



ISSN: 1994-4217 (Print) 2518-5586(online)

Journal of College of Education

Available online at: <https://eduj.uowasit.edu.iq>

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analysis; critical
linguistics; critical
stylistics; ideology;
material; mental;
relational; Sethe; Toni
Morrison; transitivity;
verbalization****Article info****Article history:**

Received 15.Febr.2023

Accepted 3.Apr.2023

Published 29.May.2023

**Identity Formation Through Verbal Processes in Toni Morrison's
"Beloved"****A B S T R A C T**

Socially shared beliefs and ideas, known as "ideology," are not limited to particular sorts of texts, such as news, political speeches and/or debates, or even commercial advertisements; they may be found in all forms of texts, literary or non-literary. Throughout history, literature has become one of the most potent means used by writers to express a majestic, rhetorical message or idea to audiences. The current study uses a literary text sourced from the fictional novel "Beloved". Despite the fact that "Beloved" was written by one of today's most notable fiction writers, Toni Morrison, only a few studies have tackled her novels from a linguistic standpoint. Based on that, the current study seeks to investigate how the use of linguistic resources, particularly verbs, contributes to the construction of the identity of the main character, 'Sethe'. Informed by Simpson's (2004) model of transitivity, the study in hand employed one of Jeffries' (2010) TCFs of critical stylistics, namely 'Representing Actions/Events/States', to analyze the data. The study concluded that different pictures were drawn for the character under scrutiny. It is also found that the linguistic context in which a process is produced is as crucial as the frequency and type of the process and its respective participants in constructing Sethe's identity.

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.31185/eduj.Vol51.Iss2.3393>

تشكيل الشخصية من خلال الأفعال في رواية "بُلُغْد" لطوني موريسون

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المستخلص

لا ينحصر وجود المعتقدات أو الأفكار التي يشاطرها مجتمع معين ، والمعروفة ب "الإيديولوجية" على أنواع معينة من النصوص، كالمقالات الإخبارية أو الخطب أو المناظرات السياسية، أو حتى الإعلانات التجارية ؛ بل يمكن أن يتعدى ذلك إلى جميع أنواع النصوص، سواء كانت تلك النصوص أدبية أو غير أدبية. فقد أصبح الأدب على مر التاريخ أحد أكثر الوسائل الكتاب فاعلية للتعبير عن رسالة أو فكرة بلاغية ذات دلالة معينة وإيصالها للجمهور. تم أخذ عينة الدراسة الحالية من الرواية الخيالية والمعنونة "بُلُغْد". على الرغم من حقيقة أن رواية "بُلُغْد" هي من تأليف الروائية طوني موريسون ، والتي تعد واحدة من أبرز كتاب روايات الخيال في عصرنا، إلا أن قلة قليلة من المختصين في هذا المجال قد تناولوا رواياتها من وجهة نظر لغوية. وبناءً على ذلك ، تهدف الدراسة الحالية إلى التحقق من كيفية مساهمة استخدام الموارد اللغوية ، والأفعال تحديداً ، في رسم هوية الشخصية الرئيسية ، "سيث". اعتماداً على نموذج سيمبسون (٢٠٠٤) للتعددية الفعلية ، استخدمت الدراسة واحدة من الوظائف المفاهيمية النصية الخاصة للأسلوبية النقدية الخاص بالمؤلفة جيفريز (٢٠١٠) ، والمسماة ب 'تمثيل الأفعال ذات النشاط الجسدي/الأفعال التي تصف الأحداث /الأفعال التي تصف حالة ما' لتحليل البيانات. وخلصت الدراسة إلى أنه هناك صور مختلفة تم رسمها للشخصية محل البحث. وقد وجدت الدراسة أيضاً أن السياق اللغوي الذي يتم فيه إصدار تلك الأفعال لا يقل أهمية عن عدد ونوع العمليات الفعلية والمشاركين في تلك العمليات في بناء هوية سيث.

الكلمات المفتاحية: تحليل الخطاب النقدي، علم اللغة النقدي ، الأسلوبية النقدية ، الأيديولوجيا ، العمليات ذات النشاط الجسدي ، العمليات ذات النشاط الذهني ، العمليات الفعلية العلائقية ، سيث ، طوني موريسون ، التعددية الفعلية ، العمليات اللفظية .

Introduction

While language is not the only instrument for human to communicate, it has been the primary focus of discourse studies. This could be attributable to the unadulterated ideological function of language. Many linguists have been interested in unearthing the deep-rooted relationship between language and ideology. Jeffries (2010), for instance, has emphasized the point that there is no such innocent language. She has stated that "All texts are ideological" (p. 6). Herman and Vervaeck (2019), on the other hand, have argued that language cannot be abstracted from its social or ideological functions (p. 256). Although numerous studies in the field of linguistics have been conducted to detect latent ideologies in texts, the majority of these studies, however, have focused on media and political discourse rather than literature. The investigation of ideology in literary works has received inadequate attention. Thus, The study in hand seeks to address this void by examining a literary text that serves as an example of language seeking to affect readers and establish various sorts of meaning. The study aims to look into how grammar of that literary text works in the construction of characters in narrative discourse. In this study, one of Jeffries' (2010) tools of critical stylistics,

'Representing Actions/Events/States' (traditionally known as 'Transitivity'), is utilized to analyze how Toni Morrison's novel "Beloved" employs verbal choice in order to convey the ideology of 'Self and Other.'

Background to the Study

Linguistic analysis of literary works allows for an assessment of particular choices that the language offers for specific grammatical characteristics of narrative discourse that influence characterization and ideologically influence meaning perception. What follows is a fairly extensive description of the three linguistically-oriented approaches used for text analysis: 'Critical Linguistics' (CL), 'Critical Discourse Analysis' (CDA), and 'Critical Stylistics' (CS). The following discussion outlines the fundamentals that separate each approach, comparing their approaches to those offered by critical stylistics and attempting to introduce an argument throughout the suggested method to evaluate its applicability to study fictional works.

Given the need for a method that enables those who are interested in text analysis to conduct systematic linguistic analyses to unearth the ideology embedded in the texts, the pivotal books by Fowler et al. (1979); and Kress & Hodge (1979) have developed a new and impactful tendency in the ideological study of language. According to Fowler (1991), this method is an examination of the relationships between signs, meanings, and the social and historical factors that govern the semiotic construction of discourse, employing a specific type of linguistic analysis (p. 5). The word 'Critical' denotes that the linguistic analysis is more than just a description of textual features; it is an interpretation of the fundamental ideologies embedded in the linguistic constructs. The main goal of this method is to investigate the ideology embedded in language. Despite widespread criticism raised that it lacked a thorough toolset for linguistic analysis, the emergence of Critical Linguistics marked a watershed moment in the study of the relationship between language and ideology (Alaghbary et al., 2015, p. 5), as the analysis doesn't only offer a description of the linguistic features but also an explanation of why and how specific discourses are used (Teo, 2000, p. 11).

The focus on language as a means of constructing meaning and embedding ideologies has grown into the broad range of approaches known as Critical Discourse Analysis, or (CDA). The primary concern of CDA, as Machin and Mayr (2012) have illustrated, is that it "typically analyses news texts, political speeches, advertisements, school books, etc. (p.12) in such a way that is openly sympathetic of political intervention and social change (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997, p. 257). However, CDA, like the approach that preceded it, has been widely criticised. Wodak (2014) has described CDA as being "a problem-oriented interdisciplinary research programme, subsuming a variety of approaches, each with different theoretical models, research methods, and agendas"(p. 2). According to Jeffries (2007), there is no unified tradition, and thus no consented analytical toolset that should be applied in the discipline (p.12). Practitioners of this approach, as a result, have encountered three challenges: The incomprehensibility of the analytical tools, subjectivity against/ in favor of a certain political viewpoint taken by the analyst, and, ultimately, the lack of a strictly

delineated methodological and/or theoretical framework. The functional role of language in society that CDA practitioners adopt leads to the belief that "CDA is not a formal school of thought, but rather a range of stances" (Breeze, 2011, p. 5).

Critical stylistics arose to address the problems identified in CL and then CDA. With the publication of Jeffries' (2010) book, *Critical Stylistics: The Power of English*, this approach is formally established. According to Jeffries (2014), the emergence of CS arose to address "a feeling of frustration in the face of critical discourse analysis's deliberate lack of methodology or framework and its apparent abandonment of many of the achievements of linguistics in its scientific phase of development" (pp. 408–409). Jeffries and McIntyre (2010) have pointed out that, CS attempts to combine CDA's ideological awareness with textual stylistic analysis (p.194). Jeffries (2014) has developed a "method of finding the ideology in texts whether or not you agree with it" through a set of ten tools that she calls the Textual-Conceptual Functions, shortened into TCFs (p.410). What distinguishes CS from other approaches to textual analysis, such as CL and CDA, is that it embraces texts of any form and purpose, rather than just literary ones. Furthermore, CS views text centrality as the unavoidable underpinning for all stylistics (Jeffries & McIntyre 2010, p. 1). Jeffries' (2010) set of tools is: "*Naming and Describing, Representing Actions/Events/States, Equating and Contrasting, Exemplifying and Enumerating, Prioritizing, Assuming and Implying, Negating, Hypothesizing, Presenting the Speech and Thoughts of other Participants, and Representing Time, Space and Society*". This study seeks to reveal the ideology that may arise from such construction of the character's identity by investigating these verbal choices and the roles that the character in question chooses to play.

Ideology and Critical Stylistics

Critical stylistics, or CS, maintains that all texts are ideologically centered, whether such ideologies are placed in a text intentionally or unintentionally. CS uses a variety of analytical tools to uncover the hidden ideologies, freeing the researcher from subjectivity in an effort to corroborate preexisting preconceptions (Olaluwoye, 2015, p. 88). However, the question here is, what's the origin of the term 'ideology', and what does it refer to? According to van Dijk (2000), the word 'Ideology' can be traced all the way back to Destutt de Tracy's eighteenth-century term "idéologie". Since the 1970s, this contentious term has piqued the interest of researchers, scholars, and even philosophers (pp.1-2). That unprecedented interest in the term has led to the development of numerous studies in fields such as critical linguistics, critical discourse science, critical stylistics, and others. As van Dijk (2000) has affirmed, in such studies, approaches to ideology concentrate on three facets, namely the *sociological*, *psychological*, and *linguistic* aspects (p. 5). Different evaluations and definitions are given to ideology, though all these approaches agree that ideology is fundamentally social. Weber (1992) has stated that ideology is "a system of knowledge and beliefs or a set of assumptions used in the inferential processing of text"(p. 12).

Representing Actions/Events/States (Transitivity)

According to Jeffries (2010), actions (what is being done), events (what is happening), and states (what something is) are represented by the choice of the verb, where that choice may influence the way the situation is perceived by reader/hearer (p. 37). Transitivity, as Halliday (1985) has stated, is that it is part of the ideational aspect of a language because of its involvement in the way ideas are transmitted. He has explained that our most powerful conception of reality is that it consists of "goings-on: of doing, happening, feeling, being". These occurrences or (goings-on) are organized out in the language's semantic system and conveyed through the grammar of the clause (p. 101). Although several models of transitivity are found. Due to its usability, however, the current study, adopts Simpson's (2004) model which can be used to describe the choices a verb makes and what consequences those choices engender. Simpson (1993) has illustrated that those semantic processes reflected by clauses may have three components (p. 82):

- **The Process** (represented by the verb phrase).

- **The participants of the process** (represented by noun phrases).

-**The circumstances involved in the process** (represented by prepositional or/and adverbial phrases). Simpson demonstrated that processes are classified based as to whether they represent *actions, speech, mental states*, or just states of being. The main categories are:

Material Processes: Processes of "doing" are referred to as material processes. Two participant roles namely: an 'Actor' and a 'Goal' are associated with material processes. The first is obligatory element while the second is optional. Jeffries (2010) has explained that the participant labels are used in order to distinguish the grammatical role from the semantic role these participants can play (p. 40). If the Material actions are *intended* and performed by "Conscious Being" (Jeffries, 2010, p. 40), they are called 'Material Action Intentional' or (MAI) whilst the other subset is called 'Material Action Supervision' or (MAS) because the action is unintentional or beyond one's control though it is performed by a conscious being. 'Material Action Events' or (MAE) is the last subcategory of material process that refers to the verbs with an 'Inanimate 'Actor' in which the agency of human is downplayed or missing.

Mental Processes: The second group in which sensory processes are included. Simpson (1993) has confirmed that those processes are 'internalized,' and as such, their quality differs significantly from that of the 'externalized' doing and speaking processes (p. 84). Jeffries (2010) has classified mental processes into three subcategories: 'Mental Reaction' or (MR) which is used to express some types of emotions such as *liking*, and *hating*. 'Mental Cognition' or (MG) is the second subset that is employed to express processes that involve some (un)conscious mental processes such as *understanding, knowing, thinking, realizing*, etc. 'Mental Perception' or (MP) is the third subtype of mental processes. It includes verbs for *sensing, feeling, seeing, hearing*, etc. 'Mental' processes involve two participant roles: a 'Sensor' (which is central) and a 'Phenomena'.

Verbalization Processes: Jeffries (2010) has stated that 'Verbalization' process *or* (V), or in Simpson's (1993) words "... processes of saying" (p. 84) defines any action that employs language, and because it involves a human actor, it appears to be remarkably similar to that of 'Material Actions'. The 'Verbalization' is associated with two participants, a compulsory

'Sayer' (equivalent to the actor inside a material action process), a 'Verbiage' (a description of what is stated), and a 'Target' (equivalent to the goal) (p. 42).

Relational Processes: These processes indicate the existence of a relationship between two participants with no implication that one participant, in any possible way, influences the other, thus they are 'Processes of Being' (Simpson, 1993, p. 85). This category, according to Jeffries (2010) is used to represent static rather than changing or dynamic relationships between its two participants, namely: a/an 'Carrier/Identified' and an 'Attributes /Identifier'. Relational verbs might include (p. 43):

- Intensive Relations (**RI**),
- Possessive Relations (**PR**) signaled by the verb 'have' or
- Circumstantial Relations (**RC**) signaled by the verb 'be'.

Behavioural Processes: Behavioural process is one of the new categories that Simpson adds to his (2004) version of transitivity model. He describes it as a type of process that stands at the junction between material and mental processes as it represents both 'sensing' and 'doing' activities. According to Halliday and Matthiessen (2004), this category is used to represent "the outer manifestations of inner workings" (p.171), that is, it is an embodiment of the 'Physiological' or 'Psychological' acts or behaviours such as *breathing, coughing, or smiling*, however they can also represent states of consciousness such as *sighing, tearing, or laughing* (Simpson, 2004, p. 23). Generally, there is one participant role attached to this category called the 'Behaver' who is similar to the role of the 'Senser'.

Existential Processes: The sixth and last category of Simpson's (2004) transitivity model is the 'Existential' process. This category, as with the 'Relational' process asserts that "something exists or happens" (Simpson, 2004, p. 25; Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 256). As a dummy subject, 'Existential' processes usually use the word 'There'. As in the 'Behavioural' category, the 'Existential' process has one participant only called the 'Existent'. 'Existential' category is not commonly used in discourse, nevertheless it makes a significant, specialized contribution to several types of texts. In narratives, for example, it serves to present leading participants at the opening of the story (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 257). A summary of the types, subtypes, and participants involved in verbal processes is provided in table number one below:

Table 1

Types of process, their meaning and participant roles attached to each process

<i>Type of Category</i>	<i>Subcategory</i>		<i>Category Meaning</i>	<i>Participants</i>
Material Process	-Action Intention -Supervision -Events		-doing -happening -happening	Actor/ Goal Client⁽¹⁾
Mental Process	-Cognition -Perception -Reaction		-thinking -sensing -feeling	Senser/ Phenomenon
Relational Process	Identifying	Intensive Possessive Circumstantial	-Identifying -Attributing	Identified/ Identifier
	Attributive			Carrier/ Attribute
Verbalization Process	-----		saying	Sayer/ Receiver/Verbiage
Existential Process	-----		existing	Existent
Behavioural Process	-----		behaving	Behaver/ Behaviour

Note. Adapted from Simpson (2004)

The Data

"Beloved" is one of the Nobel Prize laureate and Pulitzer Prize winner Toni Morrison's most successful fictional novel that is published in 1987. The events of the novel (although are fictional nevertheless are inspired by the true story of a runaway slave, 'Margret Garner') take place primarily in Cincinnati, Ohio, USA, 1873. In "Beloved," the main character 'Sethe', an African American slave woman, who managed to escape from her white master, attempted to slaughter all her three children, but she only succeeded in killing her two-year-old daughter. 'Beloved' is the word engraved on the tombstone of Sethe's dead child. The ghost exerts a big influence on Sethe's present and perhaps her future. That ghost (who is thought to be Sethe's murdered child) continued to haunt Sethe, although it was buried. Slavery as a devastating factor of identity, community, motherhood, and racism are among the themes portrayed in "Beloved". "Beloved" is narrated through three narrative points of view: third-person omniscient; third-person limited omniscient; and first-person, which is relatively limited. "Beloved" has a very complex structure, in which two tales are narrated. The first is told mainly by characters such as 'Sethe', 'Paul D', 'Denver', and 'Baby Suggs' through flashbacks of the past, in which the course of events has culminated in chapter sixteen with the revelation of Sethe's murder of her two-year-old girl. The second climax occurs near the end of the story, during the "exorcism" of 'Beloved', who appears to be the ghost of Sethe's dead daughter (SparkNotes Editors, 2005, Key Facts Summary of "Beloved").

1) As some participant roles in Simpson's (2004) model of transitivity are unavailable, the role of 'Client' has been captured from Halliday and Matthiessen's model (2004).

Methodology

The data for the study in hand is confined to the direct speech of protagonist, Sethe that is found within the first 5000 words of the opening chapter of the novel. The selection of the first chapter rather than other parts of the novel is attributed to the significance of the opening chapter to the whole work as it serves multiple functions such as introducing the primary character(s), the main theme(s), the settings, the tone, the conflict between the protagonist and antagonist and so forth. It should be mentioned that, in order to investigate how the character's identity is formed from the character's own perspective via the transitivity system, only quotes told in the first person pronoun are chosen. That is to say, only quotes where the speaker is the character Sethe are chosen for investigation. As a result of the aforementioned parameters, the total number of texts addressed by the study is (19) quotes. However, since the 'main verb' is an essential element of the analysis, the unit of the analysis adopted by the current study is the 'independent clause' rather than the quote. Only independent clauses are considered. As such, fragments, phrases, or incomplete sentences found within these quotes will be ignored. Those (19) quotes will be both quantitatively and then qualitatively analysed. Conclusions will be drawn based on results obtained from both methods of analysis.

Analysis and Discussion of Results

This study examines and compares the verbal choice made by the main character, 'Sethe' in Toni Morrison's narrative, "Beloved". A statistical analysis is conducted first to identify the frequency of each process category and subcategory used and the participants involved. As shown in Table (2), there are a total number of 26 clauses where Sethe is found to be involved. Material processes are the most frequently-used choice made by the character, Sethe, with 10 occurrences, making up about 38% of the total occurrences.

Table 2

The type, number, percentage of processes and the roles attached to the character Sethe

The Character	Material			Mental		Relational				Verbalization		Behavioural	Existential	Total of All processes	
	Roles	Actor	Goal	Other Roles	Senser	Phenomenon	Carrier	Attribute	Identified	Identifier	Sayer	Receiver	Behavior		Existent
<i>Sula</i>		8	2	2	7	0	3	0	0	0	5	1	0	1	26
<i>Total of Each process</i>		10			7		3				6		0	0	
<i>Percentage</i>		38%			27%		12%				23%		00%	00%	

In Material processes, Sethe plays the role of the 'Actor' in 8 instances, whilst she is the 'Goal' in 2 occurrences only, as shown in the following examples:

- 1- "**Messed up my legs** back yonder. Chamomile." (Morrison, 1987, p. 7)
- 2- "Let **me get** you a basin of water." (Morrison, 1987, p. 7)
- 3- "A whitegirl **helped me**." (Morrison, 1987, p. 7)
- 4- "Talk to Denver while **I cook** you something" (Morrison, 1987, p. 7)
- 5- "**I cook** at a restaurant in town. And I sew a little on the sly." (Morrison, 1987, p. 7)
- 6- "The rest **I brought back** from where I work." (Morrison, 1987, p. 7)
- 7- "**I will never run from** another thing on this earth." (Morrison, 1987, p. 7)
- 8- "**I took one journey** and **I paid for** the ticket." (Morrison, 1987, p. 7)

As noticed in example one, Sethe is not the performer of the process but rather an effected entity of an animate being, and the process performed is categorized as a material action event (MAE), in which the 'Actor' is the *chamomile*, which is set in a separate phrase. Example 3 is the second example where Sethe is an affected rather than an affecting entity. Notably, the 'Actor' is an entity that Sethe is not used to receiving help from, but rather misery, indignity, and deprivation of will. It is worth noting that although Sethe is the 'Actor' of the MAI processes found in Examples 2,4,5,6,and 7, she is presented as a weak, powerless person whose actions affect no one other than herself, or trivial things in the world she lives. The only exception is Example 8, in which the verbal clauses *took journey* in the first clause and *paid for the tickets* in the second construct Sethe as a independent and powerful person although the verbs used have negative connotations of suffering. The verbs *cook* in example number 5, and *run* in example number 7 are used intransitively in which the only participant role found is the performer of the process, that is, the 'Actor' realised by the subject pronoun *I* which refers to the speaker, Sethe. Although the first verb suggests that Sethe performs the action voluntarily, nevertheless, the second verb may reflect a sense of fear or a feeling of insecurity that Sethe was feeling at a particular period of her life. Overall, Material category constructs the character Sethe negatively as a weak, powerless, or insecure person whose actions affect no one but herself.

Mental processes are the category that ranks second in terms of the frequency of their occurrences. As shown in Table (2), out of 26 clauses, Sethe chooses to use verbs that imply a certain mental state in 7 instances representing 27% of the overall occurrences, as illustrated below:

- 9- "**I doubt** that" (Morrison, 1987, p. 5)
- 10- "**No. I think** he's dead." (Morrison, 1987, p. 8)
- 11- "**I just hope** you'll pardon my house." (Morrison, 1987, p. 8)
- 12- "**I don't know about lonely**," said Denver's mother. (Morrison, 1987, p. 12)
- 13- Mad, maybe, but **I don't see how it could be lonely spending every minute with us like it does**" (Morrison, 1987, p. 12)

14- How could I forget ? Worrisome..." (Morrison, 1987, p. 13)

15- I've never seen it and never will. (Morrison, 1987, p. 14)

Noticeably, 6 out of 7 mental processes are mental cognitive verbs, in which modal lexical verbs such as *doubt, think, hope, don't know, don't see, and could forget* are used to express Sethe's uncertainty or doubt about something that happened or will happen to herself or someone else. The verb *hope* is an exception where Sethe's desirability is expressed. It is worth stating that the role of the 'Goal' in 3 instances is realized by a subordinate clause in which either a relational or another mental process is used, as in examples 10, 11, and 13. This suggests that the information mentioned in the subordinate clauses is either less important than that mentioned in the main clauses or is less amenable to question. In the data under scrutiny, only one verb that implies perception is used. In Example 15, the negative form of the verb See is used to reveal Sethe's determination not to see anything that relates to her tragic past. The role of the phenomenon realised by the pronoun *it* denotes a symbolic drawing similar to a chokecherry tree that is drawn on Sethe's back as a result of being whipped. All points considered, the mental category constructs the character Sethe as an uncertain, unconfident, and possibly a powerless person who is unable to openly express her opinion about the truthfulness of something. Sethe's heavy use of modalized expressions that imply mental cognition instead of a proposition in its 'raw' form, known as "categorical assertion" (Simpson, 1993, p. 45), might be a reflection of her past as a slave who was physically and mentally subordinate to her white masters.

Verbalization process comes third with 6 instances making 23% of the overall occurrences attached to Sethe. Instances with verbal processes found in my data are listed below:

16-"Maybe. But if she'd only come, I *could make* it *clear* to her." (Morrison, 1987, p. 5)

17- "I wouldn't have to *ask about* him, would I?" (Morrison, 1987, p. 8)

18- "You'd *tell* me....." (Morrison, 1987, p. 8)

19- "Oh *it's truly meant*." (Morrison, 1987, p. 8)

20- "I *told* you, he's from Sweet Home." (Morrison, 1987, p. 12)

21- "let me *tell* you something, Paul D Garner: it cost too much!" (Morrison, 1987, p. 14)

Example 16–21 above show Sethe in four clauses playing the role of a 'Sayer', while in example 18, she is found as a 'Receiver'. The role of the 'Receiver' in the remaining examples denotes different entities. It refers to her dead child, 'Beloved'; husband, Halle; (who is dead too); Paul D; and her other daughter, Denver as indicated in examples 16,17, 20, and 21 respectively. Unsurprisingly, Sethe uses the passive structure to conceal the agency of the 'Sayer' when she wanted to invite Paul D to her house. She couldn't openly express her feelings about someone or something. Although verbs like ask and tell are used several times in these processes, which might suggest that the 'Sayer' has some power or influence on the 'Receiver', nevertheless, almost all the 'Receivers' of Sethe's verbal actions are either dead or

had suffered from the misery of slavery. Based on that, Sula is portrayed as a powerless, self-confidence-lacking person whose verbal actions affect no one but dead or low-class people.

Relational processes are found to be less used by the character Sethe than Material, Mental and Verbal processes. As Table (2) reveals, there are 3 Relational processes where the character Sethe is involved making approximately 12% of the total occurrences of processes, as shown in the following examples:

22- "I think he is dead. *It's not being* sure that keeps him alive." (Morrison, 1987, p. 8)

23- "Least I can do, cooking from dawn to noon, *is* bring dinner home." (Morrison, 1987, p. 13)

24- "I *got* a tree on my back and a haint in my house, and nothing in between but the daughter I am holding in my arms." (Morrison, 1987, p. 14)

As you may have noticed, the verb *be* is used to express a relationally intensive process in Example 22. However, the shift of the voice of utterance from the active *I think he is dead* to the passive *It's not being...* is Sethe's attempt to conceal the identity of the 'Carrier'. She wants to distance herself from being blamed for not verifying her husband's death. In example 23, another relational intensive process is projected through the verb *is* in which the entire nominal clause in the subject position *Least I can do, cooking from dawn to noon* is the 'Carrier' while the clause functioning as the object performs the role of the 'Attribute'. Sethe is equating cooking from dawn to noon with bringing food home. Sethe is attempting to say that she is someone who can be counted on to support a family. The verb *got* in example 23 projects a Relational possessive process in which Sethe is the 'Carrier' and the rest of the example is the 'Attribute'. Overall, the Relational category presents the character, Sethe, as a trustworthy person and a hard worker, although she is still unconfident in herself. It is worth noting that no instances of Existential or Behavioural categories are found in the data.

Conclusion

The study in hand looked at how verbal choice and the roles each type of process offers are used to uncover the ideology that forms Sethe's identity. Sethe was given different pictures based on the type and frequency of the category and its participants. Although Material process is the most frequently used category, it portrays Sethe negatively. This is attributed to entities affected by Sethe's material actions, which were either trivial things or parts of Sethe's body. The heavy use of modalized lexical verbs presents Sethe as an uncertain or unconfident person who cannot express her opinion straightforwardly without using mitigating words. Verbalization presents Sethe as an unimpressive person who is not able to evoke others' admiration. Relational is the least used category that presents Sethe as a trustworthy and hard-working person. The data do not show any examples of Existential or Behavioural categories.

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