa has the longest history of being maligned.*” The speaker appeals to the emotions of the audience in saying to them that Africa has not had it easy with stereotypes and reminds them that it is by these stereotypes that Africa has been

maligned for a very long time. Adichie creates identification with her audience as she speaks of familiar events by referring to African history. She continues to explain to her audience that the construction of racism resulted from the stereotype that black is not as good as white.

The construction of racism, the idea of the black race or even the construction of race itself and the black as inferior were done to justify slavery, to justify, colonialism and in some ways just end up with the idea that black is not as good as white.

Here, Adichie makes reference to Zimbabwean writer Ndambudzi Maricheri, who describes colonialism as “That great principle which puts anyone who is not white in the wrong.” She does this to emphasise her point and make her audience believe her ideas as they not only come from her, but from another African writer. Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie argues that stereotypes about black people being inferior, originating from the need to justify economic enterprises of slavery and colonialism, found their way into popular imagination as well as literature.

Adichie explores a contemporary stereotype in the speech delivered at Harvard. She speaks about “*The present sexiness and hipness of Africa.*” She argues that this stereotype has made Africa become the to-go-to place for celebrities who wish to exercise aid to Africa, and therefore, “*come to Africa to adopt children and celebrities who go and take pictures with starving children to show how much they care.*” Adichie makes the audience envision famous artists who flock to Africa to exercise charity. The audience know that although not mentioned by name, popular musicians and actors like Madonna have adopted babies from Africa. Adichie further employs personification through her use of “*The present sexiness and hipness of Africa,*” as Africa is accorded human qualities by the speaker, she calls Africa sexy and hip. Adichie argues that “*The important thing about the idea of the stereotype of Africa being sexy and hip right now from CNN to the New York Times is that it reduces Africa to a*

*single story and it neglects African actors.*” The speaker blames CNN and the New York Times for reducing Africa to a single story through their media footage. By only airing or writing about western actors and singers offering aid to Africa, the two media houses neglect African writers, and make it appear as if African artists are not giving back to their own communities.

Another stereotype of Africa explored by Adichie is that of the view that Africa as a country and not a continent. In “The danger of a single story”, Adichie expresses her annoyance and confesses that *“I must say before I went to the US, I didn’t consciously identify as African. But in the US, Whenever Africa came up, people turned to me. Never mind that I knew nothing about places like Namibia.”* The audience feels the emotions of the speaker and can identify with her annoyance of being questioned about Namibia, a place she knows nothing about, just because she is African. What Adichie also stresses here is the fact that in African people have different identities because Africa comprises many different African states. She therefore exemplifies an announcement that was made in a flight she was in *“About the charity work in India, Africa and other countries.”* Adichie makes use of this example to show how Africa is referred to as a single country and, by so doing, appeals to the logic of her audience. She also appeals to their emotions, as the example she employs is a humorous one.

In the same speech, Adichie makes use of nostalgia and collective memory by recalling a recent event in which she questioned herself and provided to the questions about stereotypes about Africa.

If I were not African? I remember thinking recently watching CNN, if I didn’t know anything about Africa and all I knew depended on what I saw on CNN, what I read on in the New York Times and a lot of the ostensibly liberal media in the US, I would

think that Africans were dumb, stupid people who fight wars that really don't make sense and have no context, who drink muddy water from rivers, who are almost all dying of AIDS and who are incredibly helplessly poor.

Adichie argues that the media and books are to blame for the stereotyping of Africa, because they do not portray Africa as it truly is. She appeals to the logic reasoning of the audience by arguing that the media coverage on Africa is a misrepresentation. Adichie also appeals to the emotions of the audience by putting herself in their shoes, because all they see are these bad images of Africa they start to have views of Africa which result in stereotypes. She indirectly tells them they are not entirely to be blamed for the single stories they have of Africa. The audience is also moved and understands her frustrations about the stereotypes surrounding Africa and are made to see the need to *“challenge these stereotypes to come closer to the idea of a common humanity.”*

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie shows her audience that she too has been guilty of stereotyping. She tells an anecdote about a house boy her family had, named Fide, and confesses that,

I was startled. It had not occurred to me that anybody in his family could actually make something. All I had heard about them was how poor they were, so that it had become impossible for me to see them as anything else but poor. Their poverty was my single story of them.

With this confession from her anecdote, Adichie evokes feelings of pity in the audience. The audience is drawn to the fact that they are privileged to have a decent meal and can identify with the emotions the speaker felt for Fide and his family. Adichie, however, points out that she was indeed guilty of stereotyping, as all she had known about Fide's family was their poverty and not about their abilities.

Similarly, Adichie confesses to being guilty of the single story in an anecdote about her first visit to Mexico,

I remember walking around on my first day in Guadalajara, watching the people going to work, rolling up tortillas in the marketplace, smoking, laughing. I remember first feeling slight surprise. And then, I was overwhelmed with shame. I realised that I had been so immersed in the media coverage of Mexicans that they had become one thing in my mind, the abject immigrant. I had bought into the single story of Mexicans and I could not have been more ashamed of myself. So that is how to create a single story, show a people as one thing, as only one thing, over and over again, and that is what they become.

Adichie shows her audience that she too has been guilty of the stereotyping, appeals to them through her character, as she openly discusses her experiences about stereotypes, using herself.

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie argues in “The danger of a single story” that it is impossible to talk about the single story without talking about power. She makes use of an Igbo term ‘nkali’ which means *to be greater than the other*. Adichie argues that stories are defined by principles of nkali: How they are told, who tells them, when they are told, how many stories are told. She stresses that “*people are impressionable in the face of a story and for this matter*” story tellers should use their talent in telling stories that are complete, stories that reflect the truth and tell many stories, as all these matter in combating stereotyping.

In the speech delivered at the Commonwealth lecture on literature, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie appeals to the audience by making reference to books such as *Things fall apart* and *Arrow of God* by Chinua Achebe, to show her audience the power of narratives.

When I was about eight or nine, I read Chinua Achebe's *Things fall apart* and it completely changed my idea of literature. And so I have come to see *Things fall apart* as the book that gave me permission to tell my own stories. He wrote about characters who were familiar to me, who were Igbo and who ate yams and who lived in a world that I recognised.

Having read *Things fall apart*, many members of the audience can identify with the speaker and understand why she feels that way about the book. She also appeals to the logical reasoning of the audience as *Things fall apart* is not one sided. It is a book that gives a voice to the African people, in contrary to political allegories like *The heart of darkness* which imply that Africans had no culture, religion and language.

In "Allow hope but also fear" Adichie stresses the importance of reading: "*And now I don't say this because I am a writer who needs to earn a living (well, that's not the only reason I am saying this). But because books are still the best ways to truly come close to understanding the complexity in our very complex world*". This advice appeals to both *ethos* and *pathos* as the speaker makes a joke about the stance from which she is giving the advice. The audience is persuaded to take her advice as she is an author and knows the importance and power of reading.

In the commonwealth lecture, "To instruct is to delight, A case for realist literature," Adichie makes use of anecdotes to illustrate "*The wondrous ability of books to enlarge our imaginations.*" Adichie argues that the same way literature can generate stereotypes, so it can defuse them. Writers should, therefore, write stories that are true, stories that reflect places and people as they truly are. By doing so, Achebe's dream of a balanced story that equals a balanced humanity would be realised. Adichie makes use of a literary allusion by referring to

Pablo Neruda who notes that we belong to this great mass of humanity, not to the few, but the many.

Adichie ends “The danger of a single story” with a call for action noting that, “*When we reject the single story, when we realize that there is never a single story about any place, we regain a kind of paradise.*” Here, Adichie ends her speech with a promise that a world with no stereotypes will lead to a world of paradise. In using the expression “we regain a kind of paradise” the audiences are persuaded by the use of visual imagery as the audience envision how free the world will be without stereotypes.

#### **4.8 Spoken language**

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie is an eloquent speaker who speaks in a way that her audience can understand. She does this by using everyday language and this helps her adopt a conversational style. She speaks as though she is having a conversation with the audience and is articulate enough to make her points heard. In adopting a conversational style, she makes the audience feel at ease and also appears to be at ease herself. Adichie speaks in a way that is not imposing but inviting, she lays her arguments without imposing them on the audience. The speaker adopts a friendly style to speak about stereotypes and narratives, as well as gender equality, among other things.

In the commencement speeches studied, Adichie proves to be a delight to her audience, as she employs humorous anecdotes that entertain the audience. She too, clearly enjoys the speeches as she laughs with her audience before continuing to speak. In the speeches analysed, Adichie pauses to laugh with the audience as though she is speaking to a friend. She also pauses to allow the audience to absorb the information she has offered them. The pauses further help the audience to reflect on the ideas shared by the speaker.

Adichie makes use of a high pitch when offering warnings to the audience and calling them to action: *Do not be smugs, Do not twist yourself into shapes, Do not give love and not receive, Don't silence that voice, Dare to take*. The repetition of the stressed words 'do not' suggests that the issues the speaker is discouraging and warning the audience against are serious, and that they should take her word and make a change.

When speaking about feminism, Adichie stresses the following words. Feminism should be a party full of different feminisms. Stress is on 'should be', suggesting that currently feminism does not include all kinds of feminisms. The speaker further stresses that feminism should be a 'party' referring to an association, or a movement full of different feminisms which means that different feminisms are needed to cater for the different needs of the members. The title of the speech, "We should all be feminists" consists of stressed syllables. The author stresses the word 'we' to suggest that every human being has a responsibility to be part of feminism. The second stressed word 'be' stresses to the audience that it is important that they form part and parcel of feminism. Similarly, Adichie makes use of stressed words in the title of the speech, "The danger of a single story". The speaker puts emphasis on the word 'danger' to show the audience that having one story about a place or a people is dangerous. The word 'danger' further serves as a warning and reminds the audience about the consequence of having one story.

Adichie makes use of varying tones to pass her message. Her tone varies on the matters discussed. In the commencement speech delivered at Wellesley College, Adichie's tone varies depending on what she is discussing. For instance, Adichie makes use of a high pitch when she stresses how happy she is to be among the audience: *I am truly, truly happy to be here today, so happy!* The same tone is used by the speaker in the speech delivered at Kwani's tenth Birthday: *I am not usually known to be shy but I'm quite shy right now, Thank you, I am shy, I am very happy to be here and I thank you for this warm welcome*. Similarly, the speaker

employs the same tone at Wellesley College; she speaks in a happy tone, almost crying. She says to her audience stressing the following words “You are going to make me cry.” Emphasis is placed on the word ‘you’ to suggest that the audience is the source of the speaker’s happiness and that they will make her cry, should they continue to shower her with so much love with their cheering. In the same speech she displays a sad tone when talking about the kidnapping of her father, as well as the death of her close friend Okuloma, in the speech “We should all be feminists.” The low pitch used suggests she is talking about a sad experience.

Adichie makes use of a rising pitch when she shows the audience that she is excited or filled with disbelief. In the speech delivered at Kwani’s Tenth Birthday, Adichie makes use of a rising pitch when she tells the audience about how an agent has told her to consider setting her novel in America, and to use the African material as background. Adichie expresses her disbelief and surprise with a rising pitch saying “*How can I do that?*” The rising pitch shows the audience that the speaker is surprised about the fact that her novel was being rejected for having African characters and being set in Africa.

In the commencement speech delivered at Wellesley, Adichie adopts a high pitch when exclaiming, “*Go Hilary!*” She does this to create identification with the audience by suggesting that they are graduating from a university that may produce America’s first female president. The expression “*Go Hilary!*” suggests that the speaker is in support of Hilary Clinton being the first female American president. She further makes use of a high pitch by stressing that the audience is lucky to be graduating from Wellesley College. *You are ridiculously lucky to be graduating from this bastion of excellence and on these beautiful acers.* Adichie stresses the word ‘you’ to suggest that she is addressing each member of the audience directly. The stressed words that follow; ‘ridiculously lucky’ suggest that the audience is privileged as they are graduating from a prestigious university. She further

describes the college with the stressed words ‘beautiful’ and a ‘bastion’ of excellence. The speaker also employs the stressed words: *We cannot always bend the world into the shapes we want but we can try*. Here, the word ‘we’ is repeated to emphasise that human beings are not capable of doing everything right. Stress is further put on the word ‘but’ to suggest that there is hope that it can be done if they only ‘try.’

Adichie also makes use of a low pitch with her statements starting with “*I think,*” “*I believe,*” “*So to me*”. She further makes use of a low-medium pitch throughout the selected speeches studied to educate the audience on stereotypes, gender equality and feminism, among other things. Her speeches are not only educational, but informative and entertaining to the audience, because the speaker adopts a low-medium pitch. She does not speak too fast as the audience will struggle to keep up with her, and does not speak too slowly as that will bore the audience; but she rather adopts a pitch that varies.

#### **4.9 Conclusion**

This chapter provided an analytical discussion of the selected speeches by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie. First, the use of the feminine style of rhetoric in the selected speeches is discussed, followed by a rhetorical analysis of the selected speeches, which is presented according to the themes that emerged from the analysis. The spoken language of the speaker was further discussed, paying close attention to stress, pitch and intonation. The next chapter will present a discussion and conclusion of the study.

## CHAPTER 5

### DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSION

#### 5.1 Introduction

This study analysed selected speeches by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie and employed Campbell's (1989) theory of feminine rhetorical theory, as well as Aristotle's three proofs of rhetoric (*ethos*, *pathos* and *logos*) to shed light on the speaker's use of rhetorical style and strategies in answering the following questions that framed the study:

1. What kind of linguistic, stylistic and rhetorical evidence is used by the speaker to present the speaker's message?
2. What does the speaker's selection of details say about her knowledge and experience on race, gender and human rights?
3. How does Adichie use narratives as a tool for crafting her speeches?
4. How does the speaker's use of para-linguistic and suprasegmental features aid to the effect of the speeches?

This chapter provides a discussion of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's use of the feminine style of rhetoric, as well as her application of Aristotle's rhetorical proofs of persuasion. In addition, the chapter discusses the speaker's use of linguistic rhetorical devices, as well as the use of para-linguistic and suprasegmental features in her spoken language.

#### 5.2 Feminine style of rhetoric

The study revealed that Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie adopted the feminine rhetorical style in order to present her message. According to Campbell (1989), male and female speakers who use the feminine style rely primarily on using personal experience, extended narratives and anecdotes. In so doing, they create inductive arguments that lead to generalisations, inviting the audience to participate, addressing them as peers, allowing their experiences to be

recognised as authority and creating identification with the experiences of the audience to accomplish the goal of the feminine speaker, which is to empower listeners (see § 2.6).

Consequently, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie employed the five characteristics of feminine style in the selected speeches studied, by so doing, conforming to the characteristics of feminine rhetorical style. Adichie's selected speeches were found to contain the use of personal experience and narratives (see § 4.2.). Frederick (2009) and Doran (2010) opine that feminine speakers make use of personal experiences and extended narratives as a persuasive means to create identification with the audience (see § 2.6.1). Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie relied on stories in the form of anecdotes and experiences of herself and other people to illustrate her points. By disclosing her personal experiences to the audience, Adichie appeared to be empathetic, creating a close bond between herself and the audience. Employing extended narratives and personal experience contributed to the speaker's eloquence, as stories were used as examples to illustrate the claims of the speaker in order for the audience to understand better.

Adichie is also found to have delivered her arguments in an inductive way (see § 4.3). According to Campbell (1994) and Doran (2010), feminine speakers base conclusions and theories on personal experience (see § 2.6.2). Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie employed inductive reasoning in the selected speeches analysed by making use of personal experiences of herself and other people, as well as providing proof and evidence for her claims in order to drive the audience to make sound conclusions and realisations independently.

Moreover, Campbell (1989) and Frederick (2009) note that feminine speakers create a discursive relationship with the audience by inviting audience participation (see § 4.4.1). Adichie's speeches conform to the ideas of Campbell (1989) and Frederick (2009) as she engages her audience with her use of rhetorical questions, as well as anecdotes (see § 4.4.1).

In addition, in the selected speeches studied, Adichie addresses her audience as though she was speaking to her peers (see § 4.4.2), she tells personal stories that one would tell to close friends, consequently, she creates a bond with the audience and makes them feel that they are on the same level.

Adichie consequently conforms to Hayden (1999) and Frederick's (2009) view that feminine speakers address the audience as peers (see § 2.6.4). Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie spoke to the audience as though she was having a conversation or discussion. She did this by adopting a personal tone with the use of personal pronouns, such as 'I' and inclusive pronouns such as 'we' and 'our' (see § 4.6.2). In speaking to the audience as peers a closeness and connection is built between the audience and Adichie, as the audience feels included and valued.

Frederick (2009) and Campbell (1989) share the same view that the goal of a feminine speaker is to create identification and empowerment, by encouraging the members of the audience to be agents of change (see § 2.6.5). Adichie conforms to this characteristic of feminine rhetoric as she creates identification, as well as empowerment with the audience. She does this by giving them words of encouragement and pleads with them to be agents of change (see § 4. 5) with regards to social issues such as gender, feminism and stereotypes.

The analysis of feminine style in Adichie's oration found that the speaker strongly employed extended narratives and personal experience, as well as identification and empowerment in her orations. Beyond employing these two characteristics of feminine rhetorical theory prominently, the speaker also employed the other characteristics of feminine rhetorical style.

### **5.3 Aristotelian proofs of rhetoric**

The analysis of this study found that Adichie employed Aristotle's three rhetorical appeal forms (*ethos*, *pathos* and *logos*) to appeal to her audience. Polansky (as cited in Ryden 2015) agrees with Anderson (2008), that the three rhetorical appeal forms that make it possible for

the orator to appeal to the audience's reasoning, emotions and admiration include *ethos*, *pathos* and *logos* ( see § 2.7).

In the selected speeches analysed, the speaker employed *ethos* to speak about herself, that way, making use of her credibility to encourage the audience to be more like her. *Pathos* was employed by the speaker to arouse the emotions of the audience through humour (see § 4.3). Moreover, *pathos* was also used by the speaker to make the audience members feel guilty about gender, feminism and stereotypes (see § 4.6.2). The speaker employed *logos*, by making use of examples of poets, authors and knowledgeable persons (see § 4.6.1) to persuade the audience, as well as drew concrete examples to further appeal to the audience.

#### **5.4 Linguistic rhetorical strategies**

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie employed linguistic and rhetorical devices in her discourse in order to further appeal to the audience. Rhetorical devices are used by speakers' to emphasise something, persuade the audience, provoke negative or positive feelings or develop relationships (see § 2.9). The analysis found that the speaker employed the following linguistic and rhetorical devices in her oration: metaphors, imagery, personification, allusions, collective memory, identification, repetition, directives and pronouns. These devices were used by the speaker to speak on varying themes and were aid in simplifying information, creating vivid descriptions and serving as emphasis (see § 4.6.2). The use of these linguistic and rhetorical features provided detail on social issues such as gender, feminism and stereotypes.

The analysis also identified three themes that were explored by the speaker in the selected speeches studied. The speaker was found to have spoken extensively on social issues such as gender equality, feminism, stereotypes and narratives. The speaker ended her orations, calling for the audience to be agents of change in the world.

### **5.5 Spoken language**

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie employed para-linguistic and suprasegmental features as aid to affect the audience through spoken language. A feature that is prominent in spoken language is that of emotiveness. This feature allows for the speaker to express his or her emotions by the intensity of voice, intonation, pitch and timbre (see § 2.10).

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie made use of a natural and sincere tone to address the audience. She spoke to the audience as though she was having a conversation with them. The intonation and pitch of the speaker varied on the messages discussed. Adichie employed a high pitch when she posed questions, appeared to be surprised and when she was excited and happy. She further employed a low pitch and tone when she addressed the audience about a sad issue (see § 4.5). Although the speaker used a low-medium intonation to address the audience, stressed words were traced in the analysed speeches, and it was found that the speaker used some stressed words to emphasise important points.

### **5.6 Conclusion**

From the analysis and discussion of the selected speeches studied, it can be concluded that Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie is a feminine speaker because her oration exemplifies the characteristics of the feminine rhetorical style. Adichie utilised her status as a contemporary writer and feminist to speak on matters close to her heart. She utilised the feminine style through her extensive use of narratives and personal experience to demonstrate to the audience that social issues, such as gender equality and stereotypes require human effort in order to be combated.

When women speak, they are often thought to be speaking too much (see § 2.3.1). Nevertheless, this stereotype of women public speakers has not stopped Adichie from speaking. Adichie is thus, a contemporary feminine speaker as she openly makes use of the

public speaking platform to talk down gender inequality and stereotypes, among other social issues. She also makes use of the public speaking platform to educate the audience, as well as entertain them. Consequently, she is an inspiration to her audience as she makes use of herself and her experiences to encourage the audience to go out into the world and be agents of change.

It can also be concluded that Adichie is an eloquent woman and speaker. According to the Oxford advanced learner's dictionary (2013), an eloquent speaker is one who is able to use language and express opinions well, especially when speaking in public. Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie is an eloquent speaker, because she makes use of language that is vivid, moving to the audience, as well as convincing. Furthermore, Adichie is an eloquent woman, because she enjoys and feels what she says and her audience enjoys and feels what she says too. She makes use of simple, straightforward, everyday language, yet rich, to appeal to her audience.

Speaking in a feminine, nurturing, conversational and discursive manner, Adichie is able to articulate complex ideas in a natural and not forceful manner. It can also be concluded that Adichie relied heavily on human stories and experiences to drive her audience to reach conclusions and realisations. This shows that the speaker is a storyteller, who believes in the power of human stories and narratives. Thus, the speakers' oration contains multiple stories. In the speakers' own words:

Stories matter. Many stories matter. Stories have been used to dispossess and to malign, but stories can also be used to empower and to humanize. Stories can break the dignity of a people, but stories can also repair that broken dignity.

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