Synopsis:

Introduction:

The broad area of the research is post colonial literature. It clubs the two different theories- Discourse analysis and Subaltern Studies. It is the study of their socio-politico-cultural background. The writers belonging to the colonized nation felt it necessary to write about their nation, about their problems, about ‘who’ they are. The majority of post colonial writings deal with the grave reality of everyday life. They were suppressed by the major minority. The white settlers put them into the balcony. The marginalized people were not allowed to speak. The question is asked by the critic Gayatri Chakrabarty Spivak: Can Subaltern Speak? In actuality they can speak but they were not given their turn and if they speak they are not heard by the people who are in power. Questions were hovering over their culture about their identity, nationality, religion, language, customs and traditions etc...The westerners could only find out the difference between the two cultures but failed to respect the ‘other’ culture. The countries which were put into the category of the ‘other’ wanted to answer the question who they are/were. Literature coming from the colonial countries is the manifestation of their mind. Through their writings they started to speak and expressed themselves. So the post colonial writing is an attempt by the subalterns to create a space at the centre. So the base of the research is to study how the subalterns use language, what they speak and how they speak, their way of expression, how they have structured the text.

List of the novels selected for the research:

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Rationale for the research:

The research is based on a study of two writers. The writers do not belong to different cultural background but the difference between them is a gender difference. Gender difference or gender politics is a very difficult rather challenging issue to tackle with. Male and female are polar opposites and they definitely have different perspective for the society. The relationship between male-female is an example of cultural hegemony. Studying a culture only from a male or female’s perspective would be like having a biased mind set. So the study of writers of opposite gender will give chance to view culture as a whole. Ngugi Wa Thiong’o and Buchi Emecheta’s novels are written during colonialism. Though the literary texts have the similar themes they vary in the treatment of the ideas. All the texts focus on the major theme - theme of conflict. It is the conflict between an individual and society at different levels. The individuals struggle for their freedom - political and social freedom. The chosen texts are greatly influenced by colonial/post colonial era and have great impact upon their society. The comparative study of the writers will be helpful to find out the gaps.

Statement of the problem:

The research works have been done in this area. Majority of the research work is concerned with the thematic structure. But juxtaposing two paradoxical words and studying from that perspective will give a new dimension. Though research works have been done on these two writers there are certain questions/doubts which need to be clarified. There questions such as:

- How does language help to understand the cultural conflicts in the novels?
- If Ngugi’s main focus is the politics of the nation, does the structure of the novels reveal feminine discourse?
- How does Emecheta try to reconstruct ‘woman’ in her fictions?
- How does Ngugi try to reconstruct ‘woman’ in his fictions?
- How Emecheta has dealt with the politics of the nation?
- Does the study of these two writers help the research to see the culture as a whole?
Aims and Objectives:

As the title of the research is ‘Speaking Subaltern’ the central aim of the research is to study use of language. Though the writers belong to opposite gender they share some common problem in a colonized nation. The research will focus upon the similar and dissimilar problems of the writers and will study how they have presented the problems of their culture. In the research work language will a key weapon for the study. The focus will be on how a male and a female writers use the language differently. The research will try to bring out how the writers try to fit in meaning in their respective use of language. The research will also try to check whether the language is gendered or not. The research will also study the structure of these literary forms.

Methodology of research:

The methodology of the research will be the deep study of the chosen texts. To test how the language is used by both the writers. The research will throw in depth light on the dialogues. The research will be based on the comparative analysis of the novels of these two writers. The study will be based on the two theories- Subaltern Studies and Discourse Analysis. As the research wishes to do a comparative study, it will help to bring out gender difference in the use of language and if there is similarity which social issues make them come together.
Chapters:

1. Introduction:

As the key word in the title of the research is “Speaking Subaltern” the introductory chapter will focus on the two different theories: the theory of discourse and the theory of subaltern.

Discourse analysis is the study of language in use. It is used in different disciplines, in different ways, with contents or the meanings of the concepts. Discourse analysis is related with the social, political and cultural aspects. As discourse analysis is a multidisciplinary subject it involves the study of semiotics, poetics, linguistics, psychology, sociology, history, anthropology and communication research. Discourse studies the language in use and therefore it is more related with the speech than with the written documents. The work of discourse analysts is to investigate the meanings out of the used language because language is always used in situational context. According to Saussure language is a system of signs and signs are arbitrary. Therefore it is necessary to identify signs within the context. When used in language signs have their significance, value and importance and they become real. This makes language a social performance or social action.

There are six traditions of discourse analysis in literature. They are: Conversation analysis, interactional sociolinguistics, discursive psychology, critical discourse analysis, Bakhtinian research, and Foucauldian research.

**Conversation analysis:** People act out their sociality when they speak. They talk and do conversation. In Conversation analysis the focus is on the talk. Conversation analysis is an approach which studies talk-in-interaction or verbal interaction. The core intention of Conversation analysis is to understand social interaction and the role of discourse in everyday life.

**Interactional sociolinguistics:** Interactional sociolinguistics view of discourse is developed from the perspective of sociology and anthropology. It is developed by Gumperz and Goffman. As approach to Discourse analysis Interactional sociolinguistics is concerned with how speakers signal and interpret meaning in social interaction. This approach helps the analysts to interpret
what participants intend to convey in everyday communication. In Conversation analysis talk is culturally and contextually embedded but how socio cultural and linguistic knowledge is linked in the communication of meaning is not specified.

**Discursive Psychology:** Language is a social phenomenon and shapes social world. Discursive psychology treats written and spoken language as constructions of the world oriented towards social interaction. Based on Ludwig Wittgenstein’s philosophy discursive psychology emphasized that claims about psychological states should be treated as social activities instead of deeper ‘essences’ behind the words. This approach argues for the social construction of attitudes, social groups and identities. In discursive psychology argue that discourses do not describe the external world only, they also create it for the speaker. So language, according to discursive psychology, does not merely express experiences but it also constitutes experiences and the subjective, psychological reality. Discursive psychology tries to understand **self and identity**.

**Critical discourse analysis:** Critical discourse analysis is concerned to analyze how social and political inequalities are manifested in and reproduced through discourse. CDA provides theories and methods to study the relation between discourse and social and cultural developments in different social domain. The aim of CDA is to bring in light the linguistic discursive dimension of social and cultural phenomena and processes of change in late modernity. CDA also explores the links between language use and social practice.

**Bakhtinian research:** Bakhtin conceptualizes language as dialogic. In his views the specific uses of language or ‘utterances’ contribute dynamically to meaning-making because they are embedded in socio-cultural and historical contexts. Bakhtin particularly focuses on the discourse in the novel. In Bakhtin’s view language is dialogic in nature.

**Foucauldian research:** The French philosopher Michel Foucault studied not language, but discourse as a system of representation. Foucauldian discourse analysis can be performed upon various types of communication and textual meaning. It offers a particular critical approach to researching psychological and social worlds by considering broader contexts, rigorously dissecting discourses rather than imposing a single theoretical framework. Foucault intended to reveal how certain discourses help sustain networks social meanings. Foucault’s definition of discourse is about text and the analysis of the text and therefore it limits the meaning.
The chapter focuses on the biographical information of both of the writers. It also includes brief summary of their works.

The chapter introduces the theory of subaltern. It discusses about how the world is divided into the West and the Rest in post colonialism. According to post colonialism the basic of such difference is ‘white’. The rest of the world is always out of the territory of the white. The very notion of whiteness has put rest of the world into the margin, out of the mainstream. Colonial or imperial rule has portrayed the colonized people as inferior, feminine, childlike, uncivilized and incapable of looking after themselves. The subaltern theory focuses how the colonized people, the wretched speak about themselves and the colonizers and how they look at the western world from their own perspective and understanding. The chapter also brings in light how the word civilization got different meanings based on the racial differences. It goes so far that white people have changed the very concept of civilization. They have made it limited to their own culture. So the writers, critics and thinkers thought about putting non-western countries at the centre. Keeping these things in mind they started writing on subaltern group. They believed in the equalities between all human beings. The subaltern was a group of people who were displaced both externally and internally. The subaltern people have voice but they were deliberately muted by the ‘haves’. The theory brings in light how the subalterns ‘speak’ and how they try to rebuild their nation and their identity. With the base of the theories the research will study the writers who belong to a colonized nation.

2. Literature Review:

This chapter will be about the significance of the past. It will focus on the works done on these two writers. This chapter studies the theory of subaltern in detail. It defines the change in the meaning of subaltern. How different critics have discussed and analyzed the idea of subaltern has been talked about. For example, Antonio Gramsci has limited the meaning of subaltern to the peasants, workers and indigenous people only. For him they are gullible and can be easily deceived by the economically elite class. In his first notebook he has use the term subaltern in literal sense. In his other notebooks he used the term in a figurative way. He used the term for non-literary instances, in regard to position of subordination or lower status. Gramsci’s use of the
term subaltern is in relation to Marx. According to him subalterns are social classes and they are subject to dominant class. It is in this sense subaltern groups are subordinate to ruling group’s policies and initiatives. In his book *On the Margins of History* Gramsci has identified slaves, peasants, religious, women different races and the proletariat as subaltern social groups. Antonio Gramsci approaches the subaltern as a historically determined category because it exists within particular historical, social, economic, political and cultural context. Ranjit Guha’s study of subaltern is mainly based on the historiography of Indian nationalism as it was dominated by elitism. His main focus is on the history of Indian nationalism. Guha views elitism as the result of ideology and British rule. Guha writes that subaltern groups were exploited and in these group workers, farmers, non-industrial urban poor were involved. This difference was the result of politics of people.

Gayatri Chakravarti Spivak’s *Can Subaltern Speak?* is a landmark in the field of Subaltern Studies. She has used deconstruction to examine the truth. Her focus is on the plights and agonies of non-Europeans which were caused by the West. Spivak’s meaning, understanding and contextual use of subaltern is completely different from other critics. She is feministic in her perspective of subaltern. In feminine context subaltern means women who were suppressed by men. They are wretched and treated as second to men. By bringing in woman as subaltern subject she has meaningfully brought gender issues in Subaltern Studies. She has written against the violence done by the dominant discourse by setting a particular kind of ideology or a mental framework. In this essay as a postcolonial critic Spivak has tried to give voice to the silenced other. Her explanation of subaltern is based upon Indian culture.

The literary meaning of ‘subaltern’ is a person holding lower rank or having a subordinate position. The study of all these critics reveals that they have used the term subaltern in rich connotation. In post colonialism the term subaltern covers both, imperialism and patriarchy. In Subaltern Studies critics see the natives as feared natives in colonial hierarchy. Women are used as scapegoat in masculine imperialism. The “Subaltern” always stands in an ambiguous relation to power-subordinated to it but never consenting to its rule, never adopting a dominant point of view or vocabulary as expressive of its own identity. In general subalterns exist outside the power. In post colonialism it is a trend to look at the world from the margin.
Apart from this study the chapter also viewed works done on fictions of the writers. The study reveals that majority of the works focus upon the thematic issues of the novels.

3. Study of Select Novels of Ngugi Wa Thion’o:

This chapter will be based on the in depth reading of Ngugi Wa Thion’o’s novels. Ngugi Wa Thion’o’s novels deal with the political freedom of the nation. Reading between the lines reveals that Ngugi Wa Thion’o has woven social freedom of also. His novels are national discourse. Ngugi’s novels are written during and after colonialism. Writing about Gikuyu community he has presented social structure of colonial period and neocolonial time. Ngugi has also dealt with the themes of education, the individual and community. Ngugi is concerned with historical, cultural and political issues. The effect of British land grabbing is seen in Ngugi’s novels.

*A Grain of Wheat* celebrates freedom of the nation. All the characters are busy in the preparation. It starts with victim hero, Mugo who is from the beginning nervous. People have hailed him as the hero but he is bewildered and frighten. The unusual behavior of Mugo is the result of secret he has sealed in his heart. At the end of the novel he confesses that he is not the hero but a traitor. In this novel Ngugi has not only written about the past of Mugo, he has probed into the minds of all individuals. So the novel is the blend of national as well as personal past. Ngugi narrates how white settlers came to Africa with the Bible in their hands and fooled the natives by grabbing their land. *A Grain of Wheat* portraits how national as well as social past is fragmented by the colonizers. The colonized people were farmers and for farmers the meaning of freedom is simply to get their land back. In this the very idea or the concept of freedom is misunderstood by the natives. In general the novel is national, political and social discourse.

*Petals of Blood* is about the legalized brutality, fear, silence and oppression. The city of Ilmorog is the centre of action for *Petals of Blood*. Ilmorog is a place from where nobody returns. It is compared with the wide open jaws of crocodile. In this novel Ngugi chooses the barren and drought-stricken part of Kenya. Farmers and herders fight against politicians. The time is after the independence of Kenya. Kenya is in the clutches of neocolonialism. In neocolonial Kenya foreigners and traitors have abandoned the people who had suffered and died.
for the land. The question of land is very important in this novel because land is presented as salvation, as a soul, as a woman, as God, the subject of prophesies, the basis of cultural and political identity. In *Petals of Blood* Ngugi negotiates for the identity of the oppressed. *The River Between* is a novel of disunity and Waiyaki is the hero of the novel. He is a visionary man. He struggles to unify the two factions- Makuyu and Kameno. He feels that educating the natives is the only solution to the problem. Like Ngugi’s other novels this novel also shows Gikuyu community.

*Weep Not, Child* is the story of a young boy, Njoroge. Like his other novels *Weep Not, Child* is also about Mau Mau insurgency. Mau Mau rebellion party was an underground resistance to colonial repression. This is a novel about the crossroads of tradition and modernity, about ancient myths confronted by modern realities. *Weep Not, Child* is a novel about loss and the beginning of loss is the loss of land. In this novel also land stands for language, dignity, selfhood, independence and freedom. Land is the symbolic heart of the novel. So Ngugi’s novels show severe or disastrous changes in the indigenous cultures. *Devil on the Cross* is an allegorical novel with the devil on the cross instead of Jesus. The novel is set against the backdrop of colonial era and in this novel Ngugi critically examines Kenyan society. In this novel Ngugi has highlighted the issues of exploitation, independence, religious hypocrisy, education and sexual harassment. In this novel the characters are caught up in modern Kenyan problems.

The deep reading of his novels reveals that Ngugi Wa Thiong’o has not only dealt with nationalist ideologies he has very well expressed patriarchal ideologies too. He has represented African women by questioning patriarchal assumptions. In Ngugi’s fiction female peasants or workers have to struggle as a woman. In neocolonial Kenya women continue to languish in misery, on the periphery. It has becomes a place where ‘women’s thighs are the tables on which contracts are signed’. With national politics Ngugi’s novels are full of gender politics. On basis of gender women are silenced. With the political and national issues Ngugi has focused upon the gender issues. He has painfully shown the exploitation of women. In his fictions land are women have become synonym of each other. His novels show the exploitation of women and through this Ngugi intended to show the exploitation of land in the hands of white people and natives. In his novels elderly women symbolize the dignity of the past of the nation, pre-colonial time and an image of a fallen woman stands for exploitation of the nation in neocolonialism in the hands...
of native people and colonizers. For ex. in *A Grain of Wheat* Mumbi is Gikonyo’s wife but is exploited by his rival Karanja. She is Gikonyo’s wife but she is the mother of Karanja’s child. In *Devil on the Cross* Warringa is exploited and impregnated by Gaturia’s father.

4. **Study of Select Novels of Buchi Emecheta:**

This chapter will study Emecheta’s works in detail. Majority of Emecheta’s works deal with the issue of victimization of women. She focuses on the problems of women. The main thing in her works is how a woman is doubly marginalized. She tries to define what it means to be a woman. She has touched upon the problems of motherhood and childbearing. For example, the title of her novel *The Joys of Motherhood* is very ironic. The main character Nnu Ego is a victim of the so called notion of motherhood. In a patriarchal society a woman is forced to bear children. It matters nothing whether she wishes to or not. Childbearing and motherhood has become a tradition. Nnu Ego is the victim of this situation. Ironically the novel is not about the joys of motherhood but about the joys of fatherhood.

In *Bride Price* Aku-nna loses her life fighting her battle against the enemy called tradition. After her father’s death she has to move to Ibuza. Ibuza is her native land and it is the place where her uncle lives. As per the African tradition Aku-nna’s uncle inherits her dead father’s property. Even the family is included in the property. He also inherits her mother and she becomes his fourth wife. Aku-nna’s mother is not asked by any one that what her wish is. She just has to follow the given order. The same way Aku-nna’s love marriage with Chike is not welcomed by any one and her step father has not paid her bride price. Even the title of the novel indicates that girls in the family are source of income. Though they have a family they are alienated from it. Emecheta through her novels constructs the notion of woman as alien.

The character of Adah in *Second-Class Citizen* is a revolutionary one. She is full of life and has a burning wish to live her dreams. But the tragedy of her life is as it is the same for all women; her wishes/dreams are caught up in a female body. Being a woman she is not free. She is a working woman and her dream is to go to UK. She sends her husband first and then she goes. Her condition is the same even in her dream world. She works and earns money but she has to live under the thumb of her husband. She has to bear children. She struggles hard to manage her
job and childbearing. She is forced to bear children. Before she came to UK she had two children and gives birth to her third child. After this she learnt to use birth control equipments but is impregnated for the fourth time and at the end of the novel she is pregnant for the fifth time. She writes a novel names it *The Bride Price* and calls it her ‘brain child’. It is the first creative work by Adah which proves that women can write. Thorough her work Adah tried to create her own identity in a patriarchal society. But the novel is burnt by her husband. Burning of her creative work is a symbol of suppression of women by men. Men never allow a woman to speak about their rights. For men, women are ‘dull brained’ and they can only think of how to breast-feed their children. She leaves her husband’s home but in the end she comes back accidently, against her wish. So what happens to Adah, happens to every woman. She is learned, knowledgeable, and full of fire but she has to be submissive before the man, her husband. Her dream world fails to fulfill her dreams.

Women, in Emecheta’s works vainly try to escape from the situation. Though Buchi Emecheta’s culture is in many ways common to other cultures, but what catches our attention is how and in what way its values and traditions differ from other cultures. Emecheta has also framed Africa in her fiction. She has invoked a larger sense of Africa by asking question of what Africa meant to her. Buchi Emecheta’s novels are the tales of girls and women who are oppressed and entrapped. Emecheta has presented her women characters with limited success. They negotiate between the old and the new. Her women characters are painfully aware about the traditional and western way of life. Emecheta has written about imposition of white and western values on indigenous people. Set in postcolonial Ibuza, Lagos and contemporary London her stories show how girls and women are counseled to accept male privilege. Women characters challenge their men’s right. Gender factor is deeply rooted in the fabric of African tradition. Emecheta, in her works, shows how gender determines women’s status and roles in domestic and public sphere. Emecheta has presented the picture of patriarchal society in which maleness is socially esteemed and femaleness is presented as subordination or in servitude to men. All female characters are disadvantaged by the fact of their gender, and their roles were confined to domesticity only. Male writers rarely explore/expose the implications of gender imposed limitations on women. Moreover in male dominate society sexuality is seen as a social structure of control, management and oppression. In general, Emecheta shows how masculinity and femininity are culturally-specific.
5. Conclusion:

They have raised their voice from the margin. Both the writers speak about their respective problems. They have created or recreated their nation and the self. The individual characters reflect the fractured self of them and as well as of their nations. The study of these two writers helps to see the issues dealt by a male and a female and how differently they handle them. In postcolonialism the natives of colonized counties were treated as subaltern subjects. They are caught between social and political hierarchy. The vision and a very beautiful dream of freedom are broken. In the works we see the natives are blindly attracted towards the city which is a symbol of neo colonialism. What we feel is once colonized is colonized forever. The natives are governed by particular ideologies.

In Ngugi’s novels the neo colonial country is seen as a fallen woman. But the study of Ngugi’s novels with feminine discourse helps to see that women characters are the connecting threads of his novels. They are the centre of his novels. The major characters of his novels are unheroic heroes. They are victims of society. His novels are fusion of personal and public past. They are unable to speak and when they speak it is only a fragment. They are driven away from their native culture, from their originality.

Buchi Emecheta’s novels are the negotiation between colonial and patriarchal spaces and personal desires. Within the space Emecheta’s women characters try to claim piece of time and make it glitter. Buchi Emecheta in an interview said that she is a feminist with a small ‘f’. For her western feminism is a luxury which she cannot afford.

The struggle of by Ngugi and Emecheta discovers the common issue of gender silencing which is framed in their works. It can be said that Ngugi’s novels are the political project and Emecheta’s novels are social project but they demonstrate the mechanism of gender subordination. Ngugi’s male characters are representation of female psyche in the hands of colonizers and their frustration comes out in another form. Mugo from A Grain of Wheat lives in constant fear, nervousness and frustration. They become violent and passionate and manipulate women. Emecheta’s male character Francis from Second-Class Citizen fails to create a room for himself in Whiteman’s culture and his frustration of failure comes out when he beats his wife Adah. Burning of Adah’s first novel, The Bride Price, shows that being a man Francis cannot see
his wife progressing and becoming an individual and independent. Both the writers have tried to present a particular ideology or a mental framework through their text. This ideological contradiction issues from the competition between two different cultures, between different genders, between individualism and national and social responsibilities. The research helps to get a new dimension to study the select works. The study finds that the narrative of the novels is the narrative of failure. The writers have not tries to provide a solution to the problem they have simply raised complicated issues of their culture, society and nation. The writers speak the language of subaltern and they tried to move the centre. They tried to recreate centres among the working people in conditions of gender and racial equality. The novels of Ngugi and Emecheta are the microcosm of macrocosm.