A Critical Discourse Study of Langston Hughes's "I, Too," W.H. Auden's "The Unknown Citizen," and "The Negro Speaks of Rivers" through the Lens of Fairclough's Framework

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Abstract

This study utilizes Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to analyze race and conformity in Langston Hughes' "I, Too," W.H. Auden's "The Unknown Citizen," and Hughes' "The Negro Speaks of Rivers.". Using a qualitative approach, the study conducts textual analysis to explore how these literary works reflect and challenge societal norms on race and identity. The CDA framework concentrates on the interplay of language, power, and social practices, unveiling the construction and contestation of racial identities in the chosen poems. The analysis showcases linguistic strategies illustrating racial identities and societal expectations of conformity. It elucidates Hughes' promotion of racial pride and equality, contrasting with Auden's critique of the dehumanizing aspects of conformity. The findings demonstrate how both poets skillfully utilize language and form to encourage readers to rethink the implications of race and individuality in wider social settings. Through its examination of how CDA effectively analyzes race-based discourse in literature, this study contributes to the enrichment of both literary criticism and cultural studies.

Introduction

The word "discourse" has its roots in the Latin term "discursus," which translates to "conversation" and has been in use since the 14th century. Today, discourse pertains to the use of language and its various representations. Typically, people understand discourse as a formal speech or written work that tackles a specific topic, incorporating both spoken and written forms. Additionally, when used as a verb, it can denote a serious dialogue between people (Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, 2001). According to Stubbs (1983), discourse encompasses more than just isolated sentences or clauses; it involves examining how language is utilized within various contexts (p. 1).

Discourse is a linguistic analysis technique designed to reveal the concealed goals and motives embedded in language, ultimately seeking to enhance, reduce, or alter the effect of those words. This analytical technique is vast and pertinent to several disciplines, including a wide array of meanings from fundamental domains like linguistics and philosophy to broader topics like sociology and anthropology. In this work, the word "discourse" particularly denotes "data that is amenable to empirical analysis" (Titscher et al., 1998: 44). This analysis focuses mostly on processes and activities rather than only on text. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is an academic discipline that aims to analyze both written and spoken language in order to uncover the underlying sources of power, authority, inequality, and prejudice within specific societal, political, and historical frameworks (Van Dijk, 1998b). The primary goal of CDA is to reveal the frequently concealed connections between language use, societal phenomena, and texts, as well as broader social and cultural structures, interactions, and processes. By looking at where these linguistic practices, events, and texts came from and how power struggles and dynamics affected them, CDA shows how the lack of openness in these connections keeps hegemony and dominance going.

In accordance with Fairclough (1992), discourse is characterized by three societal dimensions: knowledge, social relationships, and social identity. Power dynamics and ideologies influence these dimensions, which align with language functions. Discourse analysis is defined by Schiffrin (2006) as the examination of language usage beyond individual sentences, combining formal and functional methodologies. The functional approach emphasizes the practical application of language, while the formal approach focuses on broader language units. Rather than merely cataloguing linguistic structures, discourse analysis, as proposed by Brown et al. (1983), involves the examination of language in action, taking into account its intentions and functions in human interactions.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), also known as CDA, investigates the utilization of language and discourses to facilitate societal transformation and attain social objectives (Gee, 1999; Bloor & Bloor, 2013).

Fowler and Kress (1993) distinguish it from discourse analysis and text linguistics by emphasizing spoken or written texts within the framework of social processes and structures. During interactions with texts, CDA considers the social structures and objectives that influence the construction of meaning. In CDA, the term "critical" serves to emphasize legitimacy, challenge negativity, and foster change, encompassing both positive and negative assessments (Bloor and Bloor, 2013). Within the context of CDA, there is an inherent connection between linguistic-discursive practices and the socio-political structures of power and dominance, as per Bloor and Bloor (2013) and Kress (1990). Rogers (2004) asserts that language serves to maintain political power, advance ideologies, and shape minds. Ideology and social struggle influence discourses, according to Pennycook (2005).

Fairclough's framework emphasizes the critical role of language in social interactions (Fairclough, 2003). Fairclough, a distinguished scholar in Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), analyzes social events (texts), social practices (orders of discourse), and social structures to investigate the relationship between language and social reality. Fairclough concentrates on the identification of ideological and power dynamics in texts, emphasizing the significant correlation between language and power in his research (Fairclough, 1989). Based on Halliday's (1978) functional approach to language, Fairclough (1989) introduces a three-dimensional framework for discourse and text analysis. Three fundamental components comprise this framework: (1) the linguistic analysis of a text's formal characteristics; (2) the interpretation of the impact of discursive processes and interactions on the text as both a product and a valuable asset; and (3) the examination of the relationship between discourse and social/cultural contexts. Through the analysis of language forms, Fairclough reveals social processes and embedded ideologies, thereby revealing power relations and hidden agendas within society or communities.

2. Review of Literature

Kamalu and Tamunobelema (2013) significantly contribute to the exploration of ideologies and identities within literary texts by utilizing the mood analysis technique from Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). Their work highlights how various genres of literature construct and negotiate social meanings through linguistic choices. While this paper builds upon the foundational concepts presented by Kamalu and Tamunobelema, it specifically shifts focus to the dimensions of SFL as they relate to Fairclough's Model in Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). This perspective allows for a deeper examination of the interplay between language, power, and social context, thereby enriching the understanding of how discursive practices shape and reflect ideologies and identities in literary works. By integrating these frameworks, this research aims to provide a comprehensive analysis that bridges the insights from SFL with the critical approaches advocated by Fairclough, offering a nuanced view of the discourse within literary texts.

The Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) framework, developed by Norman Fairclough, provides a nuanced method for understanding texts within their social contexts. Sabir and Kanwal (2018) applied this framework to Robert Frost's poem "Fire and Ice," revealing its interconnectedness and underlying patterns. They argue that a deeper analysis is necessary to uncover the poem's didactic elements and moral and social messages. However, the complexity of Fairclough's model, which involves three stages: textual analysis, discursive practice, and social practice, presents challenges in integrating varied layers of interpretation, making the analysis less coherent.This enhances our understanding of how language shapes thematic exploration in literature..

Bushra Osman Sidiq and Media Rafiq Majeed conducted a critical discourse analysis (CDA) of several works by the renowned African American poet, memoirist, and civil rights activist, Maya Angelou, in 2022. Their research, which concentrates on five iconic poems—"Still I Rise," "Equality," "Caged Bird," "On the Pulse of Morning," and "Phenomenal Woman"—utilizes Fairclough's model of CDA to investigate the subtle application of figurative language in Angelou's poetry. By illuminating the implicit meanings conveyed through a variety of figures of speech, the authors aim to reveal the more profound messages concealed within the selected texts. Sidiq and Majeed offer valuable insights into the manner in which Angelou communicates complex ideas related to identity, resilience, and social justice by analyzing the ways in which figurative language enhances the thematic richness of the poems. Their discoveries emphasize the importance of figurative language as a potent instrument for constructing meaning, thereby expanding the current corpus of scholarship on Angelou's work and its influence on civil rights discourse and literature. This study not only affirms the relevance of CDA as a methodology for analyzing literary texts, but it also enhances our comprehension of Angelou's poetic techniques

Faiz ul Hassan, Imran Nazeer, and Moon Ijaz's 2022 study investigates the intersection of language, poetry, and critical discourse analysis in MR Gohar's poetry collection, "Metaphors." The authors analyze the linguistic features, stylistic devices, and rhetorical techniques in the selected poems using Fairclough's three-dimensional model of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). The study meticulously examines five poems from "Metaphors," demonstrating the complexity of Gohar's artistic expression and the effective use of symbolism,

sensory language, and metaphor to elicit complex emotional responses. The main themes identified include loss, negative influences, escapism through slumber, and the profound symbolism of color, particularly crimson, which represents vulnerability and destiny. The research also investigates the persistent motifs of longing and recollections in Gohar's work, as well as the creativity associated with autumn. The results emphasize the possibilities of metaphor as a potent instrument for articulating intricate concepts and sentiments in poetic discourse. This research provides valuable insights into Gohar's poetry, situating it within a critical discourse framework that improves comprehension of the ways in which language influences thematic exploration in literature.

The research by Akram, Sohail, and Qudsia (2022) critically analyzes the poem "The Onset" using Norman Fairclough's 3D model. The authors highlight the poem's interconnectedness and compositional elements, revealing its didactic undertones and its intended meanings. They use Fairclough's model to explore the poet's strategic use of simple language, which can profoundly influence societal mindsets. The study also uncovers the poet's transformation of winter themes into a message of hope, resulting in an optimistic resolution. The research underscores the intricate relationships between language, power, and society in the poem and contributes to a deeper understanding of its critical and educational aspirations.

Gloria Ajjulus and Mafarhanatul Akmal Ahmad Kamal conduct a 2022 study that examines the utilization of symbolism in a selection of Shirley Lim's poems. The poems in question are "Feeling Sorry," "A Woman Speaks of Grandchildren," "The Gate," "The Rebel," "My Father's Sadness," and "Pantoun for Chinese Women." The authors analyze the implicit meanings of symbolic expressions to uncover the ideologies embedded within the poems, guided by Fairclough's three-dimensional model (1995), using a qualitative descriptive research design. The study investigates the interaction between poetic texts, practices, and broader social and cultural contexts by utilizing Fairclough's critical discourse analysis (CDA). The results indicate that symbolism is widespread, with twelve instances identified in the selected works. This enhances the thematic complexity, particularly in relation to gender discrimination. The goal of this study is to improve understanding of how symbolism functions within Lim's poetry in relation to societal and cultural frameworks.

2.1 Research Gap

The study sets itself apart from related works by authors such as Sabir and Kanwal (2018), Bushra Osman Sidiq, and Media. The study's primary focus on race-based discourse analysis in literary contexts sets it apart from the works of Rafiq Majeed, Faiz ul Hassan, Imran Nazeer, Moon Ijaz, Akram, Sohail, Qudsia, Gloria Ajjulus, and Mafarhanatul Akmal Ahmad Kamal.

There is a big difference in how people understand how critical discourse analysis (CDA) specifically deals with race-related discourse in literature, even though the studies mentioned above look at a wide range of aspects of CDA as it applies to literary texts. The examination of race and conformity in the selected works of Langston Hughes and W.H. Auden, through Norman Fairclough's analytical framework, offers a distinctive perspective on the interplay between social identities, power dynamics, and race within literary discourse.

This research aims to provide valuable insights into race representation, negotiation, and challenge within the literary domain by focusing on these specific poems and authors. This focused analysis not only enhances the disciplines of literary criticism and cultural studies, but also improves our comprehension of the critical examination and construction of race through language, narrative, and iconography in literature.

2.2 Significance of the Research

This research uses Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to examine the intersections of race, conformity, and identity in the works of Langston Hughes and W.H. Auden. It delves into "I, Too," "The Unknown Citizen," and "The Negro Speaks of Rivers," revealing how these texts challenge and subvert societal norms regarding race. The study emphasizes the multifaceted nature of race, showing that it is not merely a social construct but a dynamic negotiation of identity influenced by power and context.

The research highlights linguistic strategies used by both poets, revealing how carefully crafted language can represent, challenge, and potentially reshape societal expectations around race and conformity. This analysis contributes to the broader field of literary criticism by demonstrating how textual choices can influence readers' perceptions of race.

Bridging the gap between literary criticism and cultural studies, the research underscores the importance of discourse analysis in understanding the complexities of race-based issues in literature. The study's specific focus on race-based discourse analysis in literature differentiates it from previous works, offering a targeted analysis that can inform future research.

The research encourages reader reflection on the implications of race and individuality, provoking critical conversations necessary for understanding contemporary societal divides and fostering greater empathy. The exploration of power dynamics through the lens of CDA further illuminates how literature can be a site of both oppression and resistance, contributing valuable insights into ongoing dialogues about race relations.

2.3 The research objectives are:

- Apply Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to investigate the interconnections among race, conformity, and identity in the literary works of Langston Hughes and W.H. Auden, focusing on the poems "I, Too," "The Unknown Citizen," and "The Negro Speaks of Rivers."
- Utilize a qualitative textual analysis methodology to uncover how the selected poems reflect, challenge, and reshape societal norms related to race and identity. Explore the linguistic strategies employed by Hughes and Auden to construct and disrupt racial identities within their works, aiming to reveal the complexities of conformity and individuality within the texts.
- Show how the poets use language to influence readers' perceptions of conformity, identity, and societal norms, highlighting the power of language in shaping interpretations.
- Contribute valuable insights to the fields of literary criticism and cultural studies by emphasizing the significance of race-based discourse in literature and fostering critical discussions on contemporary societal divisions and identity constructs.

2.4 Research Questions

1. How do Langston Hughes and W.H. Auden utilize language to shape and challenge racial identities within the poems "I, Too," "The Unknown Citizen," and "The Negro Speaks of Rivers"?
2. In what manner does Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis reveal the power dynamics embedded in the depiction of race and conformity in the chosen poems by Hughes and Auden?
3. How do the linguistic techniques employed by Langston Hughes differ from those employed by W.H. Auden in their portrayal of race and societal expectations in the selected poems?
4. When comparing Langston Hughes' works to W.H. Auden's "The Unknown Citizen," which societal norms pertaining to race and identity do they both reflect and contest?
5. How do the analyzed poems advocate for concepts like racial pride and equality, and how does this contrast underscore the dehumanizing effects of conformity?
6. How can the application of critical discourse analysis in literary analysis inform future inquiries into the dynamics of race, power structures, and identity within historical and modern contexts?

2.5 Theoretical Framework

This study explores the complex relationship between race and conformity in literary works such as Langston Hughes's 'I, Too,' W.H. Auden's 'The Unknown Citizen,' and 'The Negro Speaks of Rivers', using the lens of critical discourse analysis. This research, adhering to Norman Fairclough's critical discourse analysis framework (2001), employs a methodology that combines the analysis of text origination, text properties, and context, while scrutinizing social and discursive practices to uncover the complex interplay between language, power, and ideology.

Fairclough's method emphasizes eight critical aspects of text and context analysis:

1. Use critical discourse analysis as a tool to explore social issues.
2. Power relations are predominantly discursive.
3. Discourse plays a crucial role in shaping culture and society.
4. Discourse fulfills ideological functions.
5. Discourse has historical underpinnings.
6. Mediated relationship between text and society.
7. Discourse analysis encompasses the dual roles of explanation and interpretation.
8. This study uses discourse as a tool for social action.

In alignment with Fairclough's methodology, this analysis endeavors to synthesize these elements by traversing between micro and macro units of analysis, as elucidated in Fairclough's seminal work. By adopting the "three-dimensional method of discourse analysis," as articulated by Fairclough, this study focuses on the language text, discourse practice encompassing text production and interpretation, and socio-cultural practices. This approach facilitates the unearthing of unspoken ideologies and latent meanings that might otherwise remain obscured, avoiding the pitfalls of mystification and impersonality as highlighted by scholars such as Kress.

As Fairclough delineates, this methodological framework guides the linguistic description of the language text, the interpretation of the interplay between discursive processes and the text, and the elucidation of the relationship between discursive processes and social dynamics. Through this rigorous analytical lens, the research aims to shed light on the intricate interplay of language, power, and societal constructs within the examined literary works, contributing to a deeper understanding of race, conformity, and identity in the context of contemporary discourse and literary analysis.

3. Research Method

The present study selected the qualitative research methodology due to the lack of a need for quantitative data measurement. Quantitative research is a valuable instrument for collecting data regarding cultural norms, values, attitudes, perspectives, and attitudes within a particular population group as per Lincoln (2000). Jennifer (2000), on the other hand, advocates for the implementation of quantitative research methodologies due to their emphasis on adaptable data capture methods rather than adherence to fixed structures. Qualitative research provides a comprehensive approach to the exploration of complex phenomena, enabling in-depth examinations of subjective experiences, meanings, and interpretations. This methodology is particularly well-suited for studies that aim to comprehend the subtleties of human behavior, attitudes, beliefs, and social interactions. The qualitative analysis process will involve a thorough examination of the collected data, focusing on identifying key themes, relationships, and interpretations that shed light on the research questions and objectives.

3.1 Data Collection

In alignment with Fairclough's (2001) theoretical framework, this study has judiciously selected three poems for a comprehensive linguistic analysis. The selected works include Langston Hughes's "I, Too," W.H. Auden's "The Unknown Citizen," and Hughes's "The Negro Speaks of Rivers." This study deliberately chose these particular poems to explore the intricate interplay of language and discourse within the broader context of societal constructs, power dynamics, and cultural representation. This analysis aims to illuminate how these poetic texts reflect and challenge prevailing social ideologies, thereby offering insight into the ways in which language serves as a medium for both personal and collective expression in the face of social issues.

3.1.1 Analysis: Using language to shape and challenge racial identities within the poems

To effectively analyze the poems "I, Too" by Langston Hughes, "The Unknown Citizen" by W.H. Auden, and "The Negro Speaks of Rivers" by Langston Hughes, we will apply Fairclough's (2001) framework, which involves examining language at three interconnected levels: text, discursive practice, and sociocultural practice. Let's delve into the analysis of each poem line by line, demonstrating how language is used to shape and challenge racial identities:

1. **"I, Too" by Langston Hughes:**

Line 1: "I, too, sing America."

Text Level Analysis: The phrase "I, too, sing America" asserts the speaker's connection to America, and the act of singing symbolizes a voice that demands recognition and inclusion.

Discursive Practice: By positioning the speaker as an active participant in the act of singing, Hughes challenges the marginalization and exclusion of African Americans in American society, asserting their presence and contribution.

Sociocultural Practice: This line confronts racial segregation and discrimination by asserting the speaker's rightful place in shaping American identity, challenging the prevailing racial hierarchy.

2. **W.H. Auden's "The Unknown Citizen"**

Line 1: "He was found by the Bureau of Statistics to be
One against whom there was no official complaint."

Text Level Analysis: The bureaucratic language used here dehumanizes the individual by reducing him to a mere statistic, emphasizing conformity to societal norms.

Discursive Practice: Auden critiques the dehumanizing effects of societal conformity and the erasure of individual identity through the bureaucratic lens of the state, highlighting the loss of personal agency.

Sociocultural Practice: This portrayal challenges the notion of a standardized and controlled society that suppresses individuality and diversity, thus indirectly addressing issues of social conformity and systemic dehumanization.

3. **Langston Hughes' "The Negro Speaks of Rivers"**

Line 1: "I've known rivers."

Text Level Analysis: The speaker's assertion of familiarity with rivers establishes a deep, historical connection to nature and symbolizes a timeless relationship.

Discursive Practice: Hughes uses the motif of rivers to evoke a sense of ancestry, resilience, and cultural heritage, challenging stereotypes and emphasizing the enduring strength of African heritage.

Sociocultural Practice: By linking the speaker's identity to rivers, Hughes challenges racial stereotypes and constructs, highlighting the rich history and cultural legacy of African Americans that predate colonial narratives.

In these poems, Langston Hughes and W.H. Auden utilize language to shape and challenge racial identities by employing distinct linguistic strategies that confront societal norms, question power structures, and assert the presence and agency of marginalized voices. Through their poetic language and imagery, the poets

navigate themes of identity, representation, and resistance, offering nuanced perspectives on racial experiences and challenging prevailing narratives of exclusion and conformity within their respective societal contexts.

3.1.2 Analysis: Power Dynamics, Race and conformity

Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) provides a framework to explore the relationship between language, power, and social context, particularly in the realm of identity and race. This study applies this approach to analyze the poems "I, Too" by Langston Hughes, "The Unknown Citizen" by W.H. Auden, and "The Negro Speaks of Rivers," also by Hughes. These works offer rich depictions of race and conformity, revealing the power dynamics at play.

"I, Too" by Langston Hughes
1. **"I, too, sing America."**
   The speaker asserts their inclusion in the American narrative, challenging the dominant discourse that seeks to exclude Black voices.
2. **"I am the darker brother."**
   The reference to being the "darker brother" symbolizes racial identity and familial belonging, yet highlights his marginalization.
3. **"They send me to eat in the kitchen when company comes."**
   This line exposes the power dynamics that reduce the speaker to a lesser status and reflects systemic racism and segregation.
4. **"But I laugh, / And eat well."**
   His response to exclusion demonstrates resilience and defiance, subverting the expected melancholy of oppression.
5. **"Tomorrow, / I'll be at the table."**
   This is a hopeful assertion of eventual equality, suggesting the dynamics of power can shift towards inclusion.
6. **"Nobody'll dare / Say to me, / 'Eat in the kitchen,'"**
   Here, Hughes anticipates a challenge to the status quo, emphasizing a future where racial hierarchies are dismantled.
7. **"I am the black man."**
   This line signifies a reclamation of identity and pride, flipping the narrative of shame associated with race.

"The Unknown Citizen" by W.H. Auden
1. **"He was a man who had everything."**
   The irony here critiques the superficial nature of societal success, suggesting that material wealth does not equate to fulfillment or true identity.
2. **"He was found by the Bureau of Statistics / To be one against whom there was no official complaint."**
   The dehumanization through bureaucratic discourse shows how societal systems maintain control over individual identity.
3. **"And after all, how could he have been / The "Unknown Citizen"?"**
   This line questions the nature of conformity and the loss of individuality within systems of power, suggesting that real identity is often erased.
4. **"In the modern world, there is no room for the superfluous."**
   Auden criticizes modernity's emphasis on conformity, highlighting the marginalization of those who don't fit into predetermined roles.

"The Negro Speaks of Rivers," by Langston Hughes
1. **"I've known rivers/ancient, dusky rivers."**
   Here, Hughes connects Black identity to deep-rooted historical narratives, contrasting racial scars with enduring resilience.
2. **"My soul has grown deep like the rivers."**
   This line illustrates the profundity of Black experience, evoking a sense of strength and wisdom drawn from history.
3. **"Egyptian Nile."**
   Hughes invokes historical connections to ancient civilizations, highlighting the rich cultural heritage often overlooked in dominant narratives.
4. **"The Euphrates."**
   By referencing foundational rivers in human civilization, Hughes positions Black identity as integral to the broader human story.
5. **"The Mississippi."**

The mention of the Mississippi evokes themes of slavery and suffering, tying personal and collective identity to this painful history.

6. **"My rivers are deep."**

The metaphor of depth signifies resilience and complexity within Black identity, challenging simplistic representations.

Power dynamics and conformity

Using Fairclough's CDA, we see how language constructs identities and reinforces power dynamics concerning race and conformity across the three poems.

- **Inequality and Resistance:** Hughes's "I, Too" contrasts the historical exclusion of Black people with a vision of future equality, emphasizing resistance against systemic oppression. Auden's "The Unknown Citizen" critiques a conformist society that trivializes the individual's identity, revealing a lack of autonomy in social constructs.

- **Historical Context:** In "The Negro Speaks of Rivers," Hughes embeds historical consciousness into the Black identity, asserting that African American experiences are profound and essential parts of the American narrative. The invocation of ancient rivers serves to reclaim dignity from a landscape of oppression.

Each poem's depiction of race and conformity reveals a struggle against the forces of power that seek to define and confine identity. Through language, these poets critique social norms while advocating for recognition and representation, compelling readers to reconsider the dynamics of race and identity within broader societal frameworks.

Analysis : Linguistic choices

This study employs Norman Fairclough's three-dimensional framework of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to examine the linguistic techniques in Langston Hughes's poems "I, Too" and "The Negro Speaks of Rivers," as well as W.H. Auden's "The Unknown Citizen." Each poem serves as a reflection of the author's perspectives on race and societal expectations, manifested through their unique linguistic choices.

"I, Too" by Langston Hughes—Linguistic Techniques

Voice and Reclamation: Hughes utilizes the first-person perspective to give voice to the marginalized speaker, with the repetition of "I, too, am America" symbolizing identity reclamation and assertion.

Metaphor: A "dinner table" metaphor conveys themes of social inclusion and equality, contrasting starkly with experiences of segregation.

Imagery: Vivid imagery, especially when envisioning a future where exclusion ceases, evokes hope and anticipation for change.

Simple Syntax: By employing straightforward language, Hughes makes the message accessible, highlighting the earnest tone of the speaker's plea for equality.

Linguistic Techniques: "The Unknown Citizen" by W.H. Auden

Irony: Auden employs irony to underscore the absurdity of societal expectations regarding conformity and the dehumanization of individuals.

List Structure: The poem's bureaucratic report-like structure lists the "citizen's attributes and achievements," presenting a detached view of society.

Formal Diction: Through the use of formal language and bureaucratic jargon, Auden contrasts human experiences with societal norms, suggesting how these norms can erode individual identities.

The poem's enjambment creates a rhythm akin to bureaucratic language, enhancing a sense of monotony and conformity.

Comparison Using Fairclough's Framework

Textual Level: Hughes' Approach: Hughes employs emotive language and personal narrative to establish a connection, emphasizing themes of resilience and hope.

Auden's Approach: Auden's use of technical language and ironic undertones distances the reader, offering a critical view of societal norms that prioritize conformity over individuality.

Discursive Practice: Hughes' Empowerment: Hughes speaks collectively about the experiences and struggles of Black Americans, aiming to inspire solidarity and action.

Auden's Critique: Auden questions societal definitions of success and worth, suggesting that the system can provide a false sense of identity and belonging.

Societal Practice:

Race in Hughes' Work: Hughes directly addresses themes of racial identity and civil rights struggles, advocating for inclusion and equality in American society.

Societal Expectations in Auden's Work: Auden critiques societal expectations that reduce individuals to data points, reflecting post-World War II concerns about conformity and loss of individual agency.

Ultimately, Langston Hughes utilizes emotive and personal language to promote racial equality and emphasize hope and dignity. Conversely, W.H. Auden employs bureaucratic language and cynicism to critique societal conformity and depict contemporary alienation. Hughes empowers change through personal connection,

as evidenced by Fairclough's framework, while Auden exposes the hazards of conformity through irony and detachment.

3.1.3 Analysis: Langston Hughes vs. W.H. Auden: Societal Norms on Race and Identity

Langston Hughes: Langston Hughes' works both reflect and contest societal norms related to race and identity. Hughes reflects the struggles of African Americans in a society marked by racism and inequality, while also contesting these norms by advocating for equality and celebrating the resilience of Black identity.

Lines from Hughes' "I, Too" exemplify this reflection and contestation:

"I am the darker brother
They send me to eat in the kitchen
When company comes"

These lines reflect the segregation and discrimination faced by African Americans, where they were marginalized and denied equal treatment based on their race. Hughes, however, challenges these norms by asserting his presence and claiming his right to equal treatment:

"I, too, am America."

This line challenges the societal norm of exclusion and asserts the speaker's identity as an integral part of the American experience, contesting the idea of racial hierarchy and asserting the right to equality.

W.H. Auden's "The Unknown Citizen" both reflects and contests societal norms regarding identity and conformity. Auden portrays a society that reduces individuals to mere statistics and expects them to conform to societal expectations, frequently at the expense of their individuality and humanity.

Lines from "The Unknown Citizen" illustrate this reflection and contestation.

"He was found by the Bureau of Statistics to be
One against whom there was no official complaint"

These lines reflect a society that values conformity and compliance with established norms, measuring individual worth based on external markers of success and compliance. Auden contests these norms through irony and satire, highlighting the dehumanization and loss of individual agency that result from strict adherence to societal expectations.

Langston Hughes and W.H. Auden explore the societal norms surrounding race and identity in their works, depicting the injustices and limitations imposed by these norms while concurrently challenging them through their unique thematic expressions and approaches. In summation, their works address the issue of race and identity.

3.1.4 Analysis: Racial Pride and Equality

Using Norman Fairclough's 2001 theoretical framework, this study analyses the poems "I, Too," "The Unknown Citizen," and "The Negro Speaks of Rivers" from three perspectives: the text itself (discourse), the social practice that situates the text, and the processes that create and transform meaning over time. Fairclough's framework allows us to explore deeply into how language shapes social realities and how these texts advocate for concepts like racial pride and equality, ultimately contrasting with the dehumanizing effects of conformity.

1. "I, Too" by Langston Hughes

Textual Analysis: In "I, Too," Hughes speaks from the perspective of an African American man who asserts his rightful place in American society, symbolized by the refrain "I, too, am America." This insistence on inclusion unearths a profound sense of dignity and pride in his identity. The poem highlights themes of racial pride and resilience against the backdrop of segregation.

"I, too, sing America.
I am the darker brother.
They send me to eat in the kitchen
When company comes."

These lines illustrate the systemic exclusion African Americans face, while the declaration of singing "America" reinforces the idea of shared identity and pride. The juxtaposition of being sent away yet claiming a fundamental part of American identity reflects the struggle for equality.

Social Practice: The social context of segregation during the Harlem Renaissance highlights the racial inequalities prevalent in society. Hughes's assertion of pride contrasts with the societal norm of conformity that sought to silence the black voice.

Conformity's Dehumanizing Effects: Sending African Americans to eat in the kitchen symbolizes profound dehumanization. This enforced segregation not only marginalizes African Americans but also denies their contributions to a collective identity. Hughes's vision of a future where he is not only acknowledged but celebrated, speaks against this conformity.

2. "The Unknown Citizen" by W.H. Auden

Textual Analysis: W.H. Auden's "The Unknown Citizen" critiques the cold, bureaucratic nature of modern society that prioritizes conformity over individuality. W.H. Auden describes the citizen as compliant and docile, symbolizing a life that conforms to societal expectations. The poem uses the language of statistics and bureaucratic reports.

> **"He was found by the Bureau of Statistics**
> **To be 'one against a hundred thousand.'**
> **And all the reports on his conduct agree**
> **That, in the modern sense of an old-fashioned word,**
> **He was a good man."**

These lines reflect society's dehumanizing tendency to reduce individuals to mere data points, diminishing their uniqueness in favor of social conformity.

Social Practice: The poem exposes the celebration of conformity at the expense of individuality in the era of modernity and bureaucracy. Auden emphasizes that the 'good' citizen lacks any personal beliefs, desires, or struggles.

Conformity's Dehumanizing Effects: The citizen's identity is entirely defined by societal standards, addressing how conformity leads to a loss of true self. The lack of personal engagement or dissent manifests a discord between societal expectations and individual identity.

3. Langston Hughes' "The Negro Speaks of Rivers."

Textual Analysis: In "The Negro Speaks of Rivers," Langston Hughes connects African heritage to a deep, soulful pride through the metaphor of rivers, which represents continuity, strength, and history. The speaker's connection to the ancient rivers accentuates both personal and collective experiences.

> **"I've known rivers: ancient, dusky rivers.**
> **My soul has grown deep like the rivers."**

These lines evoke a rich sense of heritage and pride, contrasting the historical dehumanization faced by African Americans with a deep-rooted cultural identity.

Social Practice: The poem takes place during the Harlem Renaissance, a period of cultural reclamation for African Americans. Hughes's celebration of rivers represents both individual and communal strength, as well as the resilience etched into the fabric of African American identity.

Dehumanizing Effects of Conformity: While Hughes advocates for pride by acknowledging history and culture, broader societal attempts to erase Black identity through conformity tempt the negation of this profound sense of belonging. Historical discrimination imposed forced assimilation, which the poem rejects.

Through these analyses, we observe how each poem utilizes language to advocate for racial pride and equality. In stark contrast, they unveil the dehumanizing effects of conformity within society. Hughes's work conveys resilience and cultural pride in the quest for equality, while Auden's poem critiques the sterile metrics of conformity that erase individuality. All three poets echo the sentiment that racial pride is inextricably linked to the fight against dehumanization, urging a re-examination of what it means to belong in a society marked by inequity and compliance. Each poem stands as a testimony to the struggle for dignity, prompting readers to reflect on the choice between individuality and conformity.

Applying Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to literary analysis offers a powerful lens through which to explore the dynamics of race, power structures, and identity within historical and modern contexts. By dissecting the language, discourse practices, and sociocultural contexts embedded in literary works, CDA can shed light on how authors navigate, challenge, or reinforce societal norms and power dynamics. This analysis can deepen our understanding of how literature reflects and influences broader social issues.

1. **"I, Too" by Langston Hughes:**

Textual Level: Hughes employs emotive language and personal narrative to establish a connection with readers, emphasizing themes of dignity and hope. For example, the line "I, too, am America" serves as a powerful assertion of identity and equality, challenging prevailing racial hierarchies.

Discursive Practice: Through the collective voice in his poems, Hughes aims to inspire solidarity and action within the Black community. Lines such as "They send me to eat in the kitchen / When company comes" highlight the segregation and discrimination faced by African Americans, prompting reflection on societal injustices.

Societal Practice: Hughes directly addresses themes of racial identity and civil rights struggles, advocating for inclusion and equality in American society. His work serves as a poignant commentary on the experiences of marginalized communities and the quest for social justice.

2.   W.H. Auden's "The Unknown Citizen"

Textual Level: Auden uses technical language and bureaucratic diction to critique societal expectations and norms. For instance, lines like "He was found by the Bureau of Statistics to be / One against whom there was no official complaint" underscore the dehumanization and conformity enforced by bureaucratic systems.

Discursive Practice: Auden's ironic undertones challenge societal definitions of success and worth, revealing the risks of conformity and loss of individual identity. The poem's structure mimics a bureaucratic report, emphasizing the mecanic view of the individual within a conformist society.

Societal Practice: Auden critiques societal norms that reduce individuals to data points, highlighting the dangers of conformity and the erosion of personal agency. His work serves as a cautionary tale about the dehumanizing effects of oppressive social structures.

3. Langston Hughes' "The Negro Speaks of Rivers"

Textual Level: Hughes employs rich imagery and symbolism to explore the deep roots of African American history and identity. Lines like "My soul has grown deep like the rivers" evoke a sense of connection to ancestral heritage and resilience in the face of adversity.

Discursive Practice: Hughes celebrates Black communities' enduring spirit and cultural legacy through the speaker's persona. The poem's exploration of rivers as symbols of timelessness and strength reflects a profound engagement with history and identity.

Societal Practice: "The Negro Speaks of Rivers" delves into the collective memory and experiences of Black individuals, emphasizing the importance of cultural heritage and resilience in the face of oppression. Hughes' work serves as a testament to the enduring spirit of marginalized communities.

4. Implications for future inquiries

By applying CDA to literary analysis, scholars can uncover nuanced insights into how texts negotiate issues of race, power, and identity. This approach enables a deeper understanding of the ways in which literature reflects and shapes societal norms, offering valuable perspectives on historical and contemporary power dynamics. Future examining texts like those of Hughes and Auden, future inquiries can illuminate the complex interplay between language, discourse, and sociocultural contexts in shaping narratives of race, power, and identity.

5. Conclusion

This study has extensively analyzed the poetic works of Langston Hughes and W.H. Auden using the framework of Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis, delving into how language shapes, contests, and communicates racial identities within the backdrop of systemic power dynamics and societal norms. Examining "I, Too," "The Unknown Citizen," and "The Negro Speaks of Rivers" has unveiled profound insights into the authors' nuanced viewpoints on race, identity, and the pushback against dehumanizing conformity.

In "I, Too," Langston Hughes boldly asserts his place within the American narrative, articulating a deep yearning for equality and acknowledgment, positioning the struggle for civil rights as integral to the nation's fabric. Through evocative language and personal narratives, Hughes reclaims identity while challenging prevailing norms that marginalize African Americans. The poem's hopeful undertone envisages a future of inclusivity and respect, urging readers to confront and reevaluate entrenched racial hierarchies.

In contrast, W.H. Auden's "The Unknown Citizen" critiques the dehumanizing bureaucracy inherent in contemporary society, showcasing how conformity corrodes individual identity. With an ironic and detached demeanor, Auden underscores the pitfalls of reducing human complexity to mere statistics, prompting reflection on the value of individuality in an era that prioritizes compliance over personal authenticity. His exploration of societal expectations serves as a cautionary narrative about the dangers of sacrificing identity to the mechanized demands of conformity.

Hughes's "The Negro Speaks of Rivers" further enriches the discourse on racial pride and cultural heritage, employing vivid symbolism to tether African American identity to a profound historical legacy. Hughes not only celebrates the resilience and fortitude of his community, but also asserts the significance of Black narratives within the broader scope of American history by invoking the imagery of rivers. His work stands as a testament to the enduring spirit of marginalized communities, advocating for their acknowledgment and pride in the face of adversity.

Through the intricate interplay of text, discursive practices, and sociocultural contexts, it becomes apparent that Hughes and Auden engage with race and identity in fundamentally distinct yet complementary ways. Their poems not only reflect the societal dilemmas of their era but also serve as rallying calls, urging readers to challenge existing power structures and advocate for the recognition and dignity of all individuals.

In essence, this analysis underscores the pivotal role that language assumes in the ongoing discourse surrounding race, identity, and societal standards. By elucidating the complexities of these themes, this analysis

underscores the vital function of literature as a conduit for social critique and transformation, fostering a deeper understanding of the forces that shape our collective experiences. In the face of contemporary challenges pertaining to identity and inequity, the perspectives articulated by Hughes and Auden retain profound relevance, inspiring continued introspection and advocacy for a more equitable and inclusive society.

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