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"Dama Ninao" est une revue scientifique interdisciplinaire qui accepte et publie tous les articles relevant des Lettres, Arts et Sciences Humaines. A cet effet, elle s'intéresse aux études et théories littéraires, linguistiques, sociologiques, philosophiques, anthropologiques et historico-géographiques. La Revue "Dama Ninao", entendu "L'Entente" en langue kabyè du Nord Togo, est créée dans l'intention de matérialiser la mondialisation ou la globalisation qui s'opère avec l'esprit d'équipe et d'échanges et la désuétude du monde autarcique. Le monde scientifique universitaire ne peut échapper à cet esprit d'équipe qui fonde un creuset où « le fer aiguise le fer », les échanges se croisent, puis s'entremêlent pour aboutir à une reconstruction des connaissances scientifiques individuelles dans la collectivité.

La Revue Dama Ninao nous renvoie à la Civilisation de l'Universel du poète sénégalais Léopold Sédar Senghor, qui prône la porosité des âmes avec l'acceptation de l'autre, de ce qu'il dispose d'utile pour mon avancement : sa civilisation, sa culture, sa langue ... Elle se fonde notamment sur la philosophie de Paul Ricœur qui préconise la perception de Soi-même comme un autre. Considérer soi-même comme un autre aux yeux de l'autre, nous amènerait à faire taire nos distensions et ressentiments afin de redimensionner notre espace, reconstruire notre histoire et notre société.

La Revue Dama Ninao s'est inspirée de la nature. Des insectes en miniature nous produisent de bels chefs-d'œuvre architecturaux, conjuguent leur génie créateur et leur force dans la patience et dans la tolérance. Ils créent des œuvres monumentales qui dépassent l'entendement humain, les termitières. A cet effet, la nature semble nous parler, nous guider, nous instruire dans le silence. Seules ces créations nous interpellent sans autant faire de nous des disciples. Comme la termitière qui, pour la plupart du temps, est une composante de maillons surgissant de la même matière, la Revue Dama Ninao se veut une termitière scientifique dont les enseignants-chercheurs en sont les maillons.

Au confluent de diverses sciences, la Revue Dama Ninao se propose de promouvoir la recherche scientifique et universitaire en impulsant le dialogue interdisciplinaire, le dialogue entre divers champs disciplinaires et divers contributeurs du monde universitaire.

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La taille des articles

Volume : 10 à 15 pages ; interligne 1.5, police 12 pour le corps du texte et les courtes citations ; police 11 pour les longues citations, Times New Roman, les références des citations doivent être incorporées dans le texte. Exemple : Guy Rocher (1968, p. 29), pas de référence en foot-notes à l'exception de quelques commentaires.

Ordre logique du texte

- Un **TITRE** en caractère d'imprimerie et en gras. Le titre ne doit pas être trop long ;
- **Nom et prénom(s)** du contributeur ou des contributeurs, **nom de l'institution** d'appartenance, **adresse mail**
- Un **Résumé (Abstract)** de 8 lignes en français et anglais, en interligne simple, suivi de 6 **Mots clés (Key words)**
- Une **Introduction** : elle doit avoir une problématique, une méthode et une structure.
- Un **Développement** : les articulations du développement du texte doivent-être titrées comme suit :

1-Pour le **Titre** de la première section

1-1-Pour le **Titre** de la première sous-section

1-2- Pour le **Titre** de la deuxième sous-section

2- Pour le **Titre** de la deuxième section

2-1-Pour le **Titre** de la première sous-section

2-2- Pour le **Titre** de la deuxième sous-section

3- Pour le **Titre** de la troisième section (si l'auteur de l'article le souhaite)

-Une **Conclusion** : elle doit être courte, précise et concise en mettant en relief l'authenticité des résultats de la recherche.

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En cas d'utilisation des tableaux, ceux-ci doivent être numérotés en chiffre romains selon l'ordre de leur apparition dans le texte. Ils doivent comporter un titre précis et une source. Les schémas et illustrations doivent être numérotés en chiffres arabes selon l'ordre de leur apparition dans le texte.

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Les instructeurs à qui la revue affecte les articles de leur spécialité, doivent les lire avec rigueur, rejeter tout article dont le contenu est en inadéquation avec le titre et/ou dont le raisonnement n'offre pas une qualité scientifique, faire des propositions pour l'amélioration dudit article, renvoyer l'auteur de l'article à la ligne éditoriale de la revue au cas où elle n'est pas respectée. Ils se doivent notamment de vérifier, par le biais d'internet, si le même article n'est pas déjà publié dans une revue en ligne.

Objectifs et portée

La revue Dama Ninao, de par son nom qui signifie « entente », a pour objectifs :

- de matérialiser le monde universitaire qui est un creuset où « le fer aiguise le fer », les échanges se croisent, puis s'entremêlent pour aboutir à une reconstruction des connaissances scientifiques individuelles dans la collectivité ;
- de promouvoir la recherche scientifique et universitaire en impulsant le dialogue interdisciplinaire, le dialogue entre divers champs disciplinaires et divers contributeurs du monde universitaire.

La revue Dama Ninao a une portée scientifique et sociale. A cet effet, elle publie tous les articles relevant des Lettres, Arts et Sciences Humaines et s'intéresse aux études et théories littéraires, linguistiques, sociologiques, philosophiques, anthropologiques et historico-géographiques sur appel à contribution thématique (colloque) ou varia. Elle est un espace de rencontre, de construction et de reconstruction des réseaux relationnels et scientifiques.

Professeur Koutchoukalo TCHASSIM

Université de Lomé

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BEYOND THE CLASSICAL VIEW OF METAPHOR IN *THEIR EYES WERE WATCHING GOD* BY ZORA NEALE HURSTON: A COGNITIVELY CONSTRUCTED APPROACH

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Abstract: The paper explores the metaphorical landscape of Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God* through a cognitively constructed framework, moving beyond classical metaphor theories that prioritize linguistic forms over cognitive processes. The study adopts the Cognitive Linguistics to examine Hurston's work, challenging the traditional rhetorical interpretation of metaphor as merely a figure of speech. It views metaphor as a fundamental cognitive mechanism, an essential means by which language and thought interconnect to shape human understanding and perception. So doing, the paper contributes to the discourse on metaphor, emphasizing the significance of cognitive processes in interpreting literary texts.

Key words: Classical, cognitive, discourse, linguistics, metaphor, rhetorical.

**AU-DELÀ DE LA CONCEPTION CLASSIQUE DE LA MÉTAPHORE
DANS *THEIR EYES WERE WATCHING GOD* DE ZORA NEALE
HURSTON : UNE APPROCHE CONSTRUITE DE FAÇON COGNITIVE**

Résumé : L'article explore le paysage métaphorique de *Their Eyes Were Watching God* de Zora Neale Hurston à travers une perspective construite de façon cognitive, dépassant les théories classiques de la métaphore qui privilégient souvent les formes linguistiques au détriment des processus cognitifs. L'étude adopte la Linguistique Cognitive pour examiner l'œuvre de Hurston, remettant en question l'interprétation rhétorique traditionnelle de la métaphore comme simple figure de style. Elle considère la métaphore comme un mécanisme cognitif fondamental, un moyen essentiel par lequel le langage et la pensée s'interconnectent pour façonner la compréhension et la perception humaine. L'article contribue alors au discours sur la métaphore, soulignant l'importance des processus cognitifs dans l'interprétation des textes littéraires.

Mots-clés : Classique, cognitive, discours, linguistique, métaphore, rhétorique.

Introduction

Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God* stands as a profound exploration of metaphor based on memory, agency, and identity within the African American experience. Traditionally, metaphor is analyzed through classical theories that emphasize its linguistic aspects, treating it primarily as a stylistic device. Such traditional approach, however, overlooks the cognitive processes that underpin metaphorical understanding and its role in shaping human perception. This paper proposes a cognitively constructed approach to metaphor in Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, positing that metaphors serve not merely as figures of speech but as fundamental cognitive mechanisms that facilitate the intertwining of language and thought. It is conducted using Cognitive Linguistics, a linguistic framework that views language as an integral part of cognition, emphasizing the relationship between language, the mind, and the individual's experience of the world.

Cognitive Linguistics posits that meaning is not just a matter of linguistic symbols but is deeply grounded in human experience, perception, and cultural context. It advances metaphor theory, proposing that metaphors are more than mere figures of speech. These are fundamental to human thought processes, highlighting how people use metaphoric language to express complex ideas. While Mark Johnson, Ronald Langacker, Eve Sweetser, Dirk Geeraerts are viewed as advocates of Cognitive Linguistics, George Lakoff is positioned as a pivotal figure in the said theory. They have all significantly contributed to the metaphor theory and the role of embodied experience in human cognition.

Their Eyes Were Watching God is rich with intricate metaphors that not only reflect the psychological states of its discourse participants, but also engage readers in a complex emotional landscape. Investigating metaphors therein prompts to explore how these metaphors function at a cognitive level, influencing the way both *Their Eyes Were Watching God*'s interlocutors and readers perceive and interact with crucial themes. To guide this exploration, the following questions are asked: To what extent does Hurston's use of metaphor challenge traditional understandings of

metaphor as a literary device? What cognitive processes are activated in readers as they encounter and interpret the metaphors in *Their Eyes Were Watching God*? In what way does specific metaphor like temporal metaphor in *Their Eyes Were Watching God* function as a cognitive tool to construct identity? Answers to these questions are provided in a tripartite articulation, the first of which deals with classical understandings of metaphor as literary device. The second articulation offers a framework for processing metaphor at a cognitive level. With temporal metaphor viewed as a cognitive tool, issue like identity is addressed in the third articulation.

1- Classical Understandings of Metaphor

In Eoghan Ryan's (2023) understandings, a metaphor is a literary device that makes a non-literal comparison between two unlike things to suggest a similarity or shared characteristics. It's a way, according to Eoghan Ryan (2023), of describing something by relating it to something else, enhancing understanding or creating vivid imagery. Unlike simile, which uses comparison cues such as 'like' or 'as', a metaphor states that one thing is another, creating a more direct and impactful connection without using 'like' or 'as'. Metaphor then appears to be a powerful tool of language so that language users use it all the time, often without noticing. Its everyday frequency of usage is striking that some fall into popular idiom termed 'day-to-day speech'. This opens the door to agree with Ivor Armstrong Richards (1936, p. 92): "Metaphor is the omnipresent principle of language... We cannot get three sentences of ordinary fluid discourse without it". Richards insists on the 'day-to-day speech' characteristics of metaphor, admitting that "Even in the rigid language of settled sciences we do not eliminate or prevent it without great difficulty". This seems to insinuate that metaphor is hardly detachable from language.

Typically, a metaphor has two parts: tenor and vehicle. The tenor is the subject or idea that is being described. It's the thing that the metaphor is about. It's the subject being compared to something else. One thinks of it as the 'thing' being discussed, the topic in the comparison. As for the vehicle, it is the figurative term or image that is used to represent the subject being described, known as the tenor. Metaphor,

structured like this, has the ability of being an indispensable tool of language that enriches both communication and artistic expression. By drawing connections between seemingly disparate concepts, metaphors add beauty to language. This confers to metaphor its aesthetic function in Discourse.

1-1- The Aesthetic Portrayal of Janie Crawford

Discourse participant like Janie Crawford is central to Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God*. This central participant is aesthetically portrayed through stylistic device known as metaphor. The prepositional phrase 'the life of men' as in the passage "At first it might seem contradictory that a work whose central character is the remarkably resolute and resilient Janie Crawford should start with a dictum about "the life of men"" (Zora Neale Hurston, p. xi) is an illustration. In one perspective, 'the life of men' is a dictum as suggested by the underlying passage. But, in another perspective, 'the life of men' is nothing but a metaphor which can be rephrased as follows: Janie Crawford is the life of men, where 'Janie Crawford' is the *tenor* and, 'the life of men', the *vehicle* regarding the structure of classical metaphor.

The aesthetic quality of metaphors enriches discourse of both written and spoken language, transforming ordinary expressions into evocative imagery. In fact, the aesthetic quality of metaphors in discourse primarily resides in their formal, visual, and compositional properties that engage the reader or listener beyond mere conceptual understanding. This aesthetic dimension involves how metaphors are structured; how they appear as creative, artistic forms that bring an emotional or sensory appeal to language, contributing to the discourse's expressiveness and coherence. William Grey (2000), focusing on the aesthetic trait of metaphor, highlights Thomas Hobbes' observation on the issue. He puts:

According to the empiricist view championed by Hobbes metaphor is at best an ornament to language. While metaphor may help us to express ourselves more forcefully or more colourfully, Hobbes and his successors claimed that it is an ornament fraught with dangers, and if we are to express ourselves as rational thinkers metaphors are best eschewed. Metaphor, on this view, is a dangerous deviation from the reliable literal resources of natural language and we should restrict ourselves to these literal resources in the systematic pursuit of truth. (William Grey, 2000, p. 2)

William Grey's (2000, p. 2) alignment with Thomas Hobbes on the fact that "metaphor is at best an ornament to language", pertains to the beauty of language expressed through metaphor. This even restricts language to its ornamental function and nothing else. Rightly, in Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, the ornamental function of language conveyed by metaphorical devices do not lack; and even the personality of the main discourse participant, Janie Crawford, notably, is ornamentally portrayed in a metaphorical way. That ornamental portrayal can be explored through the lens of physical description and mixed-race identity.

1-2- Physical Description and Mixed-Race Identity

Through the metaphor 'Janie Crawford is the life of men', Janie is presented as a woman any conscious and ambitious man would like to spouse. Janie Crawford, visibly, is crafted to challenge conventional portrayals of African American women in literature. In fact, the physical portrayal of Janie is intrinsically linked to her mixed-race heritage and its symbolic significance. Zora Neale Hurston (1937, p. xxv), describing Janie, does not exaggerate: "for most black women readers discovering *Their Eyes* for the first time, what was most compelling was the figure of Janie Crawford—powerful, articulate, self-reliant, and radically different from any woman character they had ever before encountered in literature". These characteristics position her uniquely within the social hierarchy of her community. Janie's physical appearance thus becomes a recurring aesthetic element that symbolizes both her beauty and her difference from other women in her community.

Hurston's characterization acknowledges the complex dynamics of colorism within African American communities so that, even Janie's peers whose one category are "black women readers", admit it. They cannot but admire the "powerful, articulate, self-reliant, and radically different" figure of Janie. As the dynamics of colorism involves Janie's portrayal, Hurston makes use of specific word like 'Mulatto', a colorism term to address that dynamics as seen in "it was about a woman who wasn't pathetic, wasn't a tragic mulatto, who defied everything that was expected of her" (Zora Neale Hurston, 1937, p. xxvi). The negative infinitive

sentence ‘Not to be a tragic mulatto’ conveyed by “wasn’t a tragic mulatto” equals the suggested affirmative infinitive sentence ‘To be a pretty mulatto’. Understanding ‘To be a pretty mulatto’ requires the definition of the colorism term ‘Mulatto’.

Mulatto historically refers to a person of mixed black and white ancestry, whose skin tone is typically light brown or caramel-colored, though the specific shade can vary significantly. The term originated from the Spanish and Portuguese word *mulato*, meaning ‘mule’ and reflecting colonial-era attempts to classify race. However, due to its associations with slavery and its origins in racist taxonomy, the term ‘mulatto’ is now widely considered offensive, and many people prefer using terms like ‘biracial’ or ‘multiracial’. Anyway, the elevation of the mulatto aesthetic reflects longstanding social stratifications linked to beauty, status, and acceptance. It highlights light-skinned mixed-race individuals, perpetuating ideals tied to whiteness while occasionally celebrating hybridity’s unique beauty. It even denotes a mixed-race heritage in terms of beauty, which is often shaped by Eurocentric norms.

Beauty is often shaped by Eurocentric norms as beauty traits like lighter skin, straighter hair, and European facial features are valorized as closer to dominant societal beauty standards by those who seem to hold the power. As Andrene Loiten (2017, p. 1) observes: “It is argued that beauty is subjective, which is true. However, that subjectivity can be, and is often, impacted by those who hold power”. Those who hold the power are none but Europeans according to Andrene Loiten (2017). Indeed, Andrene Loiten’s (2017) observation aligns with that of Tracy Owens Patton (2006) according to which the conceptualization of beauty is contingent upon the dominant criteria established by the ruling class. This, consequently, influences the perceptions of individuals situated on the periphery of the ruling class who are incapable of attaining the physical ideal represented by that class. ‘Janie Crawford is the life of men’ can also be explored by focusing on both the nature and the natural imagery.

1-3- Relationship with Nature and Natural Imagery

One of the most significant aesthetic elements in Janie’s portrayal is her connection to natural imagery, particularly the ‘pear tree’, visible in the following:

“He looked like the love thoughts of women. He could be a bee to a blossom—a pear tree blossom in the spring... He was a glance from God” (Zora Neale Hurston, p. 126). In this, the personal subject pronoun ‘He’ refers to Janie’s third and last husband: Tea Cake. Although the stressed excerpt does not straightforwardly refer to Janie, it has, through the ‘pear tree’ symbolism, the merit of making a love connection between Tea Cake and Janie. In effect, the ‘pear tree’ is a pivotal symbol that encapsulates Janie Crawford’s ideals of love, fulfillment, and self-discovery. It represents Janie’s vision of an ideal romantic relationship, characterized by harmony and mutual respect. It also underscores the theme of growth and self-discovery.

Just as the tree flourishes in the right conditions, Janie’s journey toward self-actualization is contingent upon her pursuit of genuine love. This relationship with nature reflects her intrinsic connection to her own identity and desires. As one can see, the pear tree embodies a perfect moment in nature, characterized by erotic energy, passionate interaction, and blissful harmony. All this contributes to build Janie’s sexual awakening and her idealized vision of love and fulfillment. The pear tree, thus, symbolizes Janie’s burgeoning sexuality, her idealized view of love, and her overall personal growth. As a sixteen-year-old, Janie experiences a sexual awakening while lying beneath the blooming pear tree. She observes the bees interacting with the blossoms and envisions marriage as a passionate, harmonious union. As it can be observed, Janie’s portrayal is exploited with the lens of understanding how rhetorical device like metaphor functions classically, aesthetically. The lines that follow process the exploitation of metaphor not aesthetically, but cognitively.

2- The Metaphor Process at a Cognitive Level

While traditional metaphor involves a direct comparison between two unlike things, suggesting that one is the other, cognitive metaphor posits that metaphor is not just a linguistic expression but a fundamental mechanism of human thought. It suggests that one understands abstract concepts through more concrete experiences. So, processing metaphor at a cognitive level involves mapping abstract concepts onto

more concrete experiences through systematic connections, making metaphor a core part of thought, not just language, allowing both writers and readers to structure and reason about complex ideas. As Musolff Andreas observes:

Metaphor was no longer seen as ephemeral to a theory of meaning but as being among our principal vehicles for understanding our physical, social and inner world by ‘mapping’ conceptual structures from a relatively familiar, experientially grounded ‘source domain’ onto a more abstract or less well-known ‘target domain’. (Musolff Andreas, 2012, p. 302)

Musolff Andreas’ understanding of metaphor is built on a core principle known as the ‘mapping process’ which suggests that metaphor functions through systematic mapping of structures from one mental domain to another. So, by mapping the source onto the target, one makes use of what he/she knows about physical reality to reason about abstract ideas. On the way of processing metaphor cognitively, agency plays a fundamental role.

2-1-Agency Role in Cognitive Metaphor

Linguistics agency refers to the capacity of a noun viewed as ‘agent’ to initiate or perform an action, crucial for understanding roles and motivations, highlighting how language structures responsibility and meaning. This moves beyond mere syntax to show how agents influence events, whether through active subjects or implied forces in passive/intransitive forms. Agency, writes Roy Bhaskar (1989, p. 81), is “the intentional causal intervention in the world, subject to the possibility of a reflexive monitoring of that intervention”. Roy Bhaskar’s statement on agency reflects agency as an Intentional Causal Intervention (ICI), holding, on the one hand the term ‘Intentional’ as deliberate action, highlighting human intention behind decisions making. On the other hand, it is meant by the nominal ‘Causal Intervention’ actions that have an impact on the world around us, implying that individuals can affect change. Rightly, in Zora Neale Hurston’s *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, agency conveys an Intentional Causal Intervention. It is metaphorically constructed to highlight its cognitive trait.

2-2- Agency Metaphor as Intentional Causal Intervention

Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God* offers an exploration of agency through the experiences of its main discourse participant: Janie Crawford. The metaphor of agency as 'Intentional Causal Intervention' can be applied to Janie's journey, illustrating her struggle for self-identity and empowerment against societal constraints. The following reference excerpt is an example of metaphorical construction of agency as Intentional Causal Intervention: "I used to climb to the top of one of the huge chinaberry trees which guarded our front gate and look out over the world. The most interesting thing that I saw was the horizon. It grew upon me that I ought to walk out to the horizon and see what the end of the world was like" (Zora Neale Hurston, 1991, p. 27). This passage, even not pointed out as a systematic reference of Hurston's original *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, has the merit of being analyzed.

The passage describes Janie Crawford's childhood experience of climbing a chinaberry tree and gazing at the horizon, symbolizing her yearning for exploration, freedom, and self-discovery. This moment serves as a metaphor for understanding her agency. The horizon represents Janie's deepest desires and aspirations. It symbolizes a future filled with possibilities beyond the constraints of her immediate environment. In fact, Roy Bhaskar's (1989) conceptualization of agency as 'Intentional Causal Intervention' highlights how Janie's longing to reach the horizon reflects her intentionality in pursuing her dreams and identity. Plus, Janie's decision to "walk out to the horizon" signifies her proactive approach to life. This metaphor emphasizes her desire to take control of her destiny, illustrating the notion of agency as an active force. By contemplating the horizon, Janie recognizes that she possesses the power to shape her future, which aligns with Hurston's thematic exploration of self-empowerment.

The agency metaphor analysis showcases that the act of "looking out over the world" from the tree implies a moment of contemplation and reflection. Janie's awareness of her surroundings and her yearning to "see what the end of the world

was like” underscores her capacity for reflexivity. This self-awareness represents a key aspect for agency realization. It allows Janie to evaluate her circumstances, leading to informed decisions about her relationships and life choices. While the horizon signifies freedom and potential, it also serves as a reminder of the limitations imposed by her reality. One is aware of the fact that Janie’s journey is fraught with societal constraints such as gender, race, and class. So, acknowledging the metaphor ‘horizon’ suggests her understanding of these boundaries, further enhancing her agency as she seeks to transcend them.

The chinaberry tree symbolizes Janie’s growth and the safe space from which she observes the world. “Climbing the tree” can be interpreted as a metaphor for her ascent to self-awareness and empowerment. It foreshadows her later struggles and triumphs as she seeks to establish her own identity outside societal constraints. As one can see, the underlying reference riddled with metaphor serves as a poignant encapsulation of Janie Crawford’s journey toward self-discovery and empowerment. Through the metaphor of ‘horizon’ and her act of ‘climbing the tree’, Hurston illustrates agency viewed ‘intentional causal intervention’. So, Janie’s longing to explore beyond her immediate environment reflects her intentional causal interventions, positioning her as an active participant for her life.

Agency then appears to be that catalyst even able to bring significant changes to Janie’s life. As Iryna Alyeksyeyeva (2025, p. 6) puts: “agency is one of the central issues of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) where is it defined as the ability to act and to bring about change with agent being the person or the entity who/which stands behind change and causes it”. From this, it is understood that agency is helpful in taking initiatives for bringing changes. The idea is that language is not just passive reflection but an active tool, enabling individuals, say agents to use discourse strategically to create new meanings and drive social change. Besides agency, linguistic expressivity can resonate with cognitive metaphor.

2-3- Cognitive Metaphor-based Linguistic Expressivity

Linguistic expressivity pertains to the ability of language to articulate the speaker's emotions, attitudes, and subjective significances that extend beyond mere informational transmission. It thus elucidates the mechanisms through which languages employ form to impart additional sensory, evaluative, emotional, or informational subtleties that transcend propositional contents. This definition of expressivity aligns with Margaret Apresyan's understanding on the matter. She puts: "Expressiveness is a cluster of semantic-stylistics features of a linguistic unit, and these features enable the given linguistic unit to convey the subjective attitude of the speaker to the content of the utterance or the addressee in speech" (Margaret Apresyan, 2018, p. 8). By employing the term 'expressiveness' instead of 'expressivity', Margaret Apresyan (2018) draws the attention that 'expressivity' and 'expressiveness' are linguistic terms that can be used interchangeably.

Equating expressivity with 'semantic-stylistics features' as admitted by Margaret Apresyan, is a way to insinuate that words, sounds, or grammatical structures possess inherent, combined qualities that go beyond literal meaning to convey the speaker's subjective emotions, attitudes, or evaluations. It acts as a stylistic, non-denotative component that adds intensity, imagery, and emotional color to speech, distinguishing it from neutral communication. This is perceived in what Janie sees: "dust-bearing bee sink into the sanctum of a bloom" (Zora Neale Hurston, p. 14). In effect, when Janie sees the "dust-bearing bee sink into the sanctum of a bloom," she is not just observing nature; she is using a cognitive frame to categorize her own internal 'stirrings'. Her expressivity is heightened because she lacks a formal vocabulary for female desire in the restrictive atmosphere of Nanny's house; Nanny being Janie's grandmother. By mapping her body onto the tree, she creates a linguistic space for her own agency.

The expressivity encapsulated in "dust-bearing bee sink into the sanctum of a bloom" is metaphorically oriented at a cognitive level in the sense that source domains such as blossoming, pollination, and rooting of a tree, are mapped onto target

domains like female puberty, sexual awakening, and emotional fulfillment. This metaphor can be interpreted cognitively as it allows Hurston to bypass the ‘clinical’ or ‘sociological’ descriptions of black womanhood, instead grounding Janie’s identity in a natural, inevitable, and flourishing physical reality. Likewise, in the passage where Janie wants to “walk out to the horizon and see what the end of the world was like” (Zora Neale Hurston, 1991, p. 27), the linguistic expressivity stems from the tension between verticality symbolized by ‘climbing the tree’ and horizontality symbolized by ‘the world that stretches out’.

‘Climbing the tree’ conveys the idea of any orientation described by the particle ‘up’. This particle spans from literal spatial verticality to abstract metaphorical meanings, including completion and orientation. It functions within phrasal verbs to indicate finality or improvement. In addition to this, cognitive linguistics suggests that ‘up’ is often mapped to ‘Power’ or ‘Control’. So, by climbing the tree to see the horizon, Janie is cognitively seeking a position of power to survey her own potential path.

3- Temporal Metaphor for Identity Construction

In Zora Neale Hurston’s *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, specific metaphors serve as cognitive tools to address complex issues related to identity. As the exploration of the specific metaphors goes on, attention is particularly drawn on temporal metaphor. Temporal metaphors structure how individuals perceive and communicate about the passage of time. When this is done at a cognitive level, the meaning at stake becomes striking.

3-1- Identity Construction through Flashbacks and Memories

Hurston constructs African American women’s identity through temporal metaphor which is referenced with terms such as ‘flashbacks’ and ‘memories’. Focusing on ‘flashbacks’ and ‘memories’, Janie’s personality is revealed by laying understanding on how Janie’s past experiences inform her present identity. Even if

the term ‘flashbacks’ is not mentioned in the following passage, a related idea is still present:

And since women “remember everything they don’t want to forget,” Janie Crawford recalls all the crucial moments of her life, from the time she first discovers that she is a “colored” little girl by searching for her face in a group photograph, to the moment she returns to Eatonville, Florida, from the Everglades, not swindled and deceived, as had been expected, but heartbroken, yet boldly defiant, after having toiled in the bean fields, survived a hurricane, and lost the man she loved. (Zora Neale Hurston, 1937, p. xi – xii)

Hurston begins his novel with the assertion that women “remember everything they don’t want to forget”. This opening sets up the flashback mechanism as a way for Janie to reclaim her narrative from the town gossips, establishing that she defines her own identity rather than letting the community do it for her. In fact, the phrase “women remember everything they don’t want to forget” underscores how memory is integral to identity formation. For Janie, her recollections are not merely retrospective but are foundational to her understanding of herself as a Black woman in a society that constantly marginalizes her.

The cognitive mapping evolves as, by recalling pivotal moments, Janie constructs a discourse of resilience and survival. Each memory, from realizing her racial identity to enduring the trials of love and loss, contributes to her evolving sense of self within the framework of her cultural experiences. Janie’s realization that she is a “colored” girl while searching for her face signifies a profound awareness of racial identity. This moment highlights the social constraints imposed on African Americans, particularly women, and reflects a broader societal discourse about race. Plus, Janie’s journey encapsulates the dual burdens of race and gender. Her struggles are indicative of the larger historical context in which Black women navigate both racism and sexism. The passage thus emphasizes that her identity is not formed in isolation but is deeply influenced by the societal structures surrounding her.

Janie’s return to Eatonville as “boldly defiant” indicates a transformation. Despite her heartache, she embodies strength and autonomy. This resilience against societal expectations and personal loss reflects a broader theme of reclamation of identity

among African Americans, particularly women, who strive for self-definition amidst hardship. The return to Eatonville represents not only a geographical but also a cultural anchor. Eatonville serves as a microcosm of African American life in a post-Reconstruction context, reflecting both the accomplishments and struggles of the community. As one can see, Janie's experiences and flashbacks connect her to a collective African American discourse on identity. The way she conceives issue like identity resonates with the experiences of many Black women, illustrating the ways in which personal identity intersects with broader historical realities. In addition to flashbacks and memories, a perpetual search of love can forge one's identity.

3-2- Identity Construction through Perpetual Search of Love

Hurston constructs identity not as a fixed essence but as a dynamic process shaped through Janie Crawford's continual search for love. Janie's quest is not merely romantic; it is epistemological and existential. Love becomes the primary medium through which she comes to know herself as a Black woman looking for her identity. In effect, Janie entered into matrimony three times throughout her existence, with each union contributing uniquely to the evolution of her identity. Primarily, she is perceived as a vivacious and endearing individual in pursuit of authentic love and companionship within her life. The initial spouse of Janie, Logan Killick, epitomizes the capitalist framework of America from an agrarian standpoint, as he is perpetually engaged in labor and perceives Janie merely as a beast of burden. The subsequent excerpt succinctly encapsulates Logan's ideological perspective:

Janie got up with him the next morning and had the breakfast halfway done when he bellowed from the barn. "Janie!" Logan called harshly. "Come help me move dis manure pile befo' de sun gits hot. You don't take a bit of interest in displace. 'Tain't no use in foolin' round in dat kitchen all day long." "You don't need mah help out dere, Logan. Youse in yo' place and Ah'm in mine." "You ain't got no particular place. It's wherever Ah need yuh. Git uh move on yuh, and dat quick." (Zora Neale Hurston, 1937, p. 29-30)

Logan exists as a pariah within the predominately white hegemonic society, and he articulates his frustration through the subjugation of others, including Janie.

Consequently, this societal structure operates as a confining space for African Americans.

Through the underlying failed love, Janie learns what she is not. Identity thus begins forming through negation: she refuses to internalize love as mere economic survival. Plus, she recognizes that security without emotional fulfillment is self-erasure. As it can be seen, Janie's marriage to Logan represents the first rupture between ideal and reality. For Logan, marriage equals labor and security, and Janie becomes a working body rather than a desiring subject. One can understand that Logan's world reflects Nanny's survivalist philosophy, constituting of a post-slavery logic in which safety overrides desire. Nanny being Janie's grandmother who imposes traditional views on relationships: prioritizing security over love which, furthermore, sets the groundwork for Janie's later struggles with her identity and desires. Janie's rejection of this love model marks the first assertion of self-definition.

Another significant discourse participant of Janie's identity construction is her second spouse, Joe Starks, a driven and consummate entrepreneur. Joe initially appears to promise expansion including town-building, ambition, and horizon. Yet under Joe, Janie is elevated socially but diminished personally. Her hair is covered, and her speech is restricted. She is positioned as symbolic ornament rather than autonomous individual. The following portrays the extent to which Janie is perceived as an ornamental object: "She must look on herself as the bell-cow, the other women were the gang. So she put on one of her bought dresses and went up the new-cut road all dressed in wine-colored red" (Zora Neale Hurston, 1937, p. 48). Joe tells Janie to dress up for the store's opening because he doesn't want anyone else's wife to "rank with her". He views her as the "bell-cow" while other women are merely "the gang".

Joe's consideration of Janie as an ornament is persistent in this: "A pretty dollbaby lak you is made to sit on de front porch and rock and fan yo'self and eat p'taters dat other folks plant just special for you" (Zora Neale Hurston, 1937, p. 34). In this, Joe is willing to value Janie for her decorative presence rather than her internal self. This way of loving turns into a patriarchal control, consisting in placing Janie in

a category of beings that require constant male management as witnesses the passage: “Somebody got to think for women and chillun and chickens and cows. I god, they sho don’t think none theirselves” (Zora Neale Hurston, 1937, p. 83). Joe’s idea encapsulates his perception of Janie as someone without agency or the capacity for independent thought.

The fact is that Joe aspires to attain the status of a prominent and influential figure, perceiving Janie as an aesthetically pleasing object of affection. His perspective on women diverges significantly from that of Janie’s initial spouse, Logan Killick. In this context, Joe regards Janie as a valuable possession. This contrasts with Logan’s view, who similarly objectifies Janie. For Joe, women serve as visual objects; conversely, for Logan, they are instruments to be exploited. This issue can also be examined through a feminist perspective, drawing on the insights of Murray Bookchin (1998), who articulates the dynamics of human oppression within a feminist framework as follows: “The very idea of the domination of nature by man comes from the very real domination of human by human” (Murray Bookchin, 1998, p. 1). This domination actually strengthens Janie because, as long as Janie is treated in that way, she constructs an interior self. So doing, she metaphorically sets her house in order internally, separating outer compliance from inner consciousness. Identity, thus, is developed as resistance through interiority.

Janie’s third spouse, Tea Cake, who is her junior, engages with her as a fellow human being. For instance, he expresses a desire to engage in play with her. This particular moment is profoundly significant for Janie as it allows her to experience a sense of selfhood through recognition from Tea Cake. What follows elucidates this circumstance:

He set it up and began to show her and she found herself glowing inside. Somebody wanted her to play. Somebody thought it natural for her to play. That was even nice. She looked him over and got little thrills from every one of his good points. Those full, lazy eyes with the lashes curling sharply away like drawn scimitars. The lean, overpadded shoulders and narrow waist. Even nice! (Zora Neale Hurston, 1937, p. 91-92)

Tea Cake represents Janie's inaugural authentic experience of love, facilitating her journey towards self-identity. He fosters her development towards autonomy by imparting skills such as firearm usage. Ironically, it is with this very firearm that she ultimately takes his life. This constitutes a notable irony within the narrative. She is compelled to enact this tragic deed as a consequence of rabies. At this juncture, the preeminence of nature is accentuated through the manifestation of illness as a calamity. Unlike Logan and Joe, Tea Cake acknowledges Janie in her entirety. Her optimistic and resilient demeanor can be interpreted as a manifestation of her creative essence, as she is afforded certain opportunities throughout her existence.

Metaphorically speaking, Tea Cake represents the closest realization of the pear tree vision. He invites Janie to speak, play, to laugh, and labor beside him. Their relationship is characterized by shared work, storytelling, and laughter as witnesses the following: "He was always laughing and full of fun too. He kept everybody laughing in the bean field" (Zora Neale Hurston, 1937, p. 155). "Laughing in the bean field" conveys a presupposition that work is experienced on the underlying bean field as a given field is firstly supposed to be work on, not laugh in. One is thus invited to understand that Janie works in the bean fields, not as subjugation, but as participation.

For the first time since Janie's first marriage, love becomes a relational reciprocity, emotional and embodied experience. Identity thus is no longer ornamental or hidden. It is lived, expressive, communal. Tea Cake then becomes the spouse who brings love to Janie. However, he is not idealized beyond flaw. His moments of jealousy and violence could complicate what love is as Hurston refuses romantic perfection. Identity, in this context, is forged through engagement with imperfection. As it can be seen, through specific metaphor like temporal metaphor distributed within flashbacks, memories, and the perpetual search of love, Janie has succeeded into constructing her identity as an African American woman.

Conclusion

The exploration of metaphor in Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God* through a cognitively constructed view has revealed the intricate ways in which metaphors function as essential cognitive mechanisms, shaping both interlocutors and readers engagement. By moving beyond traditional rhetorical analyses, this study has highlighted how Hurston's rich metaphoric language not only conveys complex themes of agency and identity but also invites readers to actively participate in the meaning-making process. The findings underscore that metaphors in *Their Eyes Were Watching God* serve as cognitive tools that facilitate a deeper understanding of the African American experience, particularly in relation to historical contexts of Black women marginalization and its enduring impact. Through the analysis of metaphors analyzed at a cognitive level, it becomes evident that Hurston's discourse intricately intertwines language and thought, enhancing emotional resonance and fostering empathy among readers.

The stated cognitively constructed approach, moreover, challenges existing metaphor theories by emphasizing the importance of cognitive processes in literary interpretation. It calls for a reevaluation of how metaphor is perceived within literary studies, advocating for a framework that recognizes its role as an active agent in shaping human perception and understanding. *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, thus, exemplifies the power of metaphor as more than a stylistic device, viewing it as a vital component, say a cognitive tool in revealing one's agency and constructing African American identity by focusing the complexities of human experience. This study contributes to ongoing discussions in Cognitive Linguistics, suggesting that future research should continue to explore the interplay between metaphor, cognition, and discourse. This will probably enrich one's understanding of literature's capacity to reflect and shape African American existential realities.

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