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**A STUDY OF DISCOURSE ANALYSIS
ON THE COLOR PURPLE
BY ALICE WALKER**

Özlem UĞUREL

**Dokuz Eylül Üniversitesi
Eğitim Bilimleri Enstitüsü**

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**Lisansüstü Eğitim-Öğretim ve Sınav Yönetmeliğinin
Yabancı Diller Eğitimi Anabilim Dalı İçin Öngördüğü
YÜKSEK LİSANS TEZİ
olarak hazırlanmıştır**

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Yüksek Lisans tezi olarak sunduğum, “**A Study of Discourse Analysis on The Color Purple by Alice Walker**” adlı çalışmanın tarafımdan, bilimsel ahlak ve geleneklere aykırı düşecek bir yardıma başvurulmaksızın yazıldığını ve yararlandığım eserlerin kaynak dizininde gösterilenlerden oluştuğunu, bunlara atıf yapılarak yararlanılmış olduğunu belirtir ve bunu onurumla doğrularım.

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Özlem UĞUREL

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Yukarıda imzaların, adı geen öğretim üyelerine ait olduğunu onaylarım.

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ABSTRACT

A Study of Discourse Analysis on The Color Purple by Alice Walker

Özlem UĞUREL

This thesis aims at carrying out a study of ‘discourse analysis’ on The Color Purple by Alice Walker. Holding a pragmatic approach, various linguistic elements in Walker’s discourse are concentrated on, and they are interpreted in order to reveal the author’s intentions and messages concerning the novel’s main character’s personal growth.

The first chapter of the thesis deals with an overview of different approaches to language and some theoretical information related to discourse analysis, which has been determined to be the method of our study.

The purpose of the second chapter is to introduce the linguistic elements which will be utilized as a means to realize the analysis.

In the third chapter, some necessary information about Alice Walker and The Color Purple is given, and then the aim of Walker’s discourse is discussed briefly.

The fourth chapter includes the analysis and the interpretations made through it.

In the last chapter of the thesis, the novel’s literary form (the epistolary), some striking characteristics of the author’s language, the way followed during the analysis with its reasons are discussed, and finally the conclusions drawn from this study are presented.

Key Words: Alice Walker, The Color Purple, Discourse Analysis, Pragmatic Approach, Linguistic Elements.

ÖZET

Alice Walker'ın The Color Purple Adlı Romanı Üzerine Bir Söylem Çözümleme Çalışması

Özlem UĞUREL

Bu tezde, Alice Walker'ın The Color Purple adlı romanı üzerine bir söylem çözümleme çalışması yapmak amaçlanmıştır. Pragmatik bir yaklaşımla, Walker'ın söyleminde kullandığı çeşitli dilsel öğeler üzerinde durularak, yazarın bu dilsel öğeler aracılığı ile, romanın ana karakterinin kişisel gelişimine ilişkin mesajları ortaya konulmaya çalışılmıştır.

Tezin birinci bölümünde, araştırmamızın yöntemi olarak belirlenen 'söylem çözümlemesi' ile ilgili teorik bilgilere yer verilmiştir. İkinci bölüm, araştırmamızda araç olarak kullanılan dilsel öğeleri tanıtmayı hedeflemektedir. Üçüncü bölümde ise, önce Alice Walker ve romanı The Color Purple hakkında bilgi verilmiş ve daha sonra yazarın söylem amacı tartışılmıştır. Dördüncü bölüm, analiz ve analize bağlı yapılan yorumları içermektedir. Tezin son bölümünde ise, romanın edebi (yazınsal) biçimi, yazarın kullandığı dilin özellikleri, analiz esnasında izlenen yol ve tüm bunlar aracılığıyla ulaşılan sonuçlar sunulmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Alice Walker, The Color Purple, Söylem Çözümlemesi, Pragmatik Yaklaşım, Dilsel Öğeler.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. An Overview of Different Approaches to Language: Formalism and Functionalism

In “A Dictionary of Discourse Analysis” the term ‘discourse’ is defined as follows:

There are two different kinds of language as potential objects for study; one abstracted in order to teach a language or literacy , and another which has been used to communicate something and is felt to be coherent... this latter kind of language [spoken or written], language in use, for communication is called discourse... (1999: 58-59).

It is now a known fact that these views of language given above have arisen from different approaches to language put forward by two groups of linguists: ‘formalists vs. functionalists’. It is clear that while formalists put emphasis only on the knowledge of the language, functionalists are concerned with the authentic use of this knowledge by individuals in communication in order to achieve particular purposes.

As it can be inferred, in contrast to formalists, language is a means to an end , but not an end itself for functionalists. Here a discussion of one’s priority over the other seems to be fruitless, for it will only lead us to a chicken and egg problem. Therefore, it will be more appropriate to deal with these two views (formalism and functionalism) separately.

In the first half of the twentieth century, particularly between 1930s and 1950s, linguists approached language considerably from a formalist point of view. First, sentence linguists firmly claimed that the highest grammatical unit of language was nothing more than a sentence. Therefore, they were mostly concerned with the analysis of isolated sentences. Obviously they all argued that “sentences were autonomous and refused to raise their eyes beyond the single isolated sentence”(Enkvist, 1985:11). Furthermore, Bloomfield, an experimentalist, gave rise to the idea that linguists must concentrate on forms without taking meaning into consideration. For instance, the utterance ‘I am ill today’ may be used by a person who mentions a fact about his/her health or by a peevish pupil who does not want to go to school.

However, according to Bloomfield, what linguists must deal with is nothing but only the phonological, morphological and syntactic aspects of utterances¹. M. Coulthard summarizes Bloomfield's view by saying: "...he felt it was no concern of linguistics to explain how identical utterances can have different functions in different situations, nor how listeners [and readers] correctly decode the intended message"² (1985 : 1-2).

Secondly, in 1950s, following the period of sentence linguists, it is seen that there was an increasing concern among some other linguists in how sentences work in a larger unit above sentence level to produce discourse. As G. Cook (1989) states it was Zellig Harris, who had the first attempt to study on 'suprasentential structure' in 1952. He published an article called Discourse Analysis, in which he triggered an interest in linguists to seek the language rules which would account for how a sequence of sentences are connected in a discourse by means of a sort of expanded grammar. Coulthard summarizes Harris's approach to discourse in the following way:

Harris suggests that distributional analysis can be successfully applied to a whole text to discover structuring above the rank of sentence. As an example he creates a text containing the following four sentences:

'The trees turn here about the middle of autumn.'
 'The trees turn here about the end of October.'
 'The first frost comes after the middle of autumn.'
 'We start heating after the end of October.'

¹What is said by any one person before or after another person begins to speak [is called utterance]. An utterance may consist of one word, one sentence, or more than one sentence. The distinction between sentence and utterance is of fundamental importance to both semantics and pragmatics. Essentially, ... a sentence is an abstract theoretical entity defined within a theory of grammar, while an utterance is the issuance of a sentence, a sentence-analogue, or sentence-fragment, in an actual context (Levinson,1983:18).

² J. Lyons (1977) makes a distinction between sentence meaning and utterance meaning. He states that while 'sentence meaning' entirely bears on the grammatical and lexical properties of a sentence , 'utterance meaning' refers to all secondary facets of meanings, which are particularly connected with context. It is exactly this distinction which accounts for the view that what is said may be different from what is meant.

The aim of the analysis is to isolate units of text which are distributionally equivalent though not necessarily similar in meaning; that is equivalences which have validity for that text alone. From the first two sentences above one establishes the equivalence of 'the middle of autumn' and 'the end of October', not because they are similar in meaning but because they share an identical environment, 'the trees turn here'. The next step is to carry over the equivalences derived from the first two sentences into the next two and this allows us to equate 'the first frost comes' with 'we start heating' and of course both with 'the trees turn here', which provided the original [linguistic] context. Thus, in terms of equivalence classes, all four sentences have identical structure, class X followed by class Y. The analyst progresses in this way through the text creating a chain of equivalences and occasionally, as required, introducing a new class until the whole of the text has been divided into units assigned to one or other of the classes (1985: 4).

In spite of its favourable title, Discourse Analysis, Coulthard finds Harris's work rather disappointing. Because, although a larger unit above sentence level is under question this time, what Harris does is actually nothing more than bringing out the internal linguistic dependencies among the phrases in it without paying attention to their meaning relations. That is why the method of analysis he puts forward is considered to be a formal one. McCarthy argues that Harris's "paper is a far cry from the discourse analysis we are used to nowadays"(1991:5).

In 1957, it is seen that Noam Chomsky again directed linguistic studies towards sentence structure. He argued that the main object of linguistic analysis is to make a clear distinction between the grammatical sentences of a language and the ungrammatical sentences, which do not have acceptance as sentences of that language. Moreover, grammaticality, according to Chomsky, is independent of meaningfulness, so what a linguist must study is mainly these grammatical sentences putting meaning aside. That is to say, Chomsky has been principally concerned with the formal properties of language, which can be evidenced in this statement by him: "Despite the undeniable interest and importance of semantic studies of language, they appear to have no direct relevance to the problem of determining or characterizing the set of grammatical utterances " (1957:17).

However, it is observed that in the late 1960s and early 1970s, many scholars from different disciplines such as linguistics, psychology, philosophy, anthropology and sociology opposed the formalist view of language, and they all agreed that language is not a self-governing entity which is only composed of grammatical relations independent of meaning.

For instance, some linguists such as “Ross, McCawley and G. Lakoff argued that one can’t describe grammar in isolation from meaning...”(Coulthard,1985:2). They claimed that language is a system to create meanings, and the role of forms in achieving this goal can not be ignored. Namely, they considered meaning and grammar not as separate things, but as a unified whole.

In addition, a sociolinguist, M. A. K. Halliday (1973), whose functional approach to language had a considerable influence on British discourse analysis, has argued that grammatical items of language are entirely abstract elements which can not be seen or heard. They are realized by means of sound and writing. At this point, the relationship between these elements and the way they are realised seem to be an arbitrary one. Hence, what is known as ‘snow’ in English has another name ‘schnee’ in German and another name in another language.

Nevertheless, when the relation of these sounds or written forms to the other parts of the language or to the concept of ‘weather’ which does not exist within the code but outside it and in people’s minds is taken into consideration, it becomes quite clear that such a kind of relationship can not be coincidental . Halliday summarizes this matter by saying:

The relationship between the semantics and the grammar is one of realization: the wording ‘realizes’, or encodes, the meaning. The wording¹, in turn, is ‘realized’ by sound or writing. There is no sense in asking which determines which; the relation is a symbolic one. It is not possible to point to each symbol as an isolate [thing] and ask what it means; the meaning is encoded in the wording as an integrated whole. The choice of a particular item may mean one thing , its place in syntagm [the grammatical sequence] another, its combination with something else another, and its internal organization yet another. What the grammar does is to sort out all these possible variables and assign them to their specific functions (1994: xx).

And he concludes that language is a semantic system- the whole system of meanings that belongs to a language rather than merely belonging to the meaning of words- in which grammar and vocabulary naturally relate to each other.

¹What is meant by wording is grammatical sequences, or syntagms, which are composed of not only lexical items like verbs, nouns, etc, but also grammatical items like articles, prepositions, conjunctions, etc.

Since 1980s and 90s, it is seen that meaning has been dealt with in two different areas of linguistics called as 'semantics' and 'pragmatics'. Evidently they are considered to be different levels of analysis of meaning. It is argued that the focus of semantics is on the meaning of words or sentences, and it "concentrates on meaning that comes from purely linguistic knowledge"(Peccei,1999:2). On the other hand, pragmatics puts emphasis on "meaning in use"(Thomas,1995:1) with reference to particular situations and the users of language. In spite of the fact that both are concerned with meaning, Leech argues that the distinction made between these fields results from two different understanding of the verb *to mean*. He states that while semantics deals with the question 'What does X mean?', pragmatics examines 'What does somebody mean by X?'. That is to say, the latter focuses on the communicative purposes of language users rather than the meaning of words or sentences alone.

According to Leech, within linguistics, semantics and pragmatics are essentially not independent of each other but complementary and interrelated domains¹ of study of meaning. He points out that approaching meaning completely from a semantic point of view (meaning in abstraction), or completely from a pragmatic point of view (meaning in use) can not be enough for one to comprehend the nature of language as a whole. Therefore, he supports 'complementarism'(1983:7); that is, the viewpoint that these two should be combined while giving any account of meaning in language.

In conclusion, it is clear that the two approaches to language (formalism vs. functionalism) are entirely opposed to one another. Because, formalists study language as an autonomous system in order to attain grammatical rules about it. On the other hand, functionalists view language as a dynamic system, and they are primarily concerned with meaning ignored by formalists. Namely, their object of study is language in use (discourse) rather than language itself.

¹Levinson also argues that these two components of language (semantics&pragmatics) are in interaction. See his work 'Pragmatics' (1983:15).

1.2. Discourse Types

It is known that there are two forms of language in use, spoken and written, and evidently these two are not the same thing. Therefore, they quite naturally display some differences. A. Georgakopoulou and D. Goutsos (1997) state that writing is slower when compared to speech, which provides writers with an opportunity that they are able to produce more complex and coherent ideas by means of various linguistic elements. That is, writers have more time to examine and edit their products. However, written language is sometimes found incapable of communicating the emotion of spoken language. That is why Hatch says that “there are times when we want our writing to sound and look more like oral language”(1992: 246). Furthermore, pieces of writing are obviously more permanent than speech, and this enables their future examination and discussion. On the other hand, it is not possible for speech unless it is recorded.

Despite the differences mentioned above briefly, it should be stated that discourse analysis does not only deal with spoken interaction, but it is concerned with written interaction as well. Therefore, it seems to be more appropriate to divide discourse into two branches as spoken discourse and written discourse. For instance, Michael McCarthy uses the term ‘discourse analysis’ in such a way to include both, and he claims that it should be so “to come to a much better understanding of exactly how natural spoken and written discourse looks and sounds”(1991: 12).

1.3. Discourse Analysis

It is argued that text linguists, who are mostly concerned with written language, have contributed to the development of 'discourse analysis' to a great extent. However, from the standpoint of text linguists, text is the fundamental unit of analysis, which clearly makes the language in the text the center of attention. Georgakopoulou and Goutsos summarize this view by saying:

...the text-linguistic perspective is that the language of the text is the focus of study. This assumption ... excludes all non-linguistic or prelinguistic material. Thus the focus of discourse analysis is not on the ideas, thoughts, plans, goals, etc. which exist independently of language. It is, instead, both on what is said or done in the text, ... and on how something is said, that is, the total of the language mechanisms and strategies that operate in discourse (1997: 8).

As it is seen, text is considered to be composed of linguistic elements which hold formal links to one another, and what text linguists argue is that texts must be dealt with as they are, merely in terms of their intra-linguistic relations. That is, they do not have any contextual considerations such as non-linguistic situations, people, intentions, etc. "Linguists such as Van Dijk (1972), De Beaugrande and Dressler (1980), Halliday & Hasan (1976) have made a significant impact in this area" (McCarthy, 1991:6).

On the other hand, some other linguists who are opposed to formal definitions of discourse claim that it is not easy to separate language (spoken or written) and its context which are "like two mirrors facing each other and constantly reflecting images back and forth between each other"¹(Gee,1999:82). They argue that the language of the text itself can not be the only focus of study, so discourse analysis must deal with the relationship between the language and the context in which it is used by people in order to achieve particular meanings and to communicate them. Brown and Yule support this view by saying "the analysis of discourse, is necessarily, the analysis of language in use. [Therefore], it can not be restricted to the description of linguistic forms independent of the purposes or functions which these forms are designed to serve in human affairs"(1983: 1).

¹Gee calls this important characteristic of language 'reflexivity'.

²The difference between the text linguist and the discourse analyst in terms of their treatment of text will be dealt with in a detailed way in the second chapter of our thesis under the title of 'Text-as-product view vs. Discourse-as-process view'.

In addition, D. Schiffrin¹ points out that discourse is not a casual sequence of sentences, and what differs discourse from such sequences is not only linguistic means like cohesive ties, but also non-linguistic factors. So, he states that the language of utterances must be studied with reference to the function it has in a social interaction.

Another linguist who shares the same viewpoint is Halliday. Halliday mentions two achievable levels of realization in every piece of discourse analysis, and he explains these levels in the following way:

[The first level] is a contribution to the understanding of the text: the linguistic analysis enables one to show how, and why, the text means what it does... This is the lower of the two levels; it is one that should always be attainable provided the analysis is such as to relate the text to general features of language- provided it is based on a grammar, in other words.

The higher level of achievement is a contribution to the evaluation of the text: linguistic analysis may enable one to say why the text is, or is not, an effective text for its own purposes- in what respects it succeeds and in what respects it fails ,or is less successful... It requires an interpretation not only of the text itself but also of its context (context of situation, context of culture), and of the systematic relationship between context and text (1994: xx).

As it can be understood from the quotation above, the first level in the discourse analysis is entirely linguistically oriented, and it aims at bringing out the semantic (decontextual) meaning of the text in question. On the other hand, the second level, which focuses on what is achieved through the text rather than the text itself, is a clear attempt to reach a pragmatic interpretation. Obviously, Halliday finds the second stage -‘the evaluation of the text in relation to its context’- more difficult not only as it exactly requires much more effort but also as it is this level which enables one to have further comments. However, it doesn’t mean that discourse analysis pays no attention to the first level. On the contrary, it is considered to be a starting point, a means for the analyst to carry his/her study to the second level. At that point, Brown and Yule state that “doing discourse analysis certainly involves doing semantics, but it primarily consists of doing pragmatics... In discourse analysis, as in pragmatics, we are concerned with what people using language are

¹Deborah Schiffrin makes a distinction between linguistically oriented analysis and the ones which aim at describing how discourse organization and the use of certain ‘expressions and constructions’ in particular contexts let people communicate, and ‘interpret’ meanings. She calls the first group ‘sequential analyses’ and the second ‘semantic and pragmatic analyses’ (1994:417).

doing, and accounting for the linguistic features in the discourse as the means employed in what they are doing”(1983:26).

To sum up, ‘discourse analysis’, which came out of a variety of disciplines such as linguistics, semiotics, psychology, anthropology, etc., can be defined as a way of dealing with and thinking about a text and its ‘situated use’¹ in an actual context. In other words, it is an act of interpretation by making use of both the text and the situation in which it resides.

1.3.1. General Principles of Discourse Analysis

Deborah Schiffrin brings forward some general principles² of discourse analysis. She states that her aim is neither to describe principles which will take place of those theoretical features which make one particular approach different from another nor to suggest that all the suppositions of one particular approach essentially find acceptance by other approaches. In spite of the differences among these approaches, Schiffrin claims that “all the approaches to discourse share a single set of underlying principles” (1994: 416) mentioned below:

1-Discourse Analysis is considered to be ‘empirical’ in its essence. The data under study during the analysis are derived from speech or a piece of writing. The analysis of discourse has to account for the data in terms of both its linguistic and semantic features. Furthermore, one should always keep in mind that the ‘hypotheses’ suggested by one analyst may be evaluated in a different way by another. Namely, it is entirely based on prediction.

2-Discourse is not merely composed of structural elements, its coherence can not be got only with reference to the form and its meaning.

3-Coherence is achieved in cooperation with ‘social and cultural meanings.’

¹What is meant by ‘situated use’ is a certain position held by a text in a real context to communicate a particular meaning.

²Schiffrin only considers ‘spoken discourse’ while she is presenting some principles about discourse analysis. Therefore, there have been some additions, and the principles summarized above have been adapted to ‘written discourse’ in accordance with the purpose of our study.

4-In any spoken or written discourse, people realize forms, meanings and any process of doing something for a particular purpose in interaction with each other.

5-What people say, mean, and do is understood with reference to a context in which these are achieved.

6-However, how they say, mean, and do something “[speakers’ or writers’ choices among different forms] as alternative ways of speaking [or writing]” (1994: 416) is realized by a more complex structure which includes :

... speaker [or writer] intentions; conventionalized strategies for making intentions recognizable; the meanings and functions of linguistic forms within their emerging context; the sequential context of other utterances; properties of the discourse mode, e.g. narrative, description, exposition; the social context... ; a cultural framework of beliefs and actions (Schiffrin,1994: 416).

In short, it is seen that discourse analysis is an ‘empirical’ activity in which non-linguistic elements are as crucial as linguistic elements. It should be noted that these principles are important, for they lay emphasis on the strong relation of ‘forms and meanings’ to ‘social and cultural meanings’ in producing discourse on the whole.

1.3.2. Validity in Discourse Analysis

Since discourse analysis is principally an interpretative reading, naturally it does not convey definite answers. Thus it can be described as a sort of perception which is founded on ceaseless arguments. In this sense, all analyses are inevitably exposed to any future examination and controversy. Gee says that “ ...validity is never once and for all ...[the status of analyses] can go up or down with time as work goes on in the field”(1999:94), and he proposes four necessary elements for validity in discourse analysis:

a-Convergence: A discourse analysis becomes more dependable when it suggests more consistent and persuasive solution(s) to the problem(s) put forward at the beginning of the analysis.

b-Agreement: Provided that more analysts have a supportive attitude towards the conclusions drawn by a single discourse analyst, the solutions suggested for these problems relevant to the discourse are considered to be more satisfying.

c-Coverage: It refers not only to the ability of finding a meaning both in the preceding and following situations except for the situation in question but also making deductions about the related kinds of situations in which the analysis can be brought into use. If the analysis is applicable to similar situations, it is more valid.

d-Linguistic details: All languages are only tools of achieving various communicative functions, and the linguistic elements of any language contribute greatly to the realization of these functions. As a result of this steady relationship between the forms and the functions, the analysis which focuses on the linguistic devices is more convincing and valid. However, do these elements guarantee an absolute validity? Gee explains this matter by saying:

Validity is social, not individual. A given piece of discourse work will have a major point or theme, or a small set of them. These are the work's hypotheses. Authors will normally argue for the validity of their analyses by arguing that some aspects of convergence, agreement, coverage, and linguistic details are met in their [analyses]. But no piece of work can... ask all possible questions, seek all possible sources of agreement, cover all the data conceivably related to the data under analysis, or seek to deal with every possibly relevant linguistic detail. (1999:96).

Finally, he states that showing that the solutions to the problems presented in the beginning of the analysis and the linguistic details come towards the same point is regarded as the most immediately important features of validity in most cases. Because, it is a fact that well-founded arguments between the two can always keep their reliability.

1.4. The Aim of the Study

It is obvious that discourse analysis has derived from functionalism, which particularly emphasizes the purposes and functions of language in human communication. Therefore, it is not surprising that discourse analysis relies more upon the relationship between language and its context of use than merely upon the linguistic elements and their usage in text. Moreover, when the literary use of language is taken into consideration, one can easily notice that it is something more than an ordinary expressive use. Because, in that case, what is aimed at is clearly achieving some intentions by making use of language¹.

It would of course be wrong to say that these intentions can be understood without dealing with the linguistic elements and their usage² in text. That is, discourse analysis is certainly based on semantics to some extent. However, as it has been stated before, any attempt to reveal one's intended meanings principally requires contextual considerations; namely, a pragmatic assessment of these elements.

This study aims at applying discourse analysis to the novel The Color Purple by Alice Walker. First of all, the novel will be investigated to find out various linguistic markers which constitute the basis of our analysis, and then these will be interpreted to clarify the author's hints embedded in her language. Therefore, in the following chapter, we should introduce these linguistic elements concisely, which will be utilized as the tools of our analysis. In addition, it should be stated that as discourse analysis has an interdisciplinary origin, our study will be based on a combination of the similar views proposed by functionalists such as Brown & Yule, Schiffrin, Leech, Gee, Halliday, Hatch, etc.

¹In the third chapter of our thesis, this point will be explained in 'The Aim of Discourse' with reference to the novel 'The Color Purple' under study.

²Widdowson calls the linguistic function of a linguistic item 'usage', and the communicative function of a linguistic item 'use' (A Dictionary of Discourse Analysis, 1999: 280).

³The aim of our analysis will be discussed elaborately at the beginning of the fourth chapter, 'The Analysis'.

2. TEXT AND DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

2.1. What is Meant by Text?

A speaker or a reader of a particular language spontaneously has a linguistic competence; that is, an implicit knowledge of the rules of this language. It is this linguistic competence which enables him/her to determine whether a set of sentences are connected with each other or they are just casually together. For that reason, paying attention to the difference between the two while giving a definition of the term 'text' is really necessary and important.

Halliday and Hasan state that "the word text ... in linguistics refers to any passage, spoken or written, of whatever length, that does form a unified whole" (1976:1). They also add that considering a text only as a larger unit beyond the sentence boundary is rather simple and deceiving, for the size of a text is not a determining aspect by itself. In addition, they argue that a sentence is a grammatical unit whereas a text is a semantic one. The elements in any sentence obviously grammatically related to each other; namely, these elements are internally dependent. However, a text is achieved by means of a group of related sentences which together function as a semantic unit. At that point, it is not so difficult to see the relationship between text and sentence. It can be said that "... the expression of the semantic unity of the text lies in the cohesion among [structurally independent] sentences of which it is composed" (Halliday and Hasan, 1976:293). To put it more explicitly, the relation that is held among the sentences in any text is a meaning relation, and it is clearly quite different from the one which exists among the parts of a sentence.

It is argued that a text may be spoken or written and in any kind, prose or verse, dialogue or monologue. Novels, poems, letters, newspaper articles, course books, etc. are defined as different types of texts which are formed in accordance with particular purposes. In other words, they are not coincidental sequences of sentences on a page, and each of them certainly has its own function in human communication. As a result, as Halliday and Hasan put forward that:

Any piece of language that is operational, functioning as a unity in some context of situation, constitutes a text. It may be... in any style or genre, and involving any number of active participants. It will usually display a form of consistency ... a consistency in the meaning styles or types of semantic configuration which embody its relation to its environment (1976: 293-294).

Furthermore, it is put forward that what makes a group of sentences a text is texture, in fact. "The concept of texture is entirely appropriate to express the property of being a text" (Halliday and Hasan, 1976:2). Therefore, a real text must have it in order to be distinguished from any other sets of sentences which are not texts. Then, what is it that gives a text its unity and texture?

Here giving a simple example will be helpful to be able to find out an answer to this question:

-Peter has caught a cold. He should stay in bed.

It is evident that **he** in the second sentence refers back to **Peter** in the first sentence. So it can be said that the second sentence is anaphoric to the first sentence, and it is obvious that this anaphoric reference makes these two sentences cohesive and enables the listener or the reader to perceive them as a whole. Here it is important to notice the fact that the two items are not independent of each other. On the contrary, the second item (**he**) can be interpreted only in reference to the first one (**Peter**). In other words, a particular kind of meaning dependency occurs between these two elements because of the fact that the proper noun **Peter** and the pronoun **he** are the same thing¹ in reference. Now it can be inferred that if an element is interpreted in relation to another element in the same discourse by means of some linguistic features as exemplified above, 'texture' naturally comes into existence. In addition, it should not be ignored that both the referring and the referred items are equally important in establishing texture in a text; namely, neither of them has any priority over the other. Halliday and Hasan emphasize this idea by saying that "... cohesion is affected not by the presence of the referring item alone but by the presence of both the referring item and the item that it refers to.

¹Halliday and Hasan use the term "coreferential" for the two items that are identical in reference.

In conclusion, it is understood that texture is considered to be a prerequisite in order to accept a set of sentences as a text, and it is achieved by means of cohesive ties and deictic markers. Therefore, it will be more appropriate to examine them rather than closing the subject here.

2.2. Deictic Expressions

Deictic expressions are some certain grammatical markers which enable the decoder (the listener or the reader) to get much of meaning by referring to various things in a discourse context. In other words, these terms function as pointers to something in a given context, and that is why their interpretation can not be achieved out of context.

Levinson (1983) identifies five kinds of deictic expressions in his system:

2.2.1. Person deixis simply refers to pronouns that show the roles of participants in a context. First person refers to the speaker's or the writer's self; second person is the form used by the speaker or the writer with reference to addressee(s), and third person points to other people except the addresser or the addressee.

2.2.2. Spatial deixis or place deixis refers to the way languages indicate the connection between space and the place where the participants are situated in a discourse. Generally, a distinction is made between being close to a speaker and being far from the speaker, which is pointed by means of demonstratives **this** vs. **that**, or adverbs **here** vs. **there** in English.

2.2.3. Temporal deixis refers to time which is considered in relation to the time of speaking. **Now, then, yesterday, today, tomorrow** can be given as examples of time deictic adverbs used in English.

2.2.4. Discourse deixis "...according to Levinson, [has] to do with keeping track of reference in the unfolding discourse"(Hatch, 1992:219). Phrases like **in the previous chapter, in the following section** or markers like **this, that** may refer to large parts

of the discourse which already exist in the discourse itself. For instance, in the sentence “That was what he was trying to tell you” the pointer **that** clearly refers to not a single item but to a bigger section mentioned previously within the same discourse.

2.2.5. Social deixis is used to display the relationship between the decoder (the speaker or writer) and the encoder (addressees). It can be divided into two groups: **ABSOLUTE AND RELATIONAL** social deictic expressions. Absolute deictic expressions are composed of codes that are consistently assigned to a particular social role such as “Your Honor”, “Mr. President”, etc. Hence, it can be said that whenever they are used, what is being referred to is not a person but a position of authority or trust. Namely, absolute deictic expressions place people in accordance with their roles in the society and that is what distinguishes them from relational deictic expressions. Because, relational ones such as “my father, teacher, husband (lexical items), you, he, her (pronouns)” obviously situate people with reference to the speaker or writer without considering the roles they have in the society. It is clear that social deictics are significant since they have a special power to identify particular social relationships.

2.3. Cohesive Ties

The term **cohesion** refers to the meaning relations that exist among the textual items in any text, and such a semantic relation occurs when the interpretation of some items in a text depends on that of others.

Cohesion is realized either through grammar or through vocabulary. However, whether it is grammatical or lexical, it should be essentially kept in mind that cohesion is not an entirely structural relation in which meaning is not concerned.

After a brief explanation about Levinson’s system of deictic pointers of reference, now it will be useful to mention the system proposed by Halliday and Hasan, in which there are five major kinds of cohesive ties: **REFERENCE, SUBSTITUTION, ELLIPSIS, CONJUNCTION, and LEXICAL TIES.**

2.3.1. Reference¹: It may be established both through lexical items and grammatical items in English. For instance, **Catherine** can refer to a person whose name is Catherine. Here the reference is coded by means of a lexical item, so it is a lexical reference. Grammatical items such as pronouns, demonstratives, comparatives are used for grammatical reference. And grammatical items, by themselves, do not have referents. For instance, it is impossible to interpret a pronoun (she) without reference to a noun (Catherine) in its environment.

Reference is of three types: exophoric, anaphoric, and cataphoric references. Exophoric references make the decoder (the listener or reader) look out of the text to be able to create a meaningful relationship between the elements in the text and their knowledge of the real world. Namely, their interpretation is independent of the text. However, anaphoric (reference backward) and cataphoric (reference forward) references are entirely text-internal. For instance,

- (a) While children were playing in the garden, they found a large earthenware jar.
- (b) Jane let her smoke and so Catherine smoked.

In (a) the pronoun **they** exactly refers back to the noun **children**; therefore, the reference is anaphoric. In (b), on the other hand, the pronoun **her** refers ahead to the noun **Catherine**. As a result, the reference is cataphoric this time.

Reference words are important, for they always hold the reader attentive to find out the established reference connections either within or outside the text. In other words, the reader must always be mentally active to be able to interpret them.

¹Although deictic markers, which are used in order to refer to some parts in the discourse, have been talked about in the previous part, these pointers are discussed again as cohesive ties in REFERENCE with some additional information put forward by Halliday and Hasan.

2.3.2. Substitution : In English some words take the place of some other words which have already been used in the same discourse, and they are called substitutes. The major substitutes are **one(s)**, **do** (does, did, done and doing), and **so**. As it can be inferred, what is replaced in a text can be a noun, a verb, or a clause.

Nominal: He left the bar and went to the one down the road. (one-bar)

Verbal: “Even if a ... branch rejects an approach to join one year, try again the following year and keep on asking the branch to join until it does”(Salkie, 1995:35).
(does-joins)

Clausal: ‘I will keep my promise’ , said the man.

‘I hope so’ , said the woman. (I will keep my promise-so)

Substitution enables the writer to avoid too much repetition, which otherwise makes the text rather boring for the reader. It leads to a strong relation between one part and an earlier part. It not only makes the reader alert to discover this relation but also the text cohesive.

2.3.3. Ellipsis: The omission of a word or a phrase in a text assuming that an earlier part will clarify the meaning is called ellipsis. Similar to substitution, ellipsis can be used to form links to nouns, verbs, and clauses as in the examples below:

Nominal: ‘Have some tea.’

‘ It is a good idea, but there isn’t any (tea).’

Verbal: ‘ Were you studying?’ ‘No, I wasn’t (studying).’

Clausal: He doesn’t know how to use this calculator. So he has to learn how (to use the calculator).

As it is clear, ellipsis is quite similar to substitution in that both of them involve something referring back to something else earlier in the text. Yet, what refers back in substitution is a particular word, phrase or clause while it is a gap in ellipsis. It should be noticed that ellipsis also establishes a strong relation between one part and an earlier part of a text forcing the reader to complete these gaps, which indeed provides the reader with a better understanding of the text.

2.3.4. Conjunction: Another important type of cohesive tie is conjunction, which helps the reader grasp the relation between the clauses. There are four major kinds of conjunctive relations:

a- Additive (e.g. and, moreover, in addition, besides, furthermore, etc.)

-He worked hard all his life. And as he worked, he became very rich.

b- Adversative (e.g. but, however, yet, nevertheless, etc.)

-She has been learning English for six years; however, she can't speak it very well.

c- Causal (e.g. because, since, as, thus, therefore, consequently, etc.)

-They didn't go for a walk because it was raining.

d- Temporal (e.g. then, next, before, after, since, whenever, while, during, etc.)

-There was silence for a minute. Then he replied.

Conjunction¹, which is also a formal contribution to textuality, is evidently different from reference, substitution and ellipsis. Because, a conjunction does not make the reader look backward or forward for its referent in the text. Yet, as McCarthy states "it does presuppose a textual sequence, and signals a relationship between segments of the discourse" (1991:46).

2.3.5. Lexical Ties: In addition to grammatical cohesive ties, there are also lexical items which strengthen cohesion in text.

a-Repetition:

- Jane will take an important exam on Friday. Her parents believe that she will pass the exam.

Some important words could be repeated in a text, and their importance can be explained mainly in two ways. First, these key words help the reader understand what the text is about.

¹Although these major types mentioned above are indiscriminately called 'conjunctions' in traditional grammar, R. de Beaugrande and Dressler use the term 'junctive expressions' for them. Furthermore, each type has a different label in their classification. An additive relation is called 'conjunction', an adversative relation 'contrajunction', a causal relation 'subordination', and a temporal relation 'temporal proximity' (1996:71).

Second, they enable the reader to have a strong clue to make an interpretation about the writer's intentions. Repeated words not only help the reader awaken to these intentions but also the text make an overall sense.

b-Synonym:

-You must defend your liberties at all costs. Meanwhile, you must respect the rights and freedoms of other individuals.

A synonym is a word which has the same meaning as another word in the same language. Using synonymous words instead of repeating exactly the same word adds variety to the text. Thus, it prevents the text from becoming boring for the reader.

c-Opposites:

-Forty-six people died in a traffic accident yesterday. Out of the forty-six, thirteen were males while thirty-three were females.

If there is a contrast between two words or phrases in terms of meaning, they are called opposites. The words **males** and **females** are obviously opposites, for a person is naturally either male or female. Nobody can propose another alternative. As a result, they are BINARY opposites. Another type of oppositeness is ANTONYMY. For instance, the words **simple** and **complex** are antonyms as it is not possible to say something is either simple or complex. It can be relatively simple and complex. In addition to binary opposites, and antonyms, CONVERSENESS reveals a particular sort of contrast. The words **teacher** and **student** are converses, for if x is y's teacher, then y is x's student. Parents/children, above/below, buy/sell, etc. can be given as some other examples.

It should be noticed that using opposites does not only make the expression of a contrast possible but also contributes to the text cohesion. For instance, in the first example given above the writer by using the word **males** in fact creates a kind of expectation in the reader to find out a word that will contrast it. As the writer satisfies this expectation with the word **female**, the reader can easily advance through the text.

d-Superordinates and Hyponyms:

-Sue keeps cats and dogs in the garden of her house, for she is very fond of animals.

In the sentence above there are two specific words, **cat and dog**, which are obviously related to a general word, **animal**. These two words are hyponyms of the general word. In other words, the general word is the superordinate, and the more specific ones are its hyponyms. If a reader sees the superordinate in a text first, it is naturally difficult for him/her to predict which hyponym the text has in mind unless it is referred to distinctively. Therefore, the usual pattern in a text is the usage of the hyponym first, which is richer in meaning, followed by the general word, the superordinate.

2.4. Syntax

In addition to cohesive ties (grammatical & lexical) and deictic expressions, syntax also plays a crucial role in the analysis of a text. P. Gee argues that statements can be categorized “in terms of the type of predicate that accompanies [the subject]” (1999:124), and he proposes the following sorts of statements:

2.4.1. Cognitive Statements include predicates such as ‘think, know, guess, understand, etc.’ Namely, they are used while speaking or writing about thinking and knowing.

2.4.2. Affective Statements are the indications of one’s feelings about something. They include predicates such as ‘want, desire, like, dislike, love, hate, etc.’

2.4.3. State and Action Statements are used when somebody talks or writes about his/her or somebody else’s states or performance. Examples:

-He is inexperienced.

-She is ill.

-He kicked the ball over the top of the net.

-I sent him a postcard.

As it is clear a state statement has ‘to be’¹ as its predicate, and an action statement an action verb, which shows a movement.

¹In state statements it is possible to use predicates such as feel, look, seem, appear instead of ‘to be’ to achieve the same function.

2.4.4. Ability and Constraint Statements include the modal verbs ‘can, be able to, have to’ as their predicates. Examples:

-I can’t help them.

-He was able to solve the problem quickly.

-She has to get up very early to get to work on time.

Ability statements are related to one’s mental or physical power to realize something. Constraint statements, as it can be inferred from its name, tell about an obligation, a limit on something, or on somebody’s freedom to do something.

2.4.5. Achievement Statements refer to activities, efforts which are realized to accomplish something in the end.

-He challenges himself.

-She studies hard to pass her exams.

It is seen that Gee’s categorization does not include another important kind of statement that is called ‘imperative.’ Imperative statements are used to give orders. For instance, in ‘Tidy your room!’ the verb is in the imperative. The statements of this kind are considered to be important as they convey a strong clue for the reader or listener about the social relationships between people.

After giving some information concerning deictic expressions, cohesive markers and different types of statements, which contribute to the unity and texture of the text, it will be reasonable to discuss two extremely opposite views about text in the following part.

2.5. Text-as-product View versus Discourse-as-process View

In text-as-product view, it is argued that texts are produced and received; however, the focus of the analysis is merely on the product. That is to say, the analyst directly concentrates on what he/she sees on the page. Brown and Yule state that much of the analytical work done in ‘Textlinguistics’ results from this view, and they also add:

Typical of such an approach is the cohesion view of the relationships between sentences in a printed text ... In this view, cohesive ties exist between elements in

connected sentences of a text in such a way that one word or phrase is linked to other words or phrases. Thus an anaphoric element ... is treated as a word which substitutes for, or refers back to, another word or words... [Clearly,] the analysis of the product ... does not involve any consideration of how the product is produced or how it is received (1983:23-24).

It can be easily understood that this view does not take the process through which a text is formed into consideration, for the important thing is the result. It puts a clear emphasis on the linguistic elements and their relations to one another in the text. Namely, text is a “static object” in which a linguistic investigation is carried out by the analyst.

In contrast, in discourse-as-process view, structural elements such as words, phrases and sentences are considered to be proof of an effort by a speaker or writer to communicate a particular message to a listener or reader. What is important is to find out how a text is processed both by the speaker/writer and the receiver, but it is not the only purpose. The analyst is more interested in revealing what is intended through the text under question. Although it is an undeniable fact that discourse analysis has to depend on a study of linguistic items, it is also necessary to notice that it is employed only as a tool, and the main reason for doing so is to throw light on the producer’s intentions. Brown and Yule summarize that point by saying:

... the discourse analyst treats his data ... as a dynamic process in which language was used as an instrument of communication in a context by a speaker/writer to express meanings and achieve intentions (discourse). Working from this data, the analyst seeks to describe regularities [not rules] in the linguistic realisations used by people to communicate those meanings and intentions (1983:26).

In conclusion, it can be said that all the linguistic markers in text are employed by its producer as a means to realize a particular end. It is known that discourse analysis is related to and involves pragmatics, which studies the use of language for communicative purposes, and here this explains why it is argued none of structural elements is purposeless¹ in

¹The use of different linguistic markers in different types of texts (narrative, descriptive, argumentation, etc.) proves that they are not chosen and used at random but in accordance with the speaker’s or writer’s aims and intentions.

discourse in a better way. Hatch says that “ the structure of discourse reflects the intentions and goals of the speaker or writer” (1992:189).

As it can be understood, text should be thought as a process rather than a product, and obviously the speaker or the writer establishes some linguistic relations in discourse in order to make his/her addressees’ participation into this process possible. However, the use of cohesive ties, deictic expressions and different types of statements are not the only alternative to achieve this aim. Especially, when a literary narrative is taken into consideration, there are also FIGURES of SPEECH and some expressive devices called INTENSITY MARKERS used as some involvement strategies by the writer.

2.6. Figures of Speech

Since they decorate prose and clearly contribute to style, figures of speech can be described as a literary act realized with the purpose of dressing or embellishing thoughts. However, Corbett argues that embellishment is not the only function of figures. Because, they also enable the writer or the speaker to make his/her thoughts concrete, and so he/she is able to communicate with the reader in a more effective way. Furthermore, figures easily stimulate the reader’s or the listener’s feelings, and this naturally arouses emotional responses in them.

Then, the term figures of speech can be defined in that way:

[They are] any deviation either in thought or expression, from the ordinary and simple method of speaking [or writing], a change analogous to the different positions our bodies assume when we sit down, lie down, or look back ... Let the definition of a figure, therefore, be a form of [prose] artfully varied from[simple or] common usage (quoted from Quintilian by Corbett, 1990:425).

Figures of speech is divided into two main groups: the schemes and the tropes. A scheme is concerned with a change in the ordinary arrangement of words. However, a trope changes the typical meaning of a word or words. However, here it will be more appropriate to focus on some figures in the group of the tropes in accordance with our purpose, which puts emphasis on the pragmatic functions of the linguistic elements in the text.

2.6.1. Metaphor is an implicit comparison between two things which are dissimilar in nature but have something in common. Examples:

- Jane is a parrot.
- Violence is the cancer of the modern society.
- The teacher's question was a Gordian knot.

2.6.2. Simile is indeed quite similar to metaphor, yet simile refers to an explicit comparison. Although the comparison is between two things different in nature as in metaphor, there is an aspect in which they are similar. Examples:

- The baby's skin is as soft as silk.
- Their wedding ceremony was like a dream.
- He behaves like a child.
- She was as beautiful as a fairy.

2.6.3. Synecdoche is the substitution of a part for the whole, or vice versa. Synecdoche usually occurs when the part that is mentioned refers to something else, which is clearly an indirect way of speaking or writing. Examples:

- “Give us this day our daily bread.” (bread for food)
 - “Brandish your steel.” (steel for sword)
 - “Are there no roofs in this town that will harbor an honorable man?” (roofs for houses)
- (Corbett, 1990:445-446).

Synecdoche might be done by substituting an author/painter for his/her work, the container for the contained or vice versa, the inventor for his /her invention, etc.

2.6.4. Irony is saying something opposite to the literal meaning of something else. That is, an irony indicates a contradiction. Examples:

- It was such an entertaining party that the majority left the house only in one hour.

-George smiled. 'You are the best cook I have ever known,' he said to his wife.

-“What a great day!” when the temperature is 56 degrees in the shade.

2.6.5. Symbol is often something concrete which stands for something abstract such as an idea or emotion. The words or objects may be used in such a way that they create some special mental pictures which remind somebody of something else. Examples:

-white represents purity;

- rose represents beauty;

-a flag represents a country, and all the other things related to it as well.

2.7. Intensity Markers

Intensity markers, which cover only lexical elements, are “associated with the affective component of written discourse as more explicit cues” (Georgakopoulou and Dionysis, 1997:139). They include verbs, adjectives, adverbs, attitudes, moods, etc. towards something. These elements might be classified as positive (e.g. wonderful, fascinating, luckily, successfully, etc.) or negative (bored, shocked, hopelessly, sadly, etc.) depending on the message intended by the speaker or writer to be encoded.

In addition, Georgakopoulou and Goutsos (1997:138) mention a classification of intensity marker which is put forward by Quirk et al. According to this classification, the markers are divided into three:

- 1) *emphasizers* (e.g. only, mainly, certainly, etc.)
- 2) *amplifiers* (e.g. very, too, completely, extremely, etc.)
- 3) *hedges* (e.g. rather, sort of, maybe, etc.)

So far we have concentrated our attention first on various elements which establish surface semantic relations in text. Then, some figures of speech and intensity markers, which are as useful as these elements for our study, have been discussed briefly. Now it is evident that a discourse analysis must be based on linguistic items; otherwise, it can't be regarded as

an analysis, but only a simple commentary on a text. Yet, it does not mean that the only purpose of discourse analysts is to find out and state these items and their relationships in their analyses. Clearly the analysts are interested in them, for they provide vital clues about the encoder's aims and intentions. In fact, what they try to achieve is an act of pragmatic interpretation by making use of these clues.

In the following chapter, we believe that it will be helpful to give some information about Alice Walker and The Color Purple before starting the analysis.



3. ABOUT THE AUTHOR AND THE BOOK

3.1. About Alice Walker

Alice Walker was born in Eatonton , Georgia , on February 9 ,1944 as the youngest of eight children of Minnie Tallulah Grant Walker and Willie Lee Walker ,who were poor sharecroppers. She grew up in an atmosphere of violent racism , which created a great impact on her writing.

The most unforgettable event of her childhood was a BB gun accident , which made her blind in one eye. She was not able to regain the sight in one eye, but it taught her an invaluable lesson which afterwards became the most important cornerstone of her novels: hope is the only key to life, and success is always possible whatever the situation is. That idea becomes more clear in the quotation in Timothy Dow Adams' article about Alice Walker and her achievements:

I used to pray every night that I would wake up and somehow it would be gone. I couldn't look at people directly because I thought I was ugly.... Then when I was fourteen, I visited my brother Bill [who] took me to a hospital where they removed most of the scar tissue-and I was a changed person. I promptly went home, scooped up the best-looking guy, and by the time I graduated from high school, I was valedictorian, voted 'Most Popular,' and crowned queen! (1991:3406).

Following her graduation from high school as her school's valedictorian in 1961, she entered Spelman College in Atlanta, Georgia on scholarship. Her mother gave her a very special gift before she left home. It was a typewriter to support her creativity. It is known that she participated in many civil rights demonstrations at Spelman. After two years at Spelman, Walker received a scholarship to Sarah Lawrence College in New York. Though she didn't want to leave the activities concerning the civil rights movement, her teachers motivated her to attend Sarah Lawrence. Because, it was a great chance for her to become one of few young blacks at an outstanding university. She had the opportunity of receiving the mentoring of poet Muriel Ruykeyser and writer Jane Cooper, who awakened her interest in writing.

Her travels to Africa and Europe improved her views and made her happy. Nevertheless, when Walker learnt that she was pregnant, she found herself in an extreme depression which led her to the idea of committing suicide and the act of keeping a razor blade under her pillow for weeks. She wrote volumes of poetry to explain her fears and sorrow. Fortunately, she had a safe abortion with the help of a classmate. Then, she wrote a short story, To Hell With Dying, which explains her feelings. Her mentor, Muriel Ruykeyser, sent the story not only to many publishers but also to the African-American poet Langston Hughes. The story was published, and Alice was quite pleased, for Hughes honoured her with a hand-written letter of support.

When she graduated from Sarah Lawrence at the age of 21, she decided to participate in the civil rights movement as an activist. First, she worked as a voter-registrar in Georgia, then quickly moved to New York to take a position as a case worker in New York City's Department of Social Services.

In the summer of 1966 she went to Mississippi, where she met a Jewish civil rights lawyer, Mel Leventhal, and married soon. Since they were an inter-racial couple, they had to defend their marriage against the threats of violence.

Mel Leventhal encouraged her writing, and she always found time to write even while participating in the civil rights movement. The Civil Rights Movement: What Good Was It? was her first published article. It brought success by winning her a place in the American Scholar Magazine Annual Essay Contest. After that, she went on writing, and accepted a teaching position at Jackson State University. Her first volume of poetry, Once, was published there. The same week her daughter Rebecca was born her first novel, The Third Life of Grange Copeland, was published. Although her novel received literary applause, it was also criticized by many African-American critics as they all argued that Walker dealt too mercilessly with the black male characters in her book. However, Walker never accepted such claims because she was a witness to the tragedies that black women were experiencing. Black women were cruelly abused, discriminated, and oppressed both by the society and the men surrounding them. They were made to remain speechless about the realities of their external lives. Their inner lives and feelings were also nothing to their men who were themselves humiliated and abused. Therefore, they needed someone who would be their tongue. Walker, as a feminist and a supporter of civil rights, was ready to take that

responsibility and become their spokeswoman. Her great concern for the lives of black women as a novelist is clearly seen in her words: "The survival, the survival whole of my people. But beyond that I am committed to exploring the oppressions, the insanities, the loyalties, and the triumphs of black women"(Adams, 1991: 3407).

In 1971 Alice Walker took a position at Tougaloo College in Mississippi. She taught one year there and then accepted another teaching position at Wellesley College as a lecturer in writing and literature.

She divorced Leventhal in the mid-70s for some private reasons. In 1976 her second novel, Meridian, a story about a woman's struggle during the civil rights movement, was published. Falling in love with Robert Allen, the editor of *Black Scholar*, she moved to Mendocino and concentrated full-time on her writing. She published a book of short stories, You Can't Keep a Good Woman Down, in 1981. In 1982 she completed her most popular novel, The Color Purple, an epistolary novel about a poor and uneducated woman named Celie. Despite the fact that she was again accused of portraying black men in a harsh manner by some critics, the novel won her the Pulitzer Prize and the American Book Award in 1983. Walker was obviously against the critics' claims, and she said of The Color Purple, "It's my happiest book... I had to do all the other writing to get to this point"(Adams, 1991:3414). Daniel Taylor, in his analysis of the novel, states that written in black folk English, The Color Purple is really a valuable work because it puts black feminism in a position that can coexist with good fiction(1986:314). According to another critic, Gloria Steinem, The Color Purple " could be the kind of popular and literary event that transforms an intense reputation into a national one"(Adams, 1991:3404). Peter Prescott, in his review in *Newsweek*, said "I want to say at once that The Color Purple is an American novel of permanent importance"(Adams, 1991:3404-3405). Namely, all these critics considered The Color Purple as a novel that is worth praising despite the others' objections. Her third volume of poetry, Horses Make a Landscape Look More Beautiful, followed that success in 1984. Then Living By the Word, her second book of essays, and The Temple of My Familiar, her epic novel, were published. She continued publishing with another volume of poetry, Her Blue Body Everything We Know: Earthling Poems and a fiction , Possessing the Secret of Joy.

She dealt with her awareness that she might be bi-sexual in another novel, The Same River Twice: Honoring the Difficult. After that, she became politically active in her writings, and wrote a non-fiction book, Anything We Love Can Be Saved: A Writer's Activism, which proved her political activism. In 1988 Walker questioned the relationship between sexuality and spirituality in By the Light of My Father's Smile.

To sum up, Alice Walker has dealt with the predicament of the black American family, their spoilt family relationships, and the oppressed black women in her works. What makes her a remarkable author is that she portrays black people's lives quite sensitively with a strong narrative style. Zora Neale Hurston, who wrote folk tales and sketches about Afro-American life with a love of black folklore; Flannery O'Connor, who reflected Southern violence in her works; and Albert Camus, with his philosophical theory of existentialism emphasizing that individuals are free in their actions, are considered to be important literary influences on Walker. The author is still living in California.

3.1.1. The Author's Major Works

Short Fiction:

- In Love and Trouble: Stories of Black Women, 1973

Non-fiction:

- I Love Myself When I Am Laughing... And Then Again When I Am Looking Mean and Impressive: A Zora Neale Hurston Reader, 1979 (edited)
- In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens: Womanist Prose, 1983

Poetry:

- Five Poems, 1972
- Revolutionary Petunias and Other Poems, 1979
- Goodnight, Willie Lee, I'll See You in the Morning: Poems, 1979

Children's Literature:

- Langston Hughes: American Poet, 1974

(<http://voices.cla.umn.edu/authors/AliceWalker.html#SelectedBibliography>)

3.2. About The Color Purple

3.2.1. Characters

3.2.1.1 Major Characters

Celie is the main character and protagonist. She is a young Southern black woman, whose life is full of hardships. Although she is treated badly and abused by men, she always tries to endure. Celie writes letters to God and her sister to tell about her thoughts and feelings. The letters are a clear indication of her touching attempt to make sense of her miserable life.

Nettie is Celie's younger sister. She leaves home to join a missionary couple, Samuel and Corrine, to go to Africa. She adopts Celie's two children, Olivia and Adam, and marries Samuel after his wife's death. As they have to live separately for years, Nettie and Celie write letters to each other. Nettie is able to return home in the end.

Alphonso is Pa's real name. He marries Celie's mother after her real father is murdered by a group of young white boys. He rapes Celie and gets her pregnant. Moreover, he steals her babies and cruelly sends them away from their mother. He also steals the sisters' heritage. Celie and Nettie learn the fact that he is their stepfather through the end of the novel.

Albert is usually referred as Mr. _____ in the novel. Pa chooses him as a husband for Celie. He exploits Celie and ignores his children. He is in love with Shug Avery, who is a blues singer. Recognizing the faults in his past, he becomes a gentleman by the end of the novel.

Shug Avery is a blues singer, who earns a lot of money. She is a lover both to Albert and Celie. She plays a crucial role in gaining Celie self-confidence and self-respect. She helps Celie leave Albert and set up her own business.

Sofia Butler is Harpo's wife. Despite the difficulties in her life such as male domination and the racist white people in the town, she is powerful and quite honest. In the end, she works for Celie in general store.

Harpo is Sofia's husband and Albert's the eldest son. Albert forces him to be a dominating husband. Therefore, he tries to get Sofia to obey him the way Celie obeys Albert, but he fails. Though he has an emotional relation with Squeak (Mary Agnes) for a while, he finally returns to Sofia and enjoys a happier life with her.

Mary Agnes is also known as Squeak. After Sofia leaves Harpo, she becomes his lover. She submits to Harpo's wrong attitudes and actions until she begins a career as a blues singer. Her uncle, Bubber Hodges, rapes her while she is trying to save Sofia from prison.

3.2.1.2. Minor Characters

Celie's mother is an unnamed woman. When her husband is murdered, she goes mad. She gets married to Alphonso (Pa) after this event. She is a sick woman, and she dies after the first chapter.

Olivia is Celie's daughter. Alphonso sells her, and she is taken to Africa. She is raised by her aunt, Nettie, there.

Adam is Celie's son, who is also raised in Africa. He marries Tashi, an Olinkan African.

Corinne is Samuel's wife. She becomes Olivia's and Adam's adoptive mother. She is a Christian missionary.

Reverend Samuel is Corinne's husband. He is a Christian minister and missionary. After Corinne's death, he marries Nettie.

Mayor is a patronizing white man. He puts Sofia in jail for being rude to his wife and for attacking him.

Miss Millie is the mayor's wife. She is an aggressive white woman. She wants Sofia to be her maid.

Billy is Miss Millie's son. He doesn't like Sofia, and he is going to be a racist white man in the future.

Eleanor Jane is Miss Millie's daughter. Unlike her brother she loves Sofia very much.

Tashi is Olivia's best friend in Africa. She marries Adam and returns to America with him.

Catharine is Tashi's mother, who is for Olinkan taboo on girls' education. However, she later accepts Nettie's friendship and allows her daughter to be educated.

Odessa is one of Sofia's six sisters. Sofia lives with her when she leaves Harpo. Odessa looks after Sofia's children when she is in prison.

Germaine is a blues flute player and Shug's nineteen-year-old lover. They eventually become friends.

Henry Broadnax is known as Prizefighter. He becomes Sofia's boyfriend for a while after she leaves Harpo.

Bubber Hodges is Squeak's uncle. He is a warden at the prison. He rapes her when she goes to ask him to move Sofia out of jail.

3.2.2. Plot

Author: Alice Walker (1944-)

Book: The Color Purple

Type of Plot: Epistolary Novel¹

Time of Plot: The first half of the twentieth century

Locale: Georgia and Africa

The novel tells about a poor African-American woman named Celie, who is raped and treated badly by her father. She begins to write letters to God to mitigate her pain. Yet, Pa continues to abuse her. She gets pregnant twice, and Pa sells her babies, Olivia and Adam, to Samuel, who is a Christian minister and missionary. After Celie's mother's death she realizes that her father is interested in her younger sister, Nettie. Therefore, she tries to "protect her against Pa.

Albert, known as Mr. _____, wants to get married. Pa sells Celie to him. Nettie is still in school, and studies hard to be a teacher. Celie's life with Mr. _____ is as bad as her life with Pa. She looks after Mr. _____'s neglected children, works like a slave in the house, and she is still beaten. As Pa continually harasses Nettie, she leaves home and goes to her sister's house. Celie's vicious husband wants to rape Nettie, but Celie always prevents him from achieving his goal.

¹Epistolary novel is the novel which consists of letters written by one or more characters. On the one hand, the reader has a subjective point of view of events, for each letter belongs to only one character. Namely, only this character's perspective is depicted in his/her letter. On the other hand, it enables the reader to follow the character's thoughts and feelings without the author's interference. It also causes events to come out much earlier than expected.

(Carafi, <http://www.geocities.com/Athens/9089/colorpurple-epistolary.html>)

Finally, Mr. _____ banishes Nettie from the farm. The sisters have to separate, and Nettie promises to write letters to Celie. Unfortunately, Celie can't receive these letters; because, Mr. _____ hides them from her.

Nettie goes to the town and meets Samuel, who is raising Olivia and Adam. She gets a job as a maid with the family. Samuel's wife, Corrine, is also a missionary, and they prepare to go to Africa. Since one of the other missionaries refuses to go, Nettie is offered the woman's position and she goes to Africa with the family and children.

Meanwhile, Harpo, Mr. _____'s eldest son, is interested in a young girl named Sofia. He gets her pregnant and then marries her. Harpo tries to dominate her, but she is strong enough to defend herself, so he always fails. Sofia gets fed up with Harpo in time, and she decides to leave him. Then, she goes to her sister's house.

When Mr. _____ learns that his mistress, Shug Avery, is ill, he brings her home. He makes Celie take care of her. Celie is pleased to do so, because she falls in love with Shug. Shug doesn't like Celie at first, but afterwards changes her attitude. Meanwhile, Harpo builds a jukejoint after Sofia leaves, and he asks Shug, who is a blues singer, to sing at his place. She accepts his offer, and they manage to gather a large crowd there the first night. As Shug finds out that Mr. _____ is torturing Celie, she warns him to stop. She also learns that Celie hates sex with Mr. _____. So Shug tries to teach her the pleasures of sexual intercourse. But she realizes that Celie has lesbian tendencies. After that, she sleeps with Celie one night.

Sofia comes back with a prizefighter as her boyfriend. She goes to the jukejoint and meets Harpo with his girlfriend, Squeak. When Sofia and Harpo start dancing together, Squeak suddenly attacks Sofia. Sofia knocks her down and then leaves. Soon thereafter, Sofia meets the mayor and his wife, Miss Millie, in town. Miss Millie asks her to work as a nanny for her children. Sofia refuses her offer, and the mayor slaps her. This makes her very angry, so she hits him in turn. She is given twelve years in jail after this event, and seriously beaten by the authorities. It is really a heavy burden for Sofia. When Squeak learns that Sofia is in an unbearable situation, she goes to speak to the warden, her white uncle.

She succeeds in having Sofia move to the mayor's house to work as their servant, but she is raped by the warden. Squeak warns Harpo to call her with her real name, Mary Agnes, following the rape.

Shug returns with her husband, Grady, and they stay for a while. When she understands that Mr. _____ has been hiding Nettie's letters from Celie, she helps her find all of the letters and read them. They learn that Nettie has gone to Africa with the family and they are now in a small village, Olinka. Olinka people worship a roofleaf god, for they believe that it protects their homes from destruction in the rainy season. They consider Nettie as a second wife of Samuel, and this makes Corrine very jealous. Therefore, she prevents Nettie from meeting Samuel privately. Corrine becomes ill with a fever after a few years, and she is on the verge of dying. Nettie tells her the truth about Olivia and Adam that they are not her children, but her sister's. After learning the truth about children, Corrine dies in peace.

A road is built through the village which entirely destroys it. Olinka people are forced to use the new tin roofs and charged for water by the new owners of the land. For that reason, they leave to join the mbeles, a group of natives, to struggle against the white man.

Adam and Olivia are very good friends with a young girl named Tashi. Tashi decides to undergo the ritual scarification ceremony on her face to remember her roots. But she feels embarrassed due to the marks and soon leaves to join the mbeles. Adam follows her, and brings her home again, but she refuses to marry him with the fear that she won't be accepted in the United States. So Adam also gets his face marked to look alike, and this persuades her to get married. Then the whole family prepares to return home.

Celie decides to leave home with Shug after finding and reading Nettie's letters. When she tells Mr. _____ her decision, he tries to hit her. However, Celie is able to fight him back. Then Celie and Shug go to Memphis and they start making lots of pants. Celie eventually becomes so successful in designing pants that people want her to make pants for them. So they turn this work into a business. Meanwhile, Celie learns that Alphonso (Pa) is not her real father. She also learns that the house belongs to her and Nettie, so she immediately decides to return home after Pa's death.

Shug leaves with a young flute player for an adventure around the country. Celie naturally feels quite disappointed. Mr. _____ (Albert) finally realizes his faults and decides to give Celie her sister's last letter. He asks Celie to forgive him, and then they become good friends.

Shug eventually comes back, and she decides to retire. She has become old and needs to rest. Celie is a quite wealthy woman now. Because, she also inherits a dry goods store in addition to the house. She gives Sofia a job at her drygood store, and continues the pant business as well.

Finally, Nettie returns home with her husband and Celie's children. That is to say, Celie is able to see her beloved sister and her own children in the end. Now they are a big family, and Celie is quite happy for the first time in her life. So she writes her last letter to God to show her gratitude and finishes it by saying "Amen."

3.2.3. Mood

Throughout the novel the reader observes Celie's progress as a woman who struggles in order to declare her individual liberty in spite of all the drawbacks in her life. Therefore, the novel is written in a mood of fortitude with an implicit feeling of never-ending hope. Although she has to endure many hardships, such as poverty, racism, sexual harassment, she consistently manages to preserve her sedateness and hope. So she achieves her freedom and becomes very happy in the end .

3.2.4. Major Theme

Since the white community hates black people in the South, the Black, especially black women living in that society, inevitably experience the oppressive effect of racism. For instance, it's evidently racism which makes Sofia a prisoner. Although it's the mayor who slaps and humiliates her, nothing changes in his life. He is still free and self-assertive after that event. But as Sofia hits him in turn, she is treated as if she committed a crime , and she is sent to jail. Moreover, when Squeak (Mary Agnes) goes to see her white uncle, the warden in the jail, to ask for help about setting Sofia free, she is raped by him. Because he knows that raping a black girl doesn't put him in a burdensome situation. As it can be understood from these examples, it is this oppressive atmosphere which makes the black

Southerners try to form a community which has unity in itself. They are obviously aware of the fact that it is prerequisite to be able to survive. In spite of this awareness in them, the male members of the community destroy themselves by constantly maltreating their women both physically and mentally.

Alice Walker successfully portrays this violence through her women characters who have to endure the patriarchal norms of their society without questioning any of them. But Walker directs her readers' attention especially to the protagonist of the novel, Celie, who is cruelly beaten and abused both by her stepfather and her husband; because, both consider Celie only as a sexual object. As a result, what is injured is not only her physical body but also her soul and her real identity.

Another woman who also experiences the violence in the novel at the hands of her husband is Sofia. However, she is not as obedient as Celie. Because, Celie sacrifices herself just to protect her ill mother and younger sister, Nettie, from Pa's cruelty and sexual harassment. Getting married to Mr. _____ is in a sense an escape for her, but not a real solution as he is as abusive as Pa. On the other hand, Sofia is a physically stronger woman, and she dares to fight her husband, Harpo, back whenever he tries to beat her.

Shug Avery is obviously different from other women characters of the novel as she is a woman with self-confidence and self-respect. She thinks of herself to be worth loving, and she knows how to enjoy her life. So she becomes a model for the others, and willingly encourages Celie to explore not only her own body and beauty as a woman but also her own capacity to become a satisfied woman who is independent of the male characters in her life in the end.

In conclusion, the black female characters in The Color Purple are not only face to face with racial discrimination and humiliation inflicted by the white community but also they are dominated and badly treated by their own fathers and husbands, which also makes them humiliated in their own community. That is to say, they don't have any of the basic human rights, and so they are doubly oppressed. To sum up, the harsh treatment imposed upon the women by the men in the novel, and the women's struggle, especially the main character's struggle, against their ill-treatment to find out their real and own identities is the major theme of The Color Purple.

3.3. The Aim of Walker's Discourse in *The Color Purple*

Every discourse has an aim¹ which is considerably determined by the intent of the author. The aim in a discourse is considered to be very important since it has a great influence on almost everything in the process of discourse. In other words, the topic, the spoken or written form chosen, the lexical items and structural patterns employed by the speaker or the author are clearly determined in accordance with the purpose of the discourse. For that reason, it would be a mistake to say that the language used in a discourse is independent of any particular purpose. Of course, it may change depending on the type of discourse, but Kinneavy argues that "... no use of language is ... superior to any other... Each achieves a different and valid purpose. To achieve a specific purpose a specific aim of language must be used. Persuasion is bad science; but good rhetoric, and science may be good reference discourse but bad literature"(1971:66). In fact, it is this specific aim of language which determines the type of discourse. For instance, if its focus is on the encoder or decoder, it forms person discourse, which is divided into two as EXPRESSIVE and PERSUASIVE discourse (Kinneavy,1971). Expressive discourse concentrates on the encoder whereas persuasive discourse on the decoder.

The main character, Celie, in *The Color Purple* has a particular goal. What she desires is to get her freedom as a woman in society. However, there are usually some obstacles that prevent an easy attainment of this goal, and what she does in the novel through letters seems to be an explanation of her circumstances. In other words, they seem to have an expressive or therapeutic function for the protagonist on the surface. Yet, it is not the only thing Alice Walker wants to achieve in her novel. That becomes clear when one pays attention to her hidden messages she gives related to race discrimination, the oppressive male domination which makes the black female figures prisoners both in the white and black society, and black women's struggle against these hardships, etc.

¹James L.K. states that apart from the author's intent the aim of a discourse is partly determined by the cultural context and the situational context, for the text of the discourse is a part in both.

At that point, it can be said that she tries to awaken her readers to these matters in an implicit manner. As Charles Bazerman states “if [the reader wishes] to be able to understand fully ... how texts operate on [them], [they] need richer accounts of embedded relations, and not just apparent ones”(1992:107). Obviously Walker makes her main character use a special language in order to account for these embedded relations in her novel. It is not standard English, for Celie is an uneducated black woman from South America. It can be said that the author deliberately prefers using Black American vernacular in order to add authenticity to her work. Moreover, Walker writes as if she was speaking most probably as she wants to enable the reader to get the very emotion that they can find in speech.

To sum up, Alice Walker uses the language in such a successful way that it directly serves to the aim of her discourse. Although the emphasis seems to be on the encoder (Celie) in the beginning, in the course of the novel it is realized that it is in fact on the decoder (the reader) who is going to interpret the novel. Therefore, The Color Purple can be regarded as a persuasive discourse rather than merely an expressive one.

4. THE ANALYSIS

4.1. The Aim of the Analysis

It is no matter from whatever aspect one examines The Color Purple by Alice Walker, it is indisputably evident that she has a great interest in black women's lives in general terms. However, it is clearly seen that her focus is particularly on the main character and the protagonist of the novel, Celie.

In the beginning, Celie is described as a poor black girl who desperately loses her real self at the merciless hands of male characters. Raped, beaten, and silenced, she is inevitably disempowered and caught in such a blind valley that she has to suffer alone there. In spite of the fact that she knows it is impossible to get a reply, she writes many letters to God to express her painful experiences and in a way to mitigate the destructive effects of the psychological trauma she suffers from greatly and yields to. Her attempt to write letters to God is in fact a clear indication of her great need of exchange as a human being. As Seyla Benhabib argues "exchange is at the heart of our self-understanding as autonomous and social beings..." (Kaplan, 1996:125). But unfortunately, Celie's can not be described as an exchange in the real sense, for her addressee is nobody but a silent god.

In the course of the novel, it is not difficult to notice that Celie enters into a transformation process which encourages her to become rebellious first, and then which enables her to reach a genuine triumph by the end of the novel. Marc-A Christophe argues that "Alice Walker's The Color Purple is a song of joy and of triumph : triumph of one woman's, [Celie's], struggle...to [gain] the wholeness of her being"(1999:101). Nevertheless, it is a fact that this transformation process to get her wholeness is as difficult as the oppressive circumstances under which she has to live. But at the same time, it has a vital importance in terms of showing the main character that what she really has to do is to search for the meaning of her life through the realities which are hidden in her own experiences. She has to struggle against all the hardships with great fortitude. Audre Lorde emphasizes the importance of this point very well by saying that "change means growth, and growth can be painful. But we sharpen self-definition by exposing the self in work and struggle... For Black and white, old and young, lesbian and heterosexual women alike, this can mean new paths to... survival"(Allan, 1995:69).

In other words, Celie understands that the only thing which will enable her to get rid of her scars of oppression is to discover the truth about her beaten spirit and personality. Once she realizes this truth, the feeling of acceptance in her turns into anger, rebellion, and eventually she is able to get the key to independence.

With this great awareness in her, Celie manages to complete her long journey which she started with no power to declare her existence. At the end of the novel, it is seen that she grows from self-negation to self-revelation, which should be celebrated by heart. Because, what she achieves is clearly not only to survive but also to fulfil some sense of security and steadiness despite several threats such as family violence, physical and psychological exploitation in her life (Adams,1991:3406). As a consequence, she deserves to be rewarded with the delights of self-actualization and liberty.

Mary Helen Washington states that Walker questions not only the external realities facing her woman characters but also she carefully deals with the inner world of each. Washington also adds that:

What particularly distinguishes Alice Walker in her role as apologist and chronicler for black women is her evolutionary treatment of black women; that is, she sees the experiences of black women as a series of movements from woman totally victimized by society and by the men in their lives to growing developing women whose consciousness allows them to have control over their lives (1981:453).

At that point, it can be easily inferred that Celie is by no means an exception to Walker's women characters mentioned in the quotation above; on the contrary, she is only one of these women, and she embodies them as a whole. Because, she is also dominated and alienated by men in the beginning, she undergoes a striking transformation process and awakens to the realities of both her self and her life; finally, she succeeds in turning her silence to an assertively speaking voice and so becomes her own boss.

Above all these things, what is quite important to notice about The Color Purple is the fact that the reader witnesses these movements in Celie's life through her letters and the language she employs in them. Walker argues that Celie "transforms illiterate speech into

something that is, at times, very beautiful, as well as effective in conveying her sense of her world”(Johnson,1996:96). Namely, it is nothing else but her language that gives her the power she needs in order to announce her existence.

In other words, Walker helps Celie describe her experiences in such a vivid and sincere way that she invites the reader to analyse and interpret these descriptions. As it is clear, there are four important phases in the main character’s life; her physical and psychological disempowerment, her awakening, fight for the self, and eventually her rebirth and self-actualization. In accordance with the purpose of this study, these phases will be dealt with in the following parts through an analysis and interpretation of various linguistic elements as the clear evidences of the author’s intentions inscribed into Celie’s language.

4.2. Celie, The Powerless

It is striking that although The Color Purple is a novel written in the form of letters, it does not begin with a letter but with an opening statement through which one can immediately feel the repressive control of a vicious authority over the protagonist, Celie.

“ You better not never tell nobody but God. It’d kill your mammy ”(3).

In the first sentence, the negation of the verb ‘tell’ twice and the usage of the negative pronoun ‘nobody’ as the object of the predicate are the indications of a clear-cut restriction imposed upon Celie about her freedom of speech. She is allowed to share her experiences and feelings only with God, and she knows that this is exactly what she has to do. Because, the relation between the verb ‘kill’ and the social relational deixis ‘your mammy’ in the following sentence proves the existence of a terrifying threat against Celie’s mother’s life. As a result, this threatening voice manages to hold Celie hostage, and so she, in desperation, becomes silent and obedient without questioning her situation, which will last for years. Although the owner of this threatening voice is unidentified, even in the first letter it becomes clear that it can be nobody but Pa¹ (Alphonso).

¹ It will be proved with some examples during the discussion of Pa’s manners towards Celie.

When Celie writes her first letter, she is only a fourteen-year-old young girl. That is, she is not experienced and strong enough to cope with the situation she is in. Just through the first four sentences of her first letter, it can be realized that Celie is really in a great confusion.

“Dear God,

I am fourteen years old. ~~I am~~ I have always been a good girl. Maybe you can give me a sign letting me know what is happening to me ”(3).

Her erasure of the incomplete state statement, ‘I am’, shows that she has doubts about her identity in such a way that she can not even describe or name herself. As she is unable to complete this sentence, she crosses it out, which evidently results from her lack of confidence. Another important point is the relation between the tense of the following sentence, present perfect, and the adjective ‘good’ in the same sentence. If these are thought together, it is seen that since Celie views herself as a good girl, she is incapable of grasping the cause of this obvious change in her life and feels rather confused. Therefore, the ability statement ‘...you can give...’ can be considered as a sincere demand of help from God.

At that point, it will be appropriate to discuss some important reasons which push Celie into this complex psychological state.

First of all, Pa’s ill-treatment and irresponsible attitude towards Celie can be identified as one of the reasons. It is clear that he sexually abuses her without a moment’s hesitation.

“He never had a kine word to say to me. Just say You gonna do what your mammy wouldn’t. First he put his thing up against my hip and sort of wiggle it around. Then he grab hold my titties. When that hurt, I cry. He start to choke me, saying You better shut up and git used to it ”(3).

Celie’s negation of the adjective ‘kine’ (kind) in the first sentence in fact portrays Pa’s usual treatment toward her. However, what she really expects from him is only to utter a word showing that he cares for Celie as her father. But what she faces is nothing more than a sorrowful disappointment. The subordinate clause of the following action statement is an

ability statement which refers to Celie's mother's inefficiency in giving Pa sexual pleasure due to her illness. So Pa inhumanly claims a sort of compensation from Celie assuming his wife's sexual role to his teenage child with a commanding voice 'You gonna...' The repetition of the subject pronoun 'he' in the action statements which Celie uses to describe Pa's movements while raping her and the verb 'choke' are other clues about his physical power and control over her. The verbs 'hurt' and 'cry' show that the protagonist is too young and physically not mature enough to resist his attacks. Moreover, Pa is not only quite indifferent to that fact but also he obviously believes just the opposite is true. It can be easily noticed if the capitalized 'Y's in the subject pronouns used by him for Celie are taken into consideration. Sabine Bröck and Anne Konnen state that "...the female body is regarded as woman's enemy, a trap; a girl's first menstruation is consequently described as an initiation into the terrors of patriarchal society"(Johnson,1999:89). Unfortunately, Celie is also unable to escape from this terror, and she is hopelessly caught in the sexual trap of man. In addition, the verbs 'shut up' and 'git (get) used to' clearly establish an anaphoric reference to Celie's father's prohibition which prefaces her letters, "You better not never tell nobody but God..."(3). Celie is aware that she must keep her silence and obey this prohibition to be able to protect her mother and survive. According to Belenky, silent women are women who "see blind obedience to authorities as being of utmost importance for keeping out of trouble and insuring their own survival"(Johnson,1999:105), and Celie is not at all different from these women defined in that way.

Being raped repeatedly by Pa, whom she believes to be her biological father, Celie becomes pregnant twice, which is presented as another trap for her. Since her mother doesn't know anything about the truth, she is really angry with her daughter while lying in her death bed.

" She die screaming and cussing.

She scream at me. She cuss at me "(4).

The verbs 'screaming' and 'cussing' in the first sentence, and their repetition in the following ones can be thought as an indication of her mother's anger.

During a conversation with her mother about her first baby, it is seen that Celie makes a striking identification.

“She ast me bout the first one Whose it is? I say God’s. I don’t know no other man or what else to say...Finally, she ast Where it is? I say God took it. He took it while I was sleeping. Kilt it out there in the woods. Kill this one too, if he can ”(4).

If it is read carefully, the association between the proper noun ‘God’ and the common noun ‘man’ and the person deixis ‘he’ becomes quite clear. Celie identifies man’s power and dominance over her with God’s authority, and the usage of the negative determiner ‘no other’ with the word ‘man’ specifies this association. It implies this man is certainly Pa, for there is not another male in Celie’s life. The negative cognitive statement, ‘I don’t know...what else to say...’, reminds the reader of Pa’s threatening prohibition once again, which prevents Celie from confessing the truth. In this sense, she views Pa as powerful as God, and has no other choice except for accepting her situation. As it can be understood from the action statements ‘He took it’, ‘Kilt it...’, Celie strongly believes that Pa has taken away and killed her baby ruthlessly. What is more, the last action statement shows that she is aware that he will certainly do the same thing to her second baby as soon as he gets a chance.

In deed, Pa uses his physical power not only to abuse Celie’s body to have sexual satisfaction but also to daunt her no matter what the reason is. For instance, when Celie feels that Pa has an evil intention about having Nettie’s fresh body to enjoy himself sexually, she sacrifices herself for her sister this time.

“ I tell him I can fix myself up for him. I duck into my room and come out wearing horsehair, feathers, and a pair of high heel shoes. He beat me for dressing trampy but he do it to me anyway ”(9).

First of all, the verb ‘fix up’ indicates that she thinks there is something wrong with her appearance; in a way, she does not consider herself as a woman beautiful enough to attract a man.

“ I am all the time sick and fat ”(12).

The adjectives ‘sick’ and ‘fat’ used in this state statement by Celie to negate herself justify this idea quite well. The nouns ‘horsehair, feathers’, the adjective phrase ‘high heel shoes’ are clearly the symbols of womanhood in her mind. Namely, she wears them to look and feel

womanish. However, all her efforts are in vain. Because, Pa thinks that she looks like a promiscuous woman rather than being an attractive woman as it can be inferred from the adjective 'trampy' he uses for Celie's dressing style. As a result of her naive attempt to protect Nettie, she is firstly punished with physical violence as she states explicitly. But it is not enough for Pa to transfer his anger. What is referred to with the pronoun 'it' is obviously sexual intercourse with him, which can be seen as another punishment for Celie as it lacks intersubjectivity. That is, it is something done to her unfeelingly without her consent.

Another male authority figure in Celie's life is Mr. _____ . He is a widower with mischievous children, and he needs a woman both to meet his needs and to look after the children. Celie helplessly becomes his new victim to be oppressed brutally as a result of a disgusting bargain with Pa during which she is regarded as an article of trade.

*"She ain't fresh... She spoiled. Twice... She ugly. He say.
You can do everything just like you want to and she ain't gonna make you feed
it or clothe it... She ain't smart either..."(9-10).*

The negative adjectives , 'not fresh, spoiled, ugly, not smart', clearly indicate how worthless Celie is in Pa's eyes. Particularly, the adjective 'fresh' proves that she is considered to be only flesh with no spirit in her. By using the pronoun 'everything', Pa enables Mr. _____ to behave in any way he wishes in his treatment toward Celie. It is certainly a great injustice as nobody has a right to limit one's freedom by giving it to the ownership of somebody else. Therefore, what Pa does is enslaving Celie by giving her ownership to a new oppressor who will absolutely ignore Celie's feelings in the same way as her ex-oppressor did. Another important thing embedded in the object pronoun 'it' is that Pa clearly reduces Celie to the position of an object which can be bought and sold. Luce Irigaray comments on the subject in the following way: "Patriarchal society puts value on women only to the degree that they serve the purpose of commodities of exchange between man. [A] woman... is traditionally a use-value for man, an exchange value among men; in other words, a commodity"(Elsley,1999:164). As it is clear, the patriarchal society is another trap in Celie's life. As being the dominated and the objectified in that society, Celie is treated merely as something which exists to serve for her male authorities.

Under these circumstances, it would be quite unrealistic to expect a kind of miracle to take place in the main characters's life after marrying Mr. _____. Because, Mr. _____, being one of the irresponsible members of this man-made society, will undoubtedly make his own contribution to the chaos Celie is in. Namely, from that time on, he has the power to decide on behalf of his slave, to beat and to use her as his tool of sexual pleasure.

It is seen that when he is going to beat her, Celie's psychology changes in such a way that it can be described as strange.

"He say, Celie, get the belt... It all I can do not to cry. I make myself wood. I say to myself, Celie, you a tree. That's how come I know trees fear man" (22).

The noun 'belt' is surely the symbol of physical violence directed towards Celie. Although she is aware that she is going to be hurt, her attitude against this dehumanizing treatment is really very interesting. Since she does not have enough power to protect herself, the protagonist tries to believe that she is something lifeless, that is why she resembles herself to 'wood'. Similarly, the metaphor in the sentence '...you a tree' is another indication of her idea that she should turn herself into something inanimate and inert to be able to resist. For instance, it is very easy for a cruel man to choose and cut off a tree which is unable to cry or fight back. In the same way, Celie is also as silent and motionless as a tree; because, she knows that even if she cries, nobody will hear her voice or come to help. This shows how lonesome she feels. Her unwillingness to respond, her passive acceptance of this ill-treatment apparently result from her inability to determine her life. Perceiving herself as a non-living being, she certainly alienates herself from the real self. Marc-A Christophe explains this crucial point by saying: " This depersonalization we witness in Celie... is standard clinical behaviour of alienated people who, when facing seemingly insurmountable problems, pretend to be other than who they are and attempt to transcend their situation by transforming their reality "(1999:104).

The influence of Mr. _____'s tyranny over poor Celie also can be seen by the fact that she is not able to call him by his first name, Albert.

"I say Mr. _____ " (15), *"Mr. _____ be gonna all night..."*(26), *"Mr. _____ be shaving"*(31), *"M. _____ laugh"*(47), *"Mr. _____ don't love me"*(57), *"Mr. _____ think"*(93), *"Mr. _____ not going to let his wife..."*(124), *" Mr. _____ walk up"*(189), etc.

The social absolute deixis ' Mr. _____ ' used by Celie for times in different parts of the novel persuasively points out the lack of intimacy and formality between them.

The protagonist, who has been enforced to stay sexually inert under the effect of overwhelming oppressiveness of incest-rape by Pa, obviously does not depict a different outlook towards sex with Mr. _____ , for he is sexually as abusive as her father. When Shug, who is going to play a very important role in Celie's awakening process, asks whether she likes sleeping with Mr. _____ , Celie speaks honestly and says:

"Naw, I say. Mr. _____ can tell you, I don't like it at all. What is it to like?... Most times I pretend I ain't there. He never know the difference... Just do his business, get off, go to sleep "(68).

As it is seen, Celie's response to Shug's question is sharp and immediate. The first affective statement, 'I don't like...', makes it explicit that the main character does not view sex with Mr. _____ as something satisfying or pleasurable. The following interrogative affective statement, 'What is it to like?', also demonstrates that Celie finds sexual intercourse meaningless and inessential on her behalf. By paying attention to the relationship between the verb 'pretend' and the spatial (place) deixis 'there' in the negative state statement, one can infer that she protests Mr. _____ by lying there silently and just waiting for it to be over. In addition, there is a remarkable irony in this extract. Although through the ability statement 'Mr. _____ can tell you...' Celie wants to emphasize Mr. _____ 's awareness of her negative feelings concerning sleeping with him, in the cognitive statement 'He never know...' she states that he is unconscious of the difference between her emotional presence and absence while doing sex, which leads to a contradiction.

That is to say, what is implied by this cognitive statement is just the opposite of the literal meaning it expresses. Because, the main character's purpose is to show that Mr. _____ is in fact aware of her psychology, her unwillingness. However, he is not interested in her feelings; he is entirely indifferent to her. Except for her objectified female body and sexuality, Celie is nothing to him. As it is clear, sex with him lacks feelings such as love, passion, and mutual fulfilment. That is why the protagonist thinks of it as only one of Mr. _____'s duties that he realizes in a mechanic way on her, which becomes clear when one takes her metaphoric use of the word 'business' into consideration.

Celie, entrapped physically and psychologically both by her father's and her husband's maltreatment, becomes so powerless that she is never able to have enough courage in order to protect herself against this inhumane male system. When Nettie, who is certainly more courageous in comparison with Celie, runs away from home due to Pa's increasing harassment and goes to Mr. _____'s house to take her sister's shelter, she discovers something rather disappointing. Because, she sees that Celie's marriage has not improved her life. What is more, she is very unhappy with Mr. _____ and his rotten children, which becomes clear in this dialogue between the sisters:

"It is like seeing you buried, she say."

"It is worse than that, I think"(18).

By the adjective 'buried', Nettie resembles Celie to a corpse as her life seems to be too difficult to endure for a person alive. Since she is nothing but a commodity in their eyes to be used for sex, labor, or scapegoating, through the comparative adjective 'worse' in the following cognitive statement Celie tries to show that her situation is more serious than Nettie thinks.

For that reason, Nettie wants to encourage Celie to defend herself and says:

"Don't let them run over you... You got to fight. You got to fight"(17).

By the action verb 'run over', Nettie describes the way they treat Celie very well. Because, being too demanding, they are absolutely ignorant of her existence as a real subject. The focus on the subject pronoun 'You' in the repeated constraint statement, 'You got to fight', is a direct indication of Nettie's effort to make her sister comprehend that it is nobody else but only her self who has to struggle against everything and everybody tormenting her. However, Celie's following sentences depict her imposed inability to take action and so her desperation once again.

“ But I don't know how to fight. All I know how to do is stay alive ”(17).

The negative cognitive statement starting with the adversative conjunction 'but' concretizes the fact that the protagonist has never dared to guard herself. The verb 'stay' and the adjective 'alive' in the second cognitive statement unmask the reason of her passive acceptance of their treatment. Celie is aware that struggling will be costly as she has been conditioned by Pa from the very beginning to think that she is allowed to survive as long as she causes no trouble for the oppressor. Thus, she makes herself walk blindly through life and do whatever necessary to survive.

The main character, Celie, “whose name by various etymologies means holy, healing, and heavenly” (Hite,1989:109), forces herself into the idea that she will be able to get free from all her pains in the life after death. She says:

“ This life soon be over... Heaven last all ways ”(39).

It is clear that 'heaven' stands for a painless life and independence for Celie. By contrasting the adjective 'over' with the verb 'last', she emphasizes that her sufferings are all worldly and so temporary. At this point, it can be said that Celie is a real Pollyanna. Because, instead of trying to face and cope with the truth, she prefers to have a kind of alleviation in the belief that she will be rewarded with heaven's peace for her yielding sooner or later. It is evidently this belief which directs her into stoicism and an unquestioned obedience to all the commands.

It is pointed out that Celie's passivity is in fact an inheritance from her mother (Berlant,1983:218 ; Barker,1999:56). Having lived under oppressive conditions, she is also considered to have been a victim whose misery never let her fight back in life. But Celie still has a chance to alter her fate. The only thing she must achieve is to discover the hidden power in her essence, which will be possible through an environment of sisterhood.

4.3. Celie is Awakening

It is clear that Celie is subjected to an unbearable oppression. She is constantly abused and humiliated by men. As a result of their harsh treatment, the main character perceives herself as nothing more than an uneducated, ugly, and insignificant black woman. However, it is seen that she succeeds in expressing her feelings by writing even in the most difficult situations. In other words, she already has a voice though it is not heard and responded to. Therefore, what she really needs is to improve that voice to resist oppression. Although it seems to be a very difficult task for her, it is not impossible at all. Barbara Christian puts forward that "... the possibility of empowerment for black women [is dependent on creating] a community of sisters that can alter the present-day unnatural definitions of woman and man"(Johnson, 1999: 85). That is, the establishment of a community of sisterhood in which the main character is able to experience the feelings of love and encouragement will enable her to become aware of the realities of the self. And without a doubt, this awakening process will be a milestone in the protagonist's life in terms of stimulating a great desire in her not only to heal her scars of oppression but also to struggle for her individual liberty.

At that point, it can be said that Shug Avery, with her considerable independence from male dominance, has an important influence on the protagonist. Namely, she has everything Celie thinks she does not: beauty, sensuality, confidence, and independence. For that reason, Shug becomes such a strong mentor for Celie that her lessons provide the main character with a great insight about her body and spirit.

Celie obviously identifies with Shug from the eighth page of the novel, when she sees a picture of her strong mentor's. Clearly, her first impressions are quite positive:

“... Shug Avery was a woman. The most beautiful woman I ever saw. She more pretty then my mama. She bout ten thousand times more prettier then me. I see her there in furs... Her eyes serious tho. Sad some ”(8).

The state statement, ‘Shug Avery was a woman’, indicates that Shug is the reflection of the ideal female portrait in Celie’s mind. She is attracted to Shug as it can be proved through the superlative adjective ‘the most beautiful’. The comparative adjective ‘more pretty’ and the following double comparative adjective ‘more prettier’ strengthened by the adverb ‘ten thousand times’ depict that even Shug’s physical appearance in a picture is enough for Celie to feel that she is quite different from her and her mother. In fact, she is different from all the other women who are broken into pieces by their men through years of abuse. These women are never allowed to wear make-up or dress in the way they like. They can not act or even feel womanly; otherwise, they are doomed to be severely punished. Hence, through the comparisons, Celie tries to show that Shug is certainly not one of them; in contrast, she is a woman who is able to enjoy her beauty freely by having her photographs taken. In addition, the noun ‘furs’ marks another important quality that Shug has but Celie lacks. This expensive dress is evidently the symbol of her economic power. Because, no other woman Celie knows can afford or wear it. As it can be inferred, Shug’s qualities, her beauty and her economic power, are exactly admirable for Celie. That is why the protagonist begins to idolize her. However, these qualities are not the only things that activate Celie’s emotions. The protagonist uses the adjectives ‘serious’ and ‘sad’ to describe the expression she sees in Shug’s eyes. Because, this expression is certainly not new to her. On the contrary, she is quite acquainted with it, for it is the image of her own suffering. It can be said that this also creates a great intimacy between the main character and Shug.

Another point that makes Shug unusual in Celie’s eyes is her treatment of her lover, Mr. ———. When she considers Mr. ———’s commanding manners towards her and her compulsory passivity as a result of this, it is not difficult for Celie to grasp the difference. As it has been stated before, she is used to be given orders:

“ He tell me, Wash this. Iron that. Look for this. Look for that. Find this. Find that ”(24).

These imperative statements point out that he neither requests nor helps Celie but just behaves authoritatively in order to feel manly. And Celie knows that she has to obey his orders to survive. Therefore, she is never able to bring out her reactions. On the other hand, Shug feels free to do what Celie can not.

While Shug is ill, she stays and is looked after by Celie in Mr. _____'s house. One night, when she wakes up, she sees Mr. _____ sitting in her room and chewing his pipe with no tobacco in it. She says:

“ I don't want to smell no stinking blankety-blank pipe, you hear me, Albert? ”(43).

Although Mr. _____'s behaviour can be considered as an indication of his worry for Shug, she is clearly ignorant of this. What is more, the negative affective statement, 'I don't want to smell...', shows that she is courageous enough to express anything that disturbs her without hesitation. In other words, she clearly does not acknowledge his authority. The social relational deixis 'you' and her calling him directly with his first name 'Albert' can be shown as other strong clues which support this idea.

In the course of the novel, it is seen that the intimacy between these two women grows considerably. But attributing this development merely to Shug's beauty, economic power, and her independence from male domination would be insufficient. Because, Celie finds some other important things in Shug, which she has not been able to experience so far. For instance, Shug begins to satisfy her need of communication.

“ Mr. _____ drink all through Christmas... Me and Shug cook, talk, clean the house, talk, fix up the tree, talk, wake up in the morning, talk ”(95).

When the subject of the action statement, 'Me and Shug cook...', is considered carefully, it is understood that Celie still views herself as an object while Shug is a real subject for her. However, the additive conjunction 'and' indicates the fact that the main character tries to achieve a sense of togetherness despite her awareness of this sharp difference. It should be noticed that the action verbs, 'cook, clean, fix up', refer to the usual things that Celie is already expected to do. But the verb 'talk' obviously points to a very new taste for her. Because, now, the protagonist has somebody that listens and responds to her in the real

sense. For the very first time in her life, her voice is heard. The repetition of this verb is also a clear indication of excitement and pleasure she deeply feels. In addition, as it can be inferred from the action statement, ‘Mr. _____ drink...’, he participates neither in their activities nor in their conversation even though it is a special day, Christmas. But instead, he prefers drinking; namely, he does something he believes to be manly. According to Deborah Tannen, “[while] women speak and hear a language of connection and intimacy, ... men speak and hear a language of status and independence... [That is,] males tend to seek status within their worlds, and the best way to achieve and maintain status is to give orders”(Johnson,1999:125). This explains not only why Albert, by giving orders, always tries to make Celie feel his power over her but also the reason of his unwillingness to take part in women’s conversation.

During another conversation with Shug, Celie tells her that she is beaten severely by her husband. Shug is astonished as Albert has never attempted to hit her.

“ What he beat you for? she ast.

For being me and not you.

Oh, Miss.Celie, she say, and put her arms around me.

I won’t leave, ... until I know Albert won’t even think about beating you ”(66-67).

The interrogative action statement, ‘What he...’, indicates that Shug is not indifferent to Celie’s situation; moreover, she is really curious to know the cause of his violence. Here one should pay attention to the relationship between the person deictics ‘me’ and ‘you’. Because, it shows that the protagonist believes she is harshly treated, for she is not a woman like Shug. Shug is beautiful and attractive, she is not; Shug is satisfactory, she is not; Shug is confident, she is not... In short, she thinks that she has nothing desirable for Albert. So, she has no other choice except for being subservient to him. The interjection word ‘oh’ shows how touchy Celie’s response is for Shug. Evidently she is affected, and she doesn’t conceal her feelings. In contrast, she tries to show her affection as it can be understood from the action statement, ‘[she] put her arms around me.’ In addition, the social absolute deixis ‘Miss. Celie’ is a clear indication of Shug’s respect towards the main character. Celie is undeniably a self-sacrificing woman. Because, she puts up with several hardships to protect both her mother and sister. However, she has never been protected by somebody against this unjust male system. When the negative action statement, ‘I won’t leave...’, is taken into consideration, it is seen that Shug is quite willing to fulfil this to help Celie, who is unable to defend herself at the

moment. Her determination to take action against Albert in order to stop him is indicated through the cognitive statement, ‘... Albert won’t even think ...’, in the following subordinate clause. It is certain that Shug’s attitude is another factor which leads to the establishment of an emotional bond between these characters.

Shug’s helpful and protective manners strengthen the protagonist’s belief that she is a reliable person. This belief makes Shug certainly a good role model for Celie. Therefore, Shug will be able to overthrow some taboos in Celie’s mind, and make her awaken not only to her own self but also to the realities of life.

First of all, Shug arouses a strong desire in the main character to get to know her body. Until she meets Shug, Celie has been conditioned to see her body as something that makes her subordinate. Because, so far her body has merely disempowered and victimized her. Daniel Ross expresses this point by saying:

... Because the female body is the most exploited target of male aggression, women have learned to fear or even hate their bodies. Consequently, women often think of their bodies as torn or fragmented, a pattern evident in Walker’s Celie. To confront the body is to confront not only an individual’s abuse but also the abuse of women’s bodies throughout history: as the external symbol of women’s enslavement, this abuse represents for women a reminder of her degradation and her consignment to an inferior status (1988:70).

However, in the course of the novel, the main character will be able to develop an interest in her body with Shug’s help. Celie’s prejudice about the female body begins to change when she sees Shug completely naked.

*“First time I got the full sight of Shug Avery long black body with it black plum nipples... I thought I had turned into a man.
What you staring at? She ast... You never seen a naked woman before?
No ma’am, I said. I never did...
I wash her body, it feel like I’m praying”*(45).

It is evident that the main character is in fact sexually alive “contrary to the predominating cultural text”(Allan,1995:85). Her description of Shug’s body, particularly the adjective ‘plum’ and the noun ‘nipples’, prove the fact that she is really attracted to Shug and has a sort of erotic excitement towards her. Therefore, the verbal substitution in ‘I never did’ in Celie’s answer to Shug’s question, ‘You never seen...?’, in fact expresses something more than its

literal meaning. What Celie really tries to indicate is that she has never felt like that before. This idea becomes more explicit when her metaphoric use of the word 'man' is considered. Yet, the simile realized through the verb 'praying' in the last sentence illustrates another important point that should be noticed. The main character raises her physical passion to a spiritual level unlike a man who would most probably think of getting sexual pleasure out of such a scene.

In a conversation about sex with Albert, Celie tells Shug that she hates it. This moment is a good opportunity for Shug not only to make Celie discover her own body but also to awaken her to the truth about sexual intercourse.

"... Miss Celie, she say, you still a virgin.

Why I ast?

Listen, she say, right down there in your pussy is a little button that gits real hot when you do you know what with somebody. That the good part. But other parts good too, she say. Lot of finger and tongue work"(69).

Metaphorically, Shug resembles Celie's sexual organ to a 'button'. She states that it gets 'hot', which clearly refers to stimulation one experiences during sex. Indeed, what makes sex pleasurable is this stimulation as indicated by the adjective 'good'. Furthermore, if one pays attention to the determiner phrase 'lot of finger and tongue work', it is understood that Shug also tries to show that touching is as important as being animated to have sexual satisfaction. Thus, Shug's message immediately becomes clear to Celie: " if the important organ is not a hole but a button, [then] the stimulation can come from... finger and tongue"(Hite, 1989:117). So, the protagonist understands that penetration is not essential for female sexual pleasure, and enjoyment is more important than intercourse. Although Celie is a woman who has been sexually abused both by her father and husband, it is quite interesting that Shug metaphorically calls her a virgin. Because, the main character has never realized that there could be sexual pleasure for a woman so far. In addition, one day Shug shows Celie the parts of her sexual organ in mirror. Seeing and touching its parts, she is eventually able to accept her body as it can be inferred from the possessive pronoun in the sentence " *It mine* "(70).

It is obvious that Celie does not know anything about sexual orgasm, for the sexual intercourse with men is always unsatisfactory for her. But Shug also achieves to make her experience its pleasure.

“ She say, I love you, Miss Celie. And then she kiss me on the mouth... Then us touch each other. It feel like heaven...”(97-98).

By the affective statement , ‘I love you’, Shug shows Celie that their relationship is not devoid of emotion. When the relationship between the verb ‘kiss’ and the noun ‘mouth’ is taken into consideration, it is seen that Shug’s purpose in kissing Celie can’t only be to show her affection. What she tries to do is evidently to stimulate the protagonist. That is to say, this is a kind behaviour to activate Celie. Besides, the pronouns ‘us’ and ‘each other’ in the following action statement indicate that their sexual relationship has reciprocity. And it clearly gives Celie a real satisfaction as not only sex with Shug is not painful but also she is able to meet her own needs. As Royster says “Celie’s homosexuality is clearly... not congenital but a predilection or pathology that results from being the victim of not merely male but also father figure abusiveness: She is too afraid of her father to look at boys; she expresses a desire for only one person; and she seems unaware of the sexuality of other women”(Thielman, 1999:70). That is why she associates her feelings with the word ‘heaven’ this time rather than the word ‘business’ which she uses to describe sex with Albert.

Finally, it is seen that Shug manages to awaken Celie both to the beauty of her own body and to the enjoyment of love. Namely, she helps the main character to become a subject in the real sense. As it is seen, while she is objectified by Pa and Albert, Shug never attempts to gain her possession. Because, she has respect for Celie’s individuality. There is neither victory nor defeat in their relationship. That is, although Celie’s life with men hinders her self-development, her bond with Shug brings her positive correctives (Weston, 1999:156).

Shug Avery, who is both a friend and lover to Celie, also helps her to develop a very different understanding of God. In the beginning, when Shug asks her to describe God, the protagonist says:

“He big... and tall... and white ”(165).

The adjectives 'big' and 'tall' indicate that the main character believes God is a powerful being. In addition, the image of God in her mind is not different from the white's traditionally defined God (Barker,1999:61), which is clearly pointed out by the adjective 'white'. Being dominated and abused by men, she has always expected consolation from God as it can be inferred from the prepositional phrase " *with God help* "(5). However, this belief does not improve anything in her life; on the contrary, she is enslaved, and can never accomplish what she wants to do.

As a result, she becomes responsive, and decides to write to her sister, Nettie, rather than to God. What is more, she begins to reject this traditional version of God, and finally loses her faith in him.

" What God do for me?

...the God I been praying and writing to is a man. And act just like all the other mens I know. Trifling, forgetful and lowdown "(164).

Through the interrogative action statement 'What God...?', the main character obviously questions the meaning of God's existence in her life. Particularly, when Celie finds out that her biological father had been killed, resulting in her mother's nervous breakdown, and that Pa was only her stepfather, she becomes wrathful. The negative adjectives 'trifling, forgetful, lowdown' are clear indications of her anger towards God. It is evident that God is no longer honourable in Celie's eyes as he gives her a life full of pain like other men around her. That is why the protagonist directly identifies God with man through a metaphor in the state statement 'God... is a man.'

Nevertheless, as it has been stated, Shug is able to change Celie's ideas about God by discussing the nature of God and universe with her.

" God is inside you and inside everybody else. You come into the world with God. But only them that search for it inside find it. I believe God is everything. My first step from the old white man was trees. Then air. Then birds. Then other people. I think it pisses God off if you walk by the color purple and don't notice it "(166-167).

Shug explicitly states that God and human beings can not be separated through the action statement 'You come... with God.' The repetition of the preposition 'inside', and its relation to the pronouns 'you' and 'everybody' indicate that one should turn into himself/herself in order to reach God. Furthermore, it is important to notice that the nouns 'trees, air, birds, people' are closely related to each other. Because, all of them are the hyponyms of the same superordinate 'nature.' When they are thought together with the temporal conjunction 'then', it is understood that there is a great chain of being in nature, and every thing is a part of a whole¹. Therefore, by emphasizing the parts' interrelatedness, Shug in fact tries to make the main character see that each of them should be given importance. Similarly, using the noun phrase 'the color purple' symbolically for the unnoticed, Shug aims at gaining Celie an existentialist view that everything in nature should be noticed and loved just because it exists. Because, they are all together expressions of the divine.

In the end, Shug succeeds in convincing Celie that she herself is a part of everything. Keller states that "this is a clear case of oceanic feeling, of feeling connected to all life, to all of creation"(Johnson, 1999:95). Thus, it can be said that, through this conviction, Shug precisely encourages the protagonist once again to go on her voyage of self-discovery.

Sofia, Albert's daughter-in-law, is another important female character who contributes to the protagonist's awakening process. Although her husband, Harpo, wants her to be a submissive wife like his stepmother, Celie, Sofia bravely refuses to live under male domination. At that point, Harpo asks his father's idea about what he should do. And Albert advises his son in the following way:

" You ever hit her? Mr. _____ ast.

Naw, he say low, embrass.

Well how you spect to make her mind? Wives is like children. You have to let 'em who got the upper hand "(34).

¹ Shug's belief that God dwells in everything reminds the philosophy of Transcendentalism put forward by Ralph W. Emerson, who was against all kinds of institutionalized religion.

The verb 'hit' clearly indicates that Albert tries to provoke Harpo to become aggressive against his wife. It is striking that while he resembles women to children to describe them as powerless and defenceless beings, through the synecdoche 'the upper hand' in the following constraint statement he puts man to the center of power and authority. As it can be inferred from the cognitive statement '... how you spect ...?', Albert believes that using physical violence is certainly the only way, and so necessary to make women accept their superiority. However, it is really very interesting that this causes Harpo to feel incapable and ashamed as indicated through the adjectives 'low' and 'embrace'. In fact, Harpo is not an oppressive person, and he loves Sofia. For that reason, the way he feels reveals the fact that he is psychologically under the effect of patriarchy and its strict norms. What he is supposed to do is evidently to prove his manhood even at the expense of his marriage, but it won't be as easy as he thinks.

“Next time us see Harpo his face a mess of bruises. His lips cut. One of his eyes shut like a fist. He walk stiff and say his teef ache”(35).

With the pressure of the social conventions, Harpo eventually attacks Sofia. But if the noun 'bruises', the adjective 'cut', the adverb 'stiff[ly]', the verb 'ache', and the simile 'like a fist' are taken into consideration, one understands that it is not Sofia but Harpo himself who gets beaten. In other words, the result is a complete failure for him. Because, Sofia is physically quite strong, and to his surprise knows how to fight back very well. One day she tells Celie:

“All my life I had to fight. I had to fight my daddy. I had to fight my brothers. I had to fight my cousins and uncles”(38).

The relationship between the repeated verb 'fight', the social relational deictics 'my daddy, my brothers, my cousins, my uncles', and the time expression 'all my life' in these constraint statements points out that even in her own family, where normally she should feel safe and secure, Sofia had to struggle against men's physical attacks. It is obvious that she has always been courageous and determined enough to defend herself. Therefore, the protagonist comes to the conclusion that no matter how hard one tries, it seems to be almost impossible to defeat Sofia as it is clear in the constraint statement below:

“ Some womens can’t be beat. Sofia one of them”(57).

Celie is certainly impressed by Sofia’s physical strength. Because, she is able to achieve something again that Celie can not. As it is seen, Sofia rebelliously places herself outside the context of patriarchal society and family norms, which makes her an independent individual. Marc-A Christophe argues that “... Sofia’s struggle against Harpo’s will [is another] catalytic moment which [makes] Celie aware of the existence of alternative rapport between male and female”(1999:105). To put it more explicitly, Sofia shows the main character that internalizing her anger and remaining silent against male brutality only enslave her. Thus, from that moment on, Celie knows that it is essential to reveal her anger in any way she can in order to take bigger steps towards the final.

Another thing that strengthens the bond between Celie and Sofia is clearly their joint quilting, which is in fact a symbolic act. In a fight between Sofia and Harpo, the curtains of the room become torn. Then, Sofia offers Celie to put together the fragments to make a quilt pattern.

“ Me and Sofia work on the quilt. It is a nice pattern call Sister’s Choice ”(53).

The adjective ‘nice’ shows that having been separated from women all her life, Celie now enjoys working together with another woman to create something that she really likes. Furthermore, when the determiner phrase ‘Sister’s Choice’ is considered, it is seen that Celie, for the first time, is able to assert her right to choose. Namely, their solidarity brings about an important change in Celie’s life, and this can be described as the first step the protagonist takes towards becoming an autonomous individual. Although Celie is still in a passive state, her perception changes considerably. Radka Donnel-Vogt, who is a professional quilter, states that “ the quilt is first of all a speculum by which a woman looks into herself, and when she finds her unknown and disregarded beauty [and power], she can find also the courage to prevail along with others for her share in the world ”(Elsley,1999:166). So, using this speculum, the main character gets a chance to see her self and the fragments of her life more closely. Also she understands that what she must do is to struggle in order to construct a whole out of her pieces.

To sum up, both Shug and Sofia play a very important role in Celie's life. Being the protagonist's role models, they awaken her to the beauties and power in her core. In other words, gradually growing her consciousness of the self, these two women give the main character the keys of the doors that open into her self-realization. Now, it is high time for Celie to protest her oppressor to become an independent woman who is able to take charge of her own life.

4.4. Celie, The Combatant

Obviously Celie is influenced by Shug to a great extent. Because, Shug is such a courageous and free-willed woman that she never lets Albert behave authoritatively towards her. But, old Mr. _____, Albert's father, doesn't approve of his son's relationship with Shug, and he constantly criticizes her.

"She nappy headed... She ain't even clean. I hear she got the nasty woman disease" (49).

As it is seen, the words he utters about Shug are rather insulting. The negative adjectives 'nappy headed', 'not clean', and 'nasty' indicate that he views Shug as a wicked woman. What makes him talk about her in that way is in fact Shug's rejection of the established norms of the male community. In other words, Shug irritates the old man since she is a nonconformist. Although Albert loves Shug, he can't say or do anything to defend his lover against his father's humiliation. However, Celie, who is also in love with Shug, can't stand this situation, and takes her first action against the oppression of patriarchy. When her father-in-law wants her to bring a glass of water, the protagonist does what she has been told to do, but she is not completely obedient this time.

"I drop little spit in Old Mr. _____ water. I twirl the spit round with my finger" (49).

Evidently Celie is still unable to express her feelings verbally, but at least she does not curb her anger any more as it can be understood from the repetition of the action verb 'spit'. Although she rebels on behalf of Shug, the subject pronoun 'I' she uses in both sentences clearly indicates her raising sense of self.

When Celie discovers that Albert has been hiding her sister's letters which were sent to her from Africa for years, she becomes shocked. Shug helps her to put Nettie's letters in order by their postmarks, and then they together begin to read them. The main character bursts into tears after the first two or three letters. Because, she learns that her dear children, Olivia and Adam, are alive. And they have been living with their aunt since Pa cruelly took them away from her. This bitter truth naturally drives her mad, and she tells Shug:

“ How I'm gon keep from killing him. I think I feel better if I kill him. I feels sickish. Numb, now ”(122).

The repetition of the action verb 'kill' and its relation to the affective statement 'I feel better' makes clear that the protagonist has an irresistible desire to annihilate Albert. Furthermore, when she realizes that he has deliberately deprived her of her sister's and children's love and support just to make her completely desparate, it is seen that not only her pain is aggravated but also her anger grows. So, she feels disgusted, and loses her consciousness as it can be understood from the adjectives 'sickish' and 'numb'. At that point, Shug tries to calm her down by saying:

“ Nobody feel better for killing nothing ”(122).

Through this negative affective statement, Shug aims at showing the main character the fact that ending his life will not at all help her to solve the Gordian knot in her heart. What is more, it will certainly make everything worse for her. Because, if Celie killed Albert, she wouldn't be different from anyone who walked past the color purple, and ignored its existence. As a result, she once more sees that the only way to continue the rest of her life in peace is liberating herself from her oppressor as soon as possible.

After a period of time, Shug decides to leave Albert's house to go to Memphis. One evening, when everybody is in the room, she tells him that she is also going to take Celie with her, and this obviously frustrates Albert:

*“ Celie is coming to Memphis with me.
Over my dead body, Mr. _____ say ”(170).*

The tense of the action statement 'Celie is coming...' points out that Shug is really determined to do what she says. Because, she doesn't ask Albert for permission, or give him an explanation. But she just informs him of her decision. Feeling that he is losing his authority, Albert immediately becomes responsive. He tries to seem as determined as Shug to prevent them from leaving together as it can be understood from the prepositional phrase 'Over my...'. Albert doesn't know what else to say to Shug. At that moment, he thinks that Celie must be very happy to see him in trouble. Therefore, he turns to Celie, and asks what is wrong with her, which eventually triggers the main character's rebellious voice.

"You a lowdown dog is what's wrong. It's time to leave you and enter into the Creation. And your dead body just the welcome mat I need"(170).

The protagonist has been empowered in such an apparent way that she no longer hesitates to express her extreme displeasure. As it can be inferred from the adjective phrase 'lowdown dog', Celie attempts to have an absolute discharge by cursing against the oppressor. In addition, the noun phrase 'the Creation' marks her new religious perspective that everything in the natural world is strongly connected with each other, and it is their connection which makes the universe a whole. For that reason, she knows that each part is as important and valuable as the others. So, it is important to notice that by establishing a metaphorical relationship between the adjective phrase 'dead body' and the noun phrase 'the welcome mat', the main character in fact aims at sounding as threatening as possible. In other words, she wants Albert to understand that whatever he does from then on, he won't be able to put a stop to her struggle of self-realization. As Catherine A. Colton expresses "the better one's understanding of relationships in the world, the more powerful one's word would be to [achieve] a magical change"(1999:36). Hence, it can be said that it is exactly her awareness of the order in the world which strengthens Celie's ability of verbal expression. Now, the protagonist knows how to use the power of the words to her own advantage very well, and this enables her to speak courageously against the ruler.

Albert has never heard Celie speaking in such a determined and self-confident tone before. Therefore, he becomes so confused that he can only respond by making a series of spitting sounds, and Celie is still threatening:

"Mr. _____ start to sputter. ButButButButButBut. Sound like some kind of motor.

Nettie and my children coming soon, I say. And when she do, all us together gon whup your ass ”(170).

The repetition of the adversative conjunction ‘but’ clearly indicates that while the oppressor’s ability to use his voice is getting worse, the protagonist’s power is increasing over him. Through the action statement ‘Nettie and my children coming...’, Celie in fact reveals the strongest motive that lies behind her great change. The idea of having a real family clearly not only makes her more hopeful but also her struggle becomes more meaningful. The person deixis ‘us’ strengthened both by the determiner ‘all’ and the adverb ‘together’ proves that the protagonist does not feel helpless or alone any more. Furthermore, as it can be inferred from the verb phrase ‘whup your ass’, Celie shows Albert that he will pay her back for all the harms he has done her life.

To Albert, manhood, which is considered to be the only status of power in males’ world, is evidently the most valuable thing that he has. Therefore, he makes a final effort to maintain it, but the result is painful for him:

“Mr. ——— reach over to slap me. I jab my case knife in his hand ”(171).

The verb ‘slap’ in the action statement above indicates that Albert uses physical violence in order to cover his inability to silence Celie. However, it is seen that his act can not be deterrent enough for the protagonist. Defending herself physically, as indicated through the noun ‘knife’ and the verb ‘jab’, she again resolutely refuses to give up her struggle.

To speak briefly, the main character finally manages to transform herself from an object to a speaking, active subject. And her protest is evidently no longer private and silent. As T. Jita Allan puts it, “speech or the end of silence is the key marker of female selfhood”(1995:88). So, Celie, who has achieved to get her freedom of speech back, is now ready to win a victory.

4.5. Celie, The Victor

While Celie is preparing to go to Memphis, Albert tries to act as if he doesn't care about her leaving. And he keeps attempting to destroy her psychology.

“ You skinny. You shape funny...Who you think you is? Look at you. You black, you pore, you ugly, you a woman. You nothing at all ”(175-176).

The interrogative cognitive statement ‘who you think...?’ indicates that the protagonist's all efforts to become an autonomous individual do not mean anything to Albert. His repetition of the person deixis ‘you’ with negative adjectives also points out that he persistently tries to break down her determination. As it can be inferred from his emphasis on Celie's gender in the state statement ‘you a woman’, the antagonist, through a binary opposition ‘male vs. female’, still claims that being a female is being helpless and domitable. Moreover, Celie is so worthless in his eyes that he openly rejects her existence by identifyig her with nothingness. But the main character courageously proves that she is not a woman who can be defeated easily.

*“ I'm pore, I'm black, I may be ugly... but I'm here.
Amen, say Shug. Amen, amen ”(176).*

In the state statements above, Celie's focus is exactly on the subject pronoun ‘I’ rather than the adjectives ‘pore, black, ugly’. And it is a clear indication of the fact that she finally accepts and loves her self as she is. This makes her powerful enough to announce her true existence, which has been ignored all her life like the color purple in a field. So, by replacing her first self-erasing statement ‘~~I am~~’ with the state statement ‘I'm here’, the protagonist at last declares not only her physical presence but also her spiritual independence. In other words, it is Celie's “rebirth to be free, to be equal to every man, to every being” (Barker, 1999:62). According to Berlant, the main character manages to perform her triumphant being by using the superiority of language over using physical violence, which is absolutely typical of patriarchy. He adds that “speech [is] the primary arena of action [for Celie]: [because], the natural world lends [her] not its material resources but a spiritual vitality that can always assert itself while the body is threatened and battered” (1993:227). Shug, who has done all she could for the protagonist, is obviously grateful as Celie's existential fight for recognition

ends with her victory. The repetition of the interjection word 'amen' proves that Shug is actually praising the potential of human soul to triumph over the terror of oppression and the past (Barker,1999:63).

With her excellent understanding and control of power, Celie sets up a new life in Memphis. Shug tells Celie that she is in Memphis not to be her maid but to enjoy her freedom. In addition, she insists that Celie should find an appropriate work for herself in order to reveal her talents, which appeared only in drips before. Thus, the main character starts making pants.

“ I sit in the dining room making pants after pants. I got pants in every color and size... I change the cloth, I change the print, I change the waist, I change the hem, I change the fullness of the leg ”(180).

Her emphasis on the subject pronoun 'I' and the noun phrase 'pants after pants' manifest Celie's hunger to produce something on her own very well. When the determiner phrase 'every color and size' and the action verb 'change' are considered carefully, it is noticed that the protagonist certainly has a creative capacity. And she trusts in her creativity in such a way that her work becomes a sort of artistic expression for her. So, it can be said that her making pants is in fact a symbolic act. Celie's fate is clearly taking a different turn now. She, with Shug's support, achieves to turn her talent into a successful business enterprise, and calls her creations "*Folkpants*"(182). The name of her business is also symbolic, for it represents her new worldview. As it is seen, she doesn't produce pants only for women or only for men, but for all the people without any gender discrimination. Also when people start buying her unisex pants, Celie becomes very confident in herself as an important and contributing member of society. Earning her own living proves that the main character booms not only creatively but also financially.

Now, as an individual who knows and values herself, Celie is quite satisfied with her new life. In one of her letters to Nettie, she expresses her gladness by saying:

“ I am so happy. I got love, I got work, I got money, I got friends and time ”(183).

As she openly states through the adjective 'happy', Celie no longer suffers or endures, but has peace and a deep feeling of delight in life. If one pays attention to the nouns 'love, work, money, friends, time' in the repeated state statements above, it is really not difficult to understand the true reason of the protagonist's joy. Because, all these she owns now are the things that she was entirely deprived in the past. It can be said that the pieces that are necessary to make Celie's life a whole are eventually together except for the most important one, Nettie and the children. However, since she firmly believes that they will be with her soon, the main character is quite calm, and is able to wait patiently for the last piece to take its place in the puzzle.

While all these are happening, Celie learns that Pa (Alphonso), their stepfather, has died. After that, she inherits a house and a drygood store which in fact belong to her real parents. So, she expands her business in a short time, and supports Sofia financially by giving her a work in her store.

Another important point that should be mentioned related to Celie's victory is the striking change she succeeds in creating on the antagonist, Albert. When Sofia's mother dies, Celie goes to the funeral for condolence. After the funeral, Sofia and Harpo take her to Albert's house. However, as he has few common things to talk with Celie, Albert doesn't stay long with them, and walks away silently.

"Sofia say after I left, Mr._____ live like a pig... Mr._____ too weak to fight back. He couldn't sleep, she say. At night he thought he heard bats outside the door. But the worst part was having to listen to his own heart. Sound like drums"(190-191).

If the simile 'like a pig' and the negative adjective 'weak' are taken into consideration, it is seen that Albert's life gets worse in dirt and fatigue while the main character takes a lot of pleasure in creating a permanent life for herself. The negative ability statement 'he couldn't sleep' and the following constraint statement, in which the noun 'heart' stands for his conscience, prove that Albert has a great uneasiness in his soul after being left alone. What is more, his awareness of the fact that this punishment has grown out of his own bad actions makes him feel so remorseful. As it can be understood from the simile 'like drums', he is

unable to relieve his suffering. It is evident that the cursing he received from Celie has a moral authority on the antagonist. Although Celie was treated very badly by him in the past, she doesn't make use of his weakness to crush him. Because, she knows that God dwells in Albert as well ; therefore, she shouldn't hate him. When Shug goes away with a young flute player, it is seen that these two characters become closer. They talk about Shug, whom they both love, and Celie even teaches him how to sew. The protagonist writes her sister that:

“ ... when you talk to him now, he really listen, and one time, out of nowhere in the conversation us was having, he said Celie, I'm satisfied this the first time I ever lived on Earth as a natural man ”(221).

The action statement 'he really listen' and the noun 'conversation' point out that their relationship certainly has intersubjectivity, where both characters are free to talk and are listened to in turn. When the adjective phrase 'natural man' is considered, it is also understood that Albert finally achieves to get rid of his obsession of superiority that is based on gender, and is ready to have a peaceful relationship with the protagonist. As it is seen, the fact that Celie is able to forgive Albert after all helps him not only to free himself from his own oppressiveness but also to grow as a contented individual. Christophe states that “[Celie's] womanist philosophy is a humanist one, for it is geared not only toward the full development of one gender but toward the recuperation of male and female, toward the survival and wholeness of entire people, male and female”(1999:106-107).

At the close of the novel, Nettie and her children arrive at their house. As Celie has her own family with her now, her life eventually becomes complete and more meaningful. It is seen that the main character has a lyrical voice in her final letter:

“ Dear God. Dear stars, dear trees, dear sky, dear peoples. Dear everything. Thank you for bringing my sister Nettie and our children home ”(242).

Evidently her victory brings the protagonist peace, security, love and respect of people around her. Even Albert, who has been responsible for her suffering in the first place, is now a friend of hers. All these nouns she uses in her greeting are a clear indication of the blessed unity between Celie and the whole world. As it can be inferred from the pronoun 'you', it is certainly this unity that makes Celie address her gratitude not only to God but to

everything that creates the holy soul all together. “And this is the true meaning of The Color Purple, which is a quest and a celebration, a song of sorrow and joy, of birth, rebirth, and the [liberating] power of love”(Christophe, 1999:107).



5. CONCLUSION

As it has been pointed out before, Alice Walker's The Color Purple is a person discourse. It is seen that the novel evolves around its main character from the beginning to the end. Evidently this is because the author aims at drawing her readers' attention to the protagonist's impressive transformation from an oppressed, exploited, and helpless female character to a woman who is able to feel, talk on behalf of herself, and love. According to Linda Abbandonato, Walker, in The Color Purple, successfully portrays a character who is "trapped in the whole range of possible oppressions, [and who] struggles to create a self through language. She is an invisible woman... traditionally silenced and effaced in fiction; and by centering on her, Walker replots the heroine's text " (1993:296). Furthermore, by focusing on the heroine, the author leads us to find out how suppressive male domination hinders black women's fight for their individual liberties. However, Celie, who is given a touching voice for the voiceless in the society, manages to defeat this hinderance and becomes a strong role model for the oppressed in a sense.

In order to communicate her messages in an effective way, Walker chooses to make use of the epistolary as her novel's literary form. Elizabeth Fifer argues that :

The letter format adds vitality to what might otherwise become a melodramatic plot. The letters skillfully reinvent and reenvision the events by shuffling their chronological order and juxtaposing different conversations that seem as if they might have happened simultaneously. In between the letters problems are solved; their solutions appear as faits accomplis, charged with narrator's delayed excitement and delight (1985:156).

In addition, this form enables Walker to establish a direct contact between the main character and the reader thanks to her letters. Obviously she makes Celie the main narrator of the novel rather than only a bystander character. Thus, each letter becomes a meeting point for the protagonist and the reader, where an active exchange is achieved between the two. In other words, feeling very close to Celie, we are able to hear her voice, and witness her life experiences without any interference in her discourse. As H. Louis Gates states, " the epistolary form allows for a maximum of identification with a character, precisely because the devices of empathy and distance, standard in third-person narration, no longer obtain" (quoted by Johnson, 1999:102).

Celie addresses her first fifty-four letters, which are all informal narratives, to God. The letters are all undated and unsigned since they are clearly not written to be read by anybody but Celie herself. That point, in fact, reveals the paradox that lies in The Color Purple. Because, although it is written in the form of letters which normally requires mutuality, Celie is never able to receive a response. However, it should be noticed that writing letters really plays a crucial role in her life. First, she uses it as a tool to express herself, for she is strictly forbidden to do this orally. Second, it can be seen as an act of claiming a natural talent in her that may release her from ignorance and the great unhappiness she feels.

Another striking point is that as the main character's personality and voice become stronger, the length of her letters changes from only two short paragraphs in the beginning to several pages through the end. Nevertheless, it is clear that although the letters vary in length and content, they are quite similar in terms of the authenticity of the language employed in them. The critics (Fifer, 1985:158; Butler-Evans, 1989:164; Abbandonato, 1993:299; Watkins, 1993:18; Johnson, 1999:103) all agree that it is the Southern black vernacular, which makes the letters so original, moving, and convincing. They also state that these letters through which Walker has the protagonist tell her life story have a considerable conversational tone as in the quotations from different letters below:

Dear God,

He act like he can't stand me no more. Say I'm evil an always up to no good. He took my other little baby, a boy this time... I got breasts full of milk running down myself. He say Why don't you look decent? Put on something. But what I'm sposed to put on? I don't have nothing (5, 3rd letter).

Dear God,

Grady and Mr. _____ come staggering in round daybreak. Me and Shug sound asleep. Her back to me, my arms round her waist. What it like? Little like sleeping with mama, only I can't hardly remember ever sleeping with her. Little like sleeping with Nettie, only sleeping with Nettie never feel this good... It feel like heaven is what it feel like, not like sleeping with Mr. _____ at all (98, 48th letter).

Dear Nettie,

Walking down to Harpo and Sofia house it feel just like old times. Cept the house new, down below the juke-joint, and it a lot bigger than it was before. Then too I feels different. Look different. Got on some dark blue pants and a white silk shirt that look righteous... I pass Mr. _____ house and him sitting up on the porch and he didn't even know who I was (185, 62nd letter).

Moreover, it can be said that in addition to their informal and conversational tone, the lack of attention to grammar and spelling also indicate that The Color Purple carries the characteristics of spoken discourse more than written discourse. But why does the author writes as if she was speaking? Marilyn C. Aronson, in her article titled Black Portraits in African-American Literature, explains that by saying: "... black characters often used dialect speech patterns associated with the uneducated class [as a] distinctive language [to protest] against dehumanization and victimization, [to emphasize] cultural nationalism, and [to do] a private research for self-realization ..." (1998:1). As it can be inferred, Walker deliberately makes Celie use the black folk English rather than standard English. Because, Celie is also one of the representatives of these black characters who try to find and realize their real identities. In order to prove that the protagonist's language is, in fact, the reflection of her inner world, the author openly states that "Celie is created out of language. Her being is affirmed by the language in which she is revealed" (quoted by Johnson, 1999:96).

As our aim in this thesis is to bring out Walker's intentions and messages concerning the main character's personal growth, we concentrated on different linguistic elements which she embedded in Celie's language. By interpreting them as the concrete evidences of the author's intentions, we tried to indicate that none of the linguistic details in one's discourse is used casually but in accordance with a particular purpose. In other words, each discourse-its type, topic, lexical and linguistic properties- reflects an aim determined by its author. Obviously since we are primarily interested in the communicative functions of the present linguistic data rather than their linguistic functions, we applied 'discourse analysis', which is in essence an interpretive reading, as the method of our study.

We had better state that Walker's discourse is constituted by the letters immediately coming one after another, and they together constitute the communicative context of the novel. That is why each letter clearly has a strong meaning relation to the one that precedes or follows it. As it is known, in the analysis chapter of our thesis, we studied the main character's growth in four separate phases: her disempowerment, her awakening, fight for the self, and finally her self-realization. When the letters that belong to one phase are put together, it is noticed that almost each of them includes a different situation or a different character that plays a very important role in Celie's life. To put it more explicitly, we can summarize these situations and people as follows:

1) Celie, the Powerless

Characters: Pa (her stepfather) and Mr. _____ (her husband)

Situations: a- Psychological: Pa's frightening threats, humiliation, her mother's death, lack of love, lack of communication, and her inability to understand all these things

b- Physical: Pregnancy, rapes, both Pa's and Albert's violence

2) Celie is Awakening

Characters: Shug and Sofia (Celie's role models)

Situations: Her learning about her female body and sexual pleasure, a striking change in her perception of God, her desire to fight both psychologically and physically when necessary

3) Celie, the Combatant

Characters: Mr. _____ (Albert) and old Mr. _____

Situations: Her spitting in her father-in-law's water, her verbal empowerment, her cursing and physical action against Albert

4) Celie, the Victor

Characters: Shug, Nettie, and her children

Situations: Her leaving Albert, her starting a successful business, her family's arrival, and Albert's regret

As a result, we believe that focusing our attention on just one or two letters from each phase would not be enough for us to see the whole picture of the main character's development. What is more, it would be really rather difficult to analyze all the letters in each group. Therefore, we decided to study on different text fragments extracted from different letters to be able to interpret the relationships between the linguistic elements that Celie uses for the characters and situations mentioned above and her intentions in a better way.

In addition, instead of determining and dealing with only a few linguistic elements such as lexical ties and statements as the tools of our analysis, we preferred studying several kinds of linguistic forms in our study. Here, if we remember what Gee states about ' validity in discourse analysis', the reason that motivates us to do so is understood better. Gee puts special emphasis on the relationship between the forms and the functions. Because, he argues that linguistic devices of any language play a crucial role in achieving various language functions. Also as long as the items focused on and the analyst's interpretations come towards the same point, the analysis is considered to be more reliable. So we think that if the analyst uses more linguistic evidences to approve his/her hypothesis or hypotheses, the interpretations related to a major point or theme become much stronger. Another thing that Gee puts forward is that if one's conclusions are supported by other analysts who had studied on the same discourse before, he/she is seen as more successful. For that reason, during our analysis, we tried to make references to several critics with whom we share similar viewpoints.

It is known that discourse analysis can be realized at two different levels: semantic and pragmatic. As it can be inferred, we approached Walker's discourse from a pragmatic point of view, for we gave priority to the meaning that is conveyed through the communicative use of the linguistic items in the novel's context which includes different situations. Thus, we dealt with these items to understand and reveal what is meant by each in a particular situation more than what they themselves mean. Namely, we used the semantic knowledge which determines literal meaning as an access to the pragmatic meaning. " Several empirical studies have demonstrated that people do not associate a purely semantic, literal meaning with what speakers [or writers] say, but view both what speakers [or writers] say and implicate as being determined by enriched pragmatic knowledge"(Gibbs& Moise,1997:62).

In conclusion, it can be said that in The Color Purple there is a clear consistency between the linguistic items used by the author and her messages. Because, each linguistic element obviously helps us progress towards the same point; namely, the major theme. However, it should be remembered that discourse analysis is entirely a matter of interpretation, and it never provides definite answers to the questions one has in mind. Thus, our interpretations as in our analysis are always subject to future discussions and evaluations. It is clear that discourse analysis considerably improves our thinking ability and so expands our personal horizons. Furthermore, by studying different types of discourses, we can achieve to become skilled enough to understand more deeply the worlds (written or spoken) we are presented with. As a result, this ability enables us to meet both our intellectual and emotional needs.



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