A Critical Discourse Analysis of Oppression in the American Novel "Beloved"

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ABSTRACT

This study is s critical discourse analysis of oppression in the American novel "Beloved". The present study is qualitative in nature and intends to answer these questions: what linguistic strategies are employed by the novelist to portray oppression? By what means does Systemic Functional Linguistics analyse oppression in the novel? What is the most dominant mode of grammar employed by the novelist? And what types of oppression are the highly occurring in the novel? Moreover, it tries to answer the question which type of vocabulary choice is the most prevailing in the novel? This study aims at uncovering the specific linguistic tactics utilized in depicting oppression within the American novel "Beloved". It also aims at reviewing the six categories of processes proposed by Halliday (1994). Moreover, it aims at investigating the most dominant mode of grammar employed by the novelist and finding the highly occurring type of oppression in the novel. The present study hypothesizes that the material and mental processes are the highly used types of processes by the novelist. It also hypotheses that marginalization is the highly occurring type of oppression in the novel under investigation, and metaphor is the more prevalent vocabulary choice in the novel. A comprehensive framework is developed to integrate Fairclough's 1989 and Halliday's concept of Transitivity from 'Systemic Functional Grammar' (1994), in addition to Young's (1990) classification for the types of oppression.

Key words: CDA, Oppression, Narratives, Beloved.

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تحليل خطابي نقدي للاضطهاد في الرواية الأمريكية "الحبيبة"

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الملخص

هذه الدراسة عبارة عن تحليل خطابي نقدي للاضطهاد في الرواية الأمريكية "المحبوبة". هذه الدراسة ذات طبيعة نوعية وتهدف إلى تحليل القمع في الرواية الأمريكية "الحبيب". تهدف الدراسة الحالية إلى الإجابة على هذه الأسئلة: ما هي الاستراتيجيات اللغوية التي يستخدمها الروائي لتصوير الاضطهاد؟ بأي وسيلة يقوم علم اللغة الوظيفي النظامي بتحليل الاضطهاد في الرواية؟ ما هو النمط النحوي الأكثر شيوعًا الذي يستخدمه الروائي؟ وما هي أنواع القهر التي تكثر في الرواية؟ علاوة على ذلك، فهي تحاول الإجابة على سؤال أي نوع من اختيار المفردات هو الأكثر انتشارا في الرواية؟ تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى الكشف عن الأساليب اللغوية المحددة المستخدمة في تصوير القمع في الرواية الأمريكية "المحبوب". ويهدف أيضًا إلى مراجعة الفئات الستة للعمليات التي اقترحها هاليداي (١٩٩٤). علاوة على ذلك، فهو يهدف إلى التحقق من النمط النحوي الأكثر هيمنة الذي يستخدمه الروائي، وإيجاد نوع القمع الشديد الحدوث في الرواية. تفترض الدراسة الحالية أن العمليات المادية والعقلية هي أنواع العمليات الأكثر استخداما من قبل الروائي. كما تفترض أن التهميش هو نوع الاضطهاد الذي يحدث بشكل كبير في الرواية محل التحقيق، وأن الاستعارة هي اختيار المفردات الأكثر انتشارا في الرواية. تم تطوير إطار شامل لدمج نموذج فيركلاف ثنائي الأبعاد لعام ١٩٨٩ ومفهوم هاليداي للتعدية من "القواعد الوظيفية النظامية" (١٩٩٤)، بالإضافة إلى تصنيف يونغ (١٩٩٠) لأنواع الاضطهاد.

الكلمات المفتاحية: تحليل نقدي للخطاب، الاضطهاد، الرواية، الحبيبة.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introductory Remark

This study investigates the complex ways in which the concept of 'oppression' is represented in the American novel "Beloved". This narrative text is rich in linguistic features and cultural dynamics, contributing to a portrayal of oppression that is multi-layered and often ambiguous. This complexity can lead to varied interpretations, making it challenging to grasp the nuanced ways in which oppression is

communicated and perceived through language. The following research questions have been formulated to guide this investigation: What linguistic strategies are employed by the American novel to portray oppression? By what means does Systemic Functional Linguistics analyse the portrayal of oppression? What is the most dominant mode of grammar employed by the American novelist? Which type of vocabulary choice is the most prevailing in the novel? What types of oppression are the highly occurring in the novel under investigation?

The present study attempts to achieve the following aims: Uncovering the specific linguistic tactics utilized in depicting oppression within the chosen novel texts. Reviewing the six categories of processes proposed by Halliday (1994). Investigating the most dominant mode of grammar employed by the American novelist. Revealing the more prevalent vocabulary choice in the novel. And finding the highly occurring type of oppression in the novel under investigation.

The present study hypothesizes that nominalization and passivation have a high occurrence it the American novel. The material and mental processes are the highly used types of processes by the novelist. the 'imperative' mode of grammar is widely used the American novel. Metaphor is the more prevalent vocabulary choice in the American novel, while lexical relation is expected to be used more thoroughly in the British novel. And marginalization is the highly occurring type of oppression in the novel under investigation.

To address the research questions and achieve the aims of the study, the present study follows these steps: Investigating the foundational concepts of critical discourse analysis alongside an exploration of the concept of "oppression." Choosing the American novel "Beloved" by Toni Morrison as the text for examination. Developing a comprehensive framework that integrates Fairclough's (1989) two-dimensional model and Halliday's concept of Transitivity from 'Systemic Functional

Grammar' (1994), along with Young's (1990) categorization of types of oppression. Conducting both qualitative and quantitative analyses of the portrayal of oppression in the chosen novel, calculating the frequency and percentages of various results to answer the research questions and verify the study hypotheses.

This study is delimited to the critical discourse analysis of the American Novel "Beloved" (1987, 2004) by Toni Morrison. This novel which both delves into the themes of slavery and oppression.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Discourse and Discourse Analysis

The concept of discourse is a topic that generates disagreement among scholars. Discourse is defined as language that is used within a particular context (Widdowson, 2007). However, discourse is also argued to be a social phenomenon (Bloor & Bloor, 2013). Language consists of several distinct elements, and users of each language employ it in distinctive ways (Speer, 2004). Furthermore, discourse can be defined as a continuous segment of language, especially spoken language that is longer than a sentence (Crystal, 2011). Within this broad idea, several specific applications may be identified.

The study of discourse involves two fundamental concepts: Cohesion and coherence. Cohesion refers to the existence of clear and identifiable language connections, such as pronouns (e.g., "she"), demonstratives (e.g., "this"), temporal markers (e.g., "after"), logical connectors (e.g., "therefore"), and contrasting conjunctions (e.g., "but"), that contribute to the overall structure of a text. Coherence refers to how a statement or concept aligns with our world understanding. For instance, the response "Susie is on antibiotics" to the question "Who is going to drive to the Christmas party?" may initially appear unhelpful and unrelated, but it becomes clear when one considers the relationship between alcohol, Christmas parties, and driving. In this case, Susie will not be the driver

because alcohol diminishes the efficacy of the antibiotics she is currently taking, (Trask, 1999).

2.2. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

According to Fairclough (2013), CDA is a methodology employed to investigate the connection between language and its use in various contexts. This approach thoroughly analyses all facets of language utilization within social or political settings. CDA is primarily concerned with revealing the underlying significance of a text. It also illustrates how the author or speaker uses language in communication to shape thinking and behaviour.

Van Dijk (1998) describes CDA as a study examining how language and written communication are used in political and social settings. The primary objective of CDA is to analyse the structure of spoken or written texts. By studying the linguistic features and textual structures, CDA aims to uncover the hidden aspects and dynamics at play.

2.3. Language and Society

The notion of language as a fundamental element of social relationships and control is central to Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) (Bloor & Bloor, 2013). Language is not merely a means of communication but a powerful tool that both institutions and individuals use to influence and shape social interactions and structures.

In contemporary society, language is employed by various social institutions, such as the media, educational systems, and political bodies, to construct and maintain power dynamics. Fairclough (1989) emphasizes that language is a social practice, and every communicative act is embedded within social structures and power relations. For example, media outlets often frame news stories in ways that promote certain ideologies and marginalize others. This framing shapes public perception and discourse, influencing societal norms and values (Fairclough, 1995).

Furthermore, CDA examines how language contributes to social change by challenging dominant discourses and introducing alternative perspectives. Van Dijk (1993) argues that critical discourse analysts play a vital role in uncovering and resisting the subtle ways in which language perpetuates social inequalities. By analyzing discourse critically, scholars can highlight the potential for language to both reinforce and transform social structures.

2.4. Approaches of Critical Discourse Analysis

Research in Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is multifaceted and multidisciplinary, employing a wide range of methodologies applied to different types of data (Weiss & Wodak, 2003). CDA is grounded in specific methodologies and their theoretical foundations (Titscher & Jenner, 2000). Three overarching methods can be distinguished: the Socio-cognitive Approach (Van Dijk, 1995, 1998, 2002), the Discourse-Historical Approach (Wodak, 2001), and the Socio-cultural Approach (Fairclough, 1989, 1992, 2003). These methods are differentiated by the various linguistic theories that inform them, yet they share a recurring theoretical framework.

A thorough understanding of CDA necessitates familiarity with Systemic Functional Grammar, as many studies reference Hallidayan linguistics (Wodak, 2001). Hallidayan linguistics is a natural theoretical structure for CDA to draw upon, considering Halliday's assertion that "language is as it is because of its function in the social structure" (Halliday, 1973).

Fairclough's CDA framework consists of three dimensions, similar to Halliday's functional analysis (Halliday, 1998, 2004, 2014). These dimensions include understanding discourse as (i) a text, which may be spoken or written and may incorporate visual elements, (ii) a discourse practice that involves the creation, consumption, and distribution of the text, and (iii) a sociocultural practice.

Fairclough (1992) has a framework for studying discourse as a social practice, emphasizing the relationship between texts, discourse practices, and sociocultural practices, as illustrated in Figure 2.1. This figure highlights the interaction between these three dimensions and provides a visual representation of how they are interconnected.
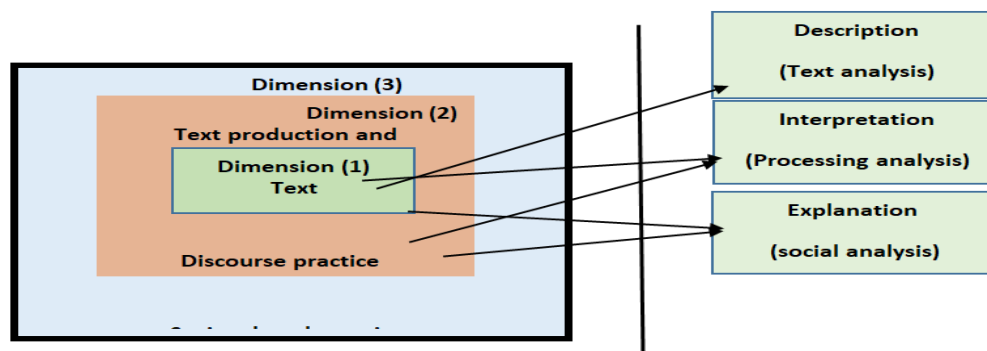

Figure (2.1) *A Critical View on the Interaction of Texts, Discourse Practices, and Sociocultural Practices (Adopted from Fairclough, 1992a)*

The framework involves three stages: (i) describing the formal properties of the text linguistically, (ii) interpreting the connection between discursive processes/interaction and the text, and (iii) explaining the relationship between discourse and social and cultural reality (Amoussou & Allagbe, 2018).

However, this study excludes Fairclough's third level, "explanation," for the following reasons:

1. Focusing on Linguistic and Discursive Practices: The primary aim of this research is to analyse the linguistic and discursive features of the selected narrative texts. By focusing on the first two levels—description and interpretation—this study provides a detailed examination of how language is used to construct and convey oppression without delving into the broader sociocultural implications.

2. Avoiding Over-Complexity: Including the "explanation" level, which involves analysing the relationship between discourse and broader social and cultural structures, could add unnecessary complexity to the study.

The detailed analysis of linguistic features and discursive practices is sufficient to address the research questions and hypotheses set out in this study.

Fairclough (1993) distinguishes three different applications of the concept of discourse:

1. Language Use in Social Interactions: The most general sense of discourse.

2. Vocabulary Employed in Specific Fields: Such as scientific or political discourse.

3. Mode of Communication: A count noun referring to a mode of communication that gives meaning to events from a particular perspective.

2.5. Critical Discourse Analysis and Systemic Functional Linguistics

Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) was developed by Michael Halliday (1989) and influenced by J.R. Firth's language studies. SFL focuses mainly on the ways in which language is used to express and understand a variety of meanings. Because the theoretical foundations of this approach are functional, it is used as a tool to investigate how language works in social life interactions to communicate meanings (Eggins, 2004).

According to SFL, text can be analysed in terms of context, an important aspect because participants in a communicative event cannot perceive and express proper meanings without context. SFL analyses language in terms of Field, Tenor, and Mode:

Field: This refers to the primary topic discussed in a particular text. At this level, the researcher typically begins to comprehend, answer questions related to a given text, such as "What is going on in the text?", and "Why do participants behave in this specific manner?" The subject and activities of "Field" can vary and include anything from tennis

to opera to linguistics to building or constructing a form, among other things (Eggins, 2004, p. 4).

Tenor: This refers to the interaction between participants in an event and the roles they play. According to Halliday and Hassan (1989, p. 12), Tenor is part of the research process where the researcher asks questions to individuals participating in a certain communication event.

Mode: This refers to the situation or the primary communication channel. The mode of discourse can be either written or spoken. It could be any kind of channel or social platform like Facebook, Twitter, etc. Thus, on these platforms, participants tend to predict the sequence, the language used, and "the symbolic organization of the text" (Halliday & Hasan, 1989, p. 20).

According to Halliday (Halliday, 1998, p. 57), "reality is made up of processes of going on, happening, doing, sensing, meaning, being, and becoming." The transitivity system involves six processes: material, mental, behavioural, verbal, relational, and existential, (Halliday, 1998, p. 60). Six Processes in the Transitivity System:

1. **Material Process**: This process involves actions and events. Material processes describe what happens in the physical world. They answer the question of "what is happening" or "what is being done." The two primary participants in this process are the Actor (the doer of the action) and the Goal (the entity affected by the action).

2. **Mental Process**: Mental processes are concerned with perception, cognition, affection, and desire. They involve sensing and feeling rather than doing. The main participants are the Sensor (the experiencer) and the Phenomenon (the entity that is sensed, known, liked, etc.).

3. **Relational Process**: These processes involve states of being or having. They are realized by the verb (be) or copular verbs (seem, become) and are divided into identifying and attributive processes.

4. Behavioural Process: Behavioural processes represent physiological and psychological behaviours. They are in between material and mental processes and typically involve one participant, the Behaver, who performs the behaviour.

5. Verbal Process: These processes involve saying, telling, and other forms of verbal communication. They include three participants: the Sayer (the one who speaks), the Verbiage (what is said), and the Receiver (the one to whom something is said).

6. Existential Process: Existential processes indicate that something exists or occurs. They are typically signalled by the use of "there" and verbs like "be," "exist," "occur." The main participant is the Existent, which is the entity or event that is said to exist.

These six processes are illustrated in the following table.

Process Type	Meaning	Key Participants
Material	Actions or events occurring in the physical world	Actor, Goal
Mental	Processes of sensing, feeling, thinking	Sensor, Phenomenon
Relational	States of being or having	Identifier/Identified, Carrier/Attribute
Behavioral	Physiological and psychological behaviors	Behaver
Verbal	Saying, telling, verbal communication	Sayer, Verbiage, Receiver
Existential	Indicating existence or occurrence	Existent

Table (2.4). *Process Types, their Meanings, and Key Participants (as adapted from (Halliday, 1998)).*

2.6. Theoretical Perspectives on Oppression

Young (2011) defines oppression as the cruel manner in which society treats members of the lower class, irrespective of the environment or legislation, whether liberal or democratic. She argues that the concept of oppression has evolved into an undeniable truth, often used to protect

political and economic interests at the expense of humanitarian concerns. In most cultures, public interest, particularly financial, is prioritized over humanitarian aspects, regardless of state policies (Young, 2011, p. 52).

Young (1990) identifies five distinct forms of oppression: exploitation, marginalization, cultural imperialism, powerlessness, and violence. Each of these types contributes to the marginalization of individuals, leading to chaos in establishing human identity. In the United States and the United Kingdom, Black people endure various forms of oppression, including inequality, lack of authority, and lack of privileges. The hostility they face makes oppression a tangible reality for them, unlike those who have not experienced such trauma and consider it invisible (Young, 1990). Young (1990) posits five distinct forms of oppression: Exploitation, marginalization, cultural imperialism, powerlessness, and violence.

1. **Exploitation**: Exploitation involves using another person's labour to benefit oneself without fair compensation. During slavery, Black people were subjected to exploitation by white people who profited from their labour. Exploitation creates a structural link between social groups, establishing connections that reinforce inequality and power dynamics. Social norms dictate who does what work, who gets paid, and how the value created through labour is appropriated (Young, 1990).

2. **Marginalization**: Marginalization occurs when individuals or groups are systematically excluded from meaningful participation in society. According to Young (1990), marginals are those deemed unemployable or unwilling to be employed by the labour market. Marginalization is a severe form of oppression, as it denies individuals the opportunity to contribute to society, leading to extreme material deprivation and social exclusion.

3. **Powerlessness:** Powerlessness refers to the lack of authority, influence, and autonomy experienced by certain groups. According to Young (1990), powerless individuals are subject to the authority of others and lack the ability to influence decisions that affect their lives. This concept is closely related to Marx's theory of socialism, where society is divided into those with power and those without. Powerless individuals often lack the prestige, authority, and sense of self that come with professional roles. They are frequently excluded from decision-making processes, reinforcing their subordinate status and perpetuating social inequalities (Heldke & O'Connor, 2004).

4. **Cultural Imperialism:** Cultural imperialism involves the imposition of the dominant group's culture and values on other groups. Young (1990) explains that this process universalizes the experiences and culture of the dominant group, marginalizing other cultures. Cultural imperialism can lead to the stigmatization and invisibility of oppressed groups, reinforcing stereotypes and limiting their cultural expression.

5. **Violence:** Violence is the most visible and direct form of oppression. It includes acts of physical harm, harassment, intimidation, and other forms of abuse intended to demean and control oppressed groups. Young (1990) notes that violence is systemic and social, not just individual acts of aggression. It is embedded in social structures and perpetuated by societal norms.

2.7. Critical Discourse Analysis and Oppression

Political discourse often employs language that frames immigration in negative terms, thereby perpetuating xenophobia and exclusion. For instance, Fairclough's (2000) analysis of political speeches and policies reveals how language is used to construct immigrants as threats to national security and economic stability. Terms such as "illegal immigrants," "flood," and "invasion" are strategically used to invoke fear and justify restrictive immigration policies. This discourse not only

dehumanizes immigrants but also reinforces the power of the dominant group to control and exclude (Fairclough, 2000, p. 77).

Another example is about "Gender Inequality in Workplace Discourse": CDA also sheds light on how workplace discourse can perpetuate gender inequality. In a study by Baxter (2010), the language used in corporate settings was analyzed to reveal how it often marginalizes women and reinforces male dominance. For example, in meetings, men are more likely to interrupt women and dominate conversations, while women's contributions are often undervalued or ignored. This discursive practice perpetuates the notion that men are more competent and authoritative, thereby maintaining gender inequality in professional environments (Baxter, 2010, p. 102).

3. Methodology

3.1. Data Collection

The data for this study comprises two seminal novels: "The Long Song" by Andrea Levy (2010) and "Beloved" by Toni Morrison (1987). These texts were meticulously chosen due to their rich and nuanced representation of oppression within distinct cultural and historical contexts—the British colonial period and the American post-slavery era, respectively. Both novels offer profound insights into the lived experiences of oppressed individuals and communities, making them ideal for a critical discourse analysis aimed at uncovering the linguistic and social mechanisms of oppression.

3.2. Description of "Beloved" by Toni Morrison (1987)

"Beloved" is set in the post-Civil War United States and tells the story of Sethe, an escaped slave who is haunted by the ghost of her dead daughter. The novel addresses the horrors of slavery and its aftermath, focusing on the psychological trauma and enduring scars left on former slaves. Through its non-linear narrative and rich symbolism, "Beloved" explores themes of memory, identity, and the haunting presence of the

past. Morrison's portrayal of Sethe's experiences sheds light on the enduring impact of slavery on individuals and communities, highlighting the pervasive nature of oppression and its long-lasting effects.

3.3. Research Design

This thesis employs a mixed-methods approach, integrating both qualitative and quantitative tools to conduct a thorough and comprehensive analysis. The qualitative approach offers a nuanced understanding by analyzing data non-numerically within a chosen framework, providing in-depth insights into the contextual and thematic elements of the study (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In contrast, the quantitative approach utilizes numerical and statistical analysis to objectively measure and analyze data, ensuring the reliability and generalizability of the findings (Onwuegbuzie & Combs, 2010).

3.4 Model of Analysis

This study employs a multi-dimensional theoretical framework that integrates Fairclough's (1989) two-dimensional model of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), Halliday's (2004) transitivity analysis, and Young's (1990) typology of oppression. These models were chosen for their complementary strengths in analyzing the linguistic construction of social realities and the various forms of oppression represented in literary texts.

4. Data Analysis

Extract:1

"She has borne the unthinkable and not gone mad, yet she is still held captive by memories of Sweet Home, the beautiful farm where so many hideous things happened."p.4

-Description Level:

1. Nominalization: The extract does not involve significant nominalization. Actions and events are described using verbs and direct language, maintaining clarity and focus on the emotional experiences.

2. Passivation: There is no passivation present in this extract. The focus remains on active participants and their experiences rather than being acted upon.

3. Positive and Negative Sentences:

The sentences are inherently negative, as they convey Sethe's suffering and the ongoing impact of her traumatic experiences. The statement "she is still held captive by memories of Sweet Home" highlights the negative consequences of her past.

4. Mode of Grammar: Declarative:

The narrative employs a declarative mode of grammar, making statements in a straightforward and assertive manner. This mode is crucial for several reasons:

1. Authority and Clarity: Declarative sentences provide information clearly and directly, giving the narrative a sense of authority. This choice underscores the importance and gravity of Sethe's experiences.

2.   Highlighting Endurance and Suffering: By using declarative statements, the text firmly establishes Sethe's endurance and suffering as central themes. The straightforward presentation of these facts leaves little room for doubt or ambiguity, reinforcing the idea that Sethe's character is defined by what she has endured.

-Halliday's Transitivity:

1. Mental Process:

The 'description level' in this text pertains to the narrative construction that conveys the character's internal experiences. The verb "borne" indicates a mental process, suggesting that Sethe has endured or carried a heavy burden. This choice of verb highlights Sethe's psychological and emotional states. In SFL, a 'senser' is an individual who experiences or perceives something. By identifying Sethe as the 'senser,' the text emphasizes her role as the one who has undergone significant, often traumatic experiences. The "unthinkable" serves as the

'phenomenon,' referring to events or experiences so extreme that they are almost beyond comprehension.

-Vocabulary Level:

1. Metaphor:

The reference to "Sweet Home" is particularly significant. While the name might suggest a place of comfort and security, it is instead a location where unspeakable horrors occurred. This irony highlights the juxtaposition between the name and the reality of the place. "Sweet Home" serves as a metaphor for the profound dissonance between appearances and the brutal truth of Sethe's experiences there. It becomes a symbol of the trauma and suffering that continue to haunt her, even after she has physically left the place behind.

-Interpretation Level:

1. Empathy and Understanding:

By focusing on Sethe's mental processes and the extreme nature of her experiences, the narrative invites readers to empathize with her. Understanding her suffering on such a profound level allows readers to connect with her character deeply.

2. Strength and Resilience:

The emphasis on Sethe's endurance positions her as a figure of strength and resilience. Despite the unthinkable burdens she has borne, she remains a central figure in the narrative, symbolizing the capacity for survival and resistance in the face of overwhelming adversity.

3. Central Theme of Suffering:

Highlighting Sethe's experiences in this manner aligns with the broader themes of the novel, which may explore the impact of trauma, the legacy of suffering, and the human capacity for endurance. Sethe's character becomes a vessel through which these themes are examined and understood. The quotation provides a poignant and evocative depiction of a woman who has "borne the unthinkable." This phrase

underscores the depth of her suffering, indicating that she has endured experiences so horrific that they defy ordinary understanding or articulation. The use of the word "borne" suggests not only the act of carrying a heavy burden but also a sense of enduring pain and hardship over an extended period. This sets the stage for understanding the profound impact of her experiences on her life and mental state.

-**Type of Oppression: Exploitation**

The text identifies the type of oppression Sethe experiences as 'exploitation.' This term encapsulates the various forms of abuse and mistreatment she has endured. Exploitation involves taking unfair advantage of someone, often through manipulation, coercion, or abuse of power. In Sethe's case, it likely refers to both her physical exploitation during her time at "Sweet Home" and the ongoing emotional exploitation as her past continues to torment her. This concept of exploitation ties into broader themes of power, control, and the lasting impact of systemic abuse and oppression.

Extract: 2

"Ten minutes for seven letters. With another ten could she have gotten "Dearly" too?" – "rutting among the headstones with the engraver, his young son looking on, the anger in his face so old; the appetite in it quite new." P5

Description Level:

1. **Nominalization:** The extract does not involve significant nominalization, as actions and events are described using verbs and direct language.

2. **Passivation:** There is no passivation present in this extract. The focus remains on active participants and their actions rather than being acted upon.

1. **Positive and Negative Sentences:** The sentences mix neutral and negative connotations. "Ten minutes for seven letters" and "With another

ten could she have gotten 'Dearly' too?" are neutral, while "rutting among the headstones" introduces a negative, unsettling element. The use of the gerund noun '‑ing' in "rutting" indicates ongoing actions or states, underscoring the continuous nature of suffering and torment. This grammatical choice conveys that these experiences are not isolated incidents but rather persistent and enduring conditions. The gerund form emphasizes the relentless and unending nature of the woman's suffering, making it clear that her torment is a constant presence in her life.

3. **Mode of Grammar: Declarative:** The extract employs a declarative mode, making straightforward statements about the characters' actions and experiences. This mode emphasizes the reality of their circumstances and the intensity of their experiences.

‑**Halliday's Transitivity:**

1. **Material Processes:** The narrative employs material processes through the verb "rutting." In SFL, a material process refers to actions or events involving physical activities or changes. The verb "rutting" suggests primal, almost animalistic behavior, emphasizing physical actions driven by instinct or base desires. This choice of vocabulary sets a raw and visceral tone, highlighting the physicality and intensity of the actions described.

2. **Mental Processes:** The phrase "Ten minutes for seven letters" involves a mental process, depicting the woman's struggle to solve a word puzzle. This image can be interpreted in multiple ways:

o **Mental Stimulation:** The difficulty in solving the puzzle may represent the woman's need for mental engagement or stimulation. It suggests that amidst her suffering, she seeks challenges to occupy her mind and perhaps find a brief respite from her reality.

o **Escape from Reality:** Alternatively, the puzzle‑solving could symbolize her attempt to escape the harshness of her reality. The focus

on a seemingly trivial activity might be a coping mechanism to distract herself from the pain and trauma she endures.

-Vocabulary Level:

1. **Lexical Relations – Antonyms:** The narrative contrasts "old" and "new" to emphasize the intensity of the emotions and actions described.

2. **Metaphor:** The disturbing image of a person engaged in an unsettling activity among headstones introduces a darker, more unsettling element. The setting of headstones evokes a sense of death and mourning, suggesting that the actions taking place are both literal and metaphorical confrontations with mortality and loss.

-Interpretation Level:

1. **Mental Stimulation and Escapism:** The woman's difficulty with the word puzzle can be seen as representing her need for mental stimulation or an escape from her reality. This interpretation suggests that her engagement with the puzzle is not merely a trivial activity but a significant attempt to find some semblance of control or distraction amidst chaos.

2. **Signs of Rage and Hunger:** The behaviors driven by rage and hunger indicate deep-seated emotional turmoil. These primal urges suggest a person acting out destructively, possibly as a result of internalized trauma or repression. The rage points to intense anger, while hunger signifies a desperate need or longing, possibly for something unattainable or lost.

-Type of Oppression: Cultural Imperialism:

The type of oppression highlighted in this extract is 'cultural imperialism.' This form of oppression refers to the imposition of one culture's values and norms over another. The destructive behavior driven by desire and anger can be seen as a response to cultural marginalization and the erasure of identity. This oppression forces individuals to internalize

negative emotions and act out in ways that reflect their struggle against a dominant culture that suppresses and devalues their own.

Extract: 3

"Same, but to listen to her, all her children are dead. She felt each one go the very day and hour." P.7

-Description Level:

1. Nominalization:

The extract does not involve significant nominalization. Actions and events are described using verbs and direct language, maintaining clarity and focus on the emotional experiences.

2. Passivation:

There is no passivation present in this extract. The focus remains on active participants and their experiences rather than being acted upon.

3. Positive and Negative Sentences:

The sentences are inherently negative, conveying a sense of loss and grief. The statements "all her children are dead" and "she felt each one go" highlight the tragedy and emotional pain experienced by Sethe.

4. Mode of Grammar: Declarative:

The use of a declarative mode of grammar, which makes a straightforward statement, serves to emphasize Sethe's distress as a mother who has endured profound loss. This grammatical choice underscores the severity of her suffering, presenting it as an undeniable reality. The narrative focuses on Sethe's intense emotional landscape, highlighting her as a mother who has tragically lost all her children. This description aims to draw readers' attention to the depth of her grief and the continuous pain she endures.

-Halliday's Transitivity:

1. Mental Process:

The phrase "She felt each one go the very day and hour" involves a mental process, depicting Sethe's perception and emotional experience. This transitivity analysis emphasizes Sethe as the "senser" and her children's departures as the "phenomenon" she perceives. This focus on mental processes underscores the intense emotional and psychological experiences Sethe endures.

-**Vocabulary Level:**

1. Metaphor:

A metaphor is used to describe the profound impact of Sethe's loss. The original phrase, "She felt each one go the very day and hour," can be interpreted metaphorically as "She felt a piece of her heart leave with each one on the very day and hour." This metaphor highlights the deep emotional and psychological connection Sethe has with her children, suggesting that each child's death took a part of her with them.

-**Interpretation Level:**

1. Profound Connection and Emotional Stress:

At the interpretive level, the text illuminates Sethe's profound connection to each of her children's deaths. The narrative implies that she felt their losses intensely, down to the precise day and hour, suggesting an acute awareness and sensitivity. This level of detail indicates not only a close bond between Sethe and her children but also the extent of her emotional stress. The text conveys that losing all of her children has subjected Sethe to severe emotional trauma, manifesting as a constant and overwhelming presence in her life.

2. Maternal Intuition and Helplessness:

The ability to sense the exact moments of her children's deaths may symbolize an extraordinary sensitivity or a form of maternal intuition, reflecting the depth of her bond with them. This acute awareness could also highlight her sense of helplessness, as she could foresee the tragedies but was powerless to prevent them. The long-lasting effects of

such profound sadness underscore the enduring impact of grief and the way it shapes Sethe's existence, influencing her perceptions, emotions, and overall mental state.

-Type of Oppression: Violence:

This paragraph focuses on 'violence' as a form of oppression that Sethe experiences through the loss of her children. Here, 'violence' is used metaphorically to refer to the deep emotional and psychological impact of her children's deaths. This form of oppression intersects with both structural and personal dimensions of suffering. Structurally, it may reflect societal and systemic issues that contribute to her circumstances, such as historical contexts of slavery, racism, and marginalization that exacerbate her suffering. This perspective underscores the complexity of her suffering, as it is not merely a result of personal tragedy but also a consequence of systemic and structural violence. The narrative thus presents Sethe's grief as multifaceted, rooted in both her personal experiences and the broader social context in which she lives.

Extract:4

"Pregnant every year including the year she sat by the fire telling him she was going to run. Her three children she had already packed into a wagonload of others in a caravan of Negroes crossing the river. They were to be left with Halle's mother near Cincinnati". P.9

-Description Level:

1. Nominalization:

There is no significant use of nominalization in this extract, as the actions and events are described using verbs and direct language.

2. Passivation:

The phrase "they were to be left" is an example of passivation. This shifts the focus from the actor to the acted upon, highlighting the children as recipients of the action. This grammatical choice emphasizes

a loss of agency for Sethe's children, implying an ambiguous and uncertain fate.

3. Positive and Negative Sentences:

The sentences in the extract are predominantly positive in structure, describing actions and plans ("she sat by the fire," "she had already packed"). However, the underlying context reveals negative circumstances, such as the repeated pregnancies and the necessity of leaving her children behind.

4. Mode of Grammar: Declarative

The extract employs a declarative mode, providing clear and straightforward statements about Sethe's actions and circumstances. This mode emphasizes the reality of her situation and the decisions she must make.

-Halliday's Transitivity:

1. Material Processes:

In SFL, a material process involves actions or events that result in some change or outcome. The verbs "sat" and "packed" indicate material processes, with Sethe as the 'actor' performing these actions. This vocabulary choice grounds the narrative in specific moments and places, highlighting Sethe's physical actions and the steps she takes to protect her children.

2. Relational Processes:

The verb "were" in "they were to be left" indicates a relational process, establishing the relationship between Sethe's children and their intended location. This emphasizes the planned but uncertain future for the children.

3. Vocabulary Level: Metaphor

The use of phrases like "pregnant every year" and "packed into a wagonload" underscores the continuous and repetitive nature of Sethe's experiences, emphasizing the physical and emotional toll on her. These

phrases metaphorically highlight the burden and dehumanizing treatment she endures.

-**Interpretation Level**：

-**Powerlessness and Reproductive Objectification**：

At the interpretive level, the text delves into Sethe's repeated pregnancies, highlighting a systemic form of oppression. This detail underscores the portrayal of black individuals, particularly women, as powerless within Western society. Sethe's constant pregnancies symbolize the forced reproductive exploitation of black women, who were often treated as mere objects for reproduction. This lack of agency is further emphasized by societal constraints that deny them the ability to make autonomous decisions about their own bodies. The narrative suggests that black people are deprived of basic rights, including the right to consent or refuse, reinforcing their objectification and dehumanization. Sethe's experiences reflect a broader historical reality where black women were subjected to sexual violence and reproductive control, illustrating the intersection of racial and gender oppression.

-**Type of Oppression: Powerlessness**：

The text identifies 'powerlessness' as the primary form of oppression experienced by Sethe. This term encapsulates her inability to resist or refuse the repeated rapes and mistreatment she endures, highlighting her lack of agency and control over her own life. The recurring forced pregnancies serve as a stark representation of her powerlessness, demonstrating how she is coerced into a cycle of reproductive exploitation. This form of oppression is deeply rooted in the racial hierarchy and systemic inequalities of the time, where white individuals wielded power over black individuals. The narrative further emphasizes the power dynamics at play, illustrating how white people exercised control over those who were less fortunate. This dynamic underscore the pervasive and institutionalized nature of racial oppression, where

black people were systematically denied autonomy and subjected to dehumanizing treatment.

5. Conclusion

The most important conclusions will be highlighted regarding the questions and the hypotheses of the study. Concerning hypothesis number (1) saying: *'The material and mental processes are the highly used types of processes by the American novelist.'* The analysis of the novel verified this hypothesis. It is found that these two types of processes are the highest among others in the novel. Firstly, 'material' scores 67 times in the novel and the 'mental' process scores 41 times in the novel.

Turning to hypothesis number (2), *'It is predicted that the 'declarative' and 'imperative' modes of grammar are utilized in the American novel.'* The analysis of the modes of grammar reveals the fact that the 'declarative' mode scores 98 times in the novel, while the 'imperative' mode scores 77 times. That is way; the above hypothesis is found proved.

In order to depict hypothesis number (3) saying: *'Marginalization is the highly occurring type of oppression in the novels under investigation.* The analysis has shown that the highly occurring type of oppression in the novels is "exploitation'. It scores 79 times in the novel. However, 'marginalization' scores 40 times in the novel. This way, one may notice that the above hypothesis is found rejected.

Then, hypothesis number (4) saying: *'Metaphor is the more prevalent vocabulary choice in the American"* is obviously verified. The analysis has shown that 'metaphor' is found in the American novel where it scores 56 times in the novel. However, 'lexical relation' scores 34 times in the novel. Butting the two parts of hypothesis together show that this hypothesis is rejected.

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