

Negotiating Racial Boundaries: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Racism in 'To Kill a Mockingbird'



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Abstract: *To explore racial discrimination in Harper Lee's "To Kill a Mockingbird", we have utilized Wodak's theoretical framework for CDA, complemented by his concentric circular model in our study. The CDA meticulously examines various textual elements, encompassing linguistic features, narrative structure, and character interactions, to discern recurrent discursive patterns perpetuating racism throughout the novel. Using Wodak's framework highlighting context's importance, the analysis explores the 1930s American South's socio-political backdrop where the narrative unfolds. This contextual lens facilitates a nuanced comprehension of how language constructs and reinforces racial discrimination while illuminating the intricate dynamics of power and ideologies within the text. By delving into the social and historical backdrop, the analysis provides a comprehensive understanding of the complex interrelationships among discourse, racism, and societal structures, yielding valuable insights and adding to the novel's portrayal of racial discrimination and its broader sociocultural implications.*

Key Words: Attitude towards Science, Self-Concept, Gender, Socioeconomic Status

Introduction

"To Kill a Mockingbird" by Harper Lee, set in 1930s Maycomb, Alabama, explores deeply ingrained racism and prejudice. It reflects the era's segregation, Jim Crow laws, and systemic discrimination faced by African Americans, highlighting the pervasive racial injustice of the time.

"Released in 1960, the novel "To Kill a Mockingbird" accentuates a powerful yet sensitive issue of America by addressing racism, establishing itself as a timeless classic. The book was under scrutiny right after its release for containing racial and immoral themes. The following study will critically analyze the representation of race within the novel from Ruth Wodak's perspective. Her discourse-historical framework offers ground to examine discursive practices socially and historically. By applying Wodak's

concentric circular model, this study aims to demystify the contextual layers prevalent within discourse that ultimately give birth to power structures, injustice, and social hierarchies."

The study has a holistic approach encompassing several key concepts. It involves the analysis of language and discourse within the novel, exploring how linguistic features and discursive patterns contribute to the perpetuation of racism. It also examines the social and historical context of the novel to provide a deeper understanding of how racism was manifested during the time period. It uncovers the underlying discursive mechanisms, shedding light on how language and discourse contribute to racism. The research extends its implications beyond the novel by employing Wodak's concentric model and CDA methodology. It aims to contribute to a more inclusive

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and equitable society by unravelling the complexities of racism and challenging prevailing ideologies through rigorous analysis and scholarly inquiry. Thus, it fosters awareness and promotes discussions on issues of racism and discrimination while contributing to the existing body of knowledge.

The significance of our study lies in the fact that it offers a systematic analysis of the discursive practices that promote racism and illuminates the ways in which discourse contributes to racism. It substantially contributes to wider socio-political dialogues concerning the prevalence and repercussions of racism in society. By unveiling the underlying mechanisms of racial bias, the study provides invaluable insights into the complexities of racial discrimination, cultivating critical consciousness and enabling meaningful discourse. Ultimately, it has the potential to catalyze societal transformation by challenging prevailing ideologies and nurturing a more inclusive and egalitarian society.

Limitations and Delimitations of the Study

This research faces several limitations when studying racial inequality and the language that plays an active role in its nurturing.

The parameters and chosen methods to conduct research limit the research in multiple ways. Due to a limited text under analysis, the qualitative sampling technique limits this research to a small sample size relevant to deducing the desired outcomes. Purposive sampling can also affect the overall results and findings as this technique is prone to biases and may be influenced by the researcher's personal opinions. The study can also face errors of judgment which can impact the quality of the research.

Following are some delimitations faced by this research:

Firstly, the discourse being analyzed is limited to a specific time period, that is, 1933-1935. This time frame can prove to be quite effective in understanding where racism stood in the 1930s, but, at the same time, it does not reveal much about its background and what form it took in the later years.

Secondly, as the story is set in Maycomb, Alabama, the particular geographical region understudy constricts the research to southeastern America. A small town setting further restricts the research because it strictly conforms to the book text.

Another barrier that affects the outcome of this research is the representation of the discrimination and oppression the black community faces. Because multiple races and nationalities fall under the vast spectrum of racial injustice, this research fails to serve a well-dicted picture of racism throughout all communities in America.

Aim, Objectives and Research Questions

The study uncovers racism in discourse by analyzing multiple contextual layers within a society. By carefully exploring institutionalized discourse, the study aims to find how society is affected by the use of racial slurs. Moreover, this paper aims to study how the novel paints a vivid picture of discourse as a social process. Finally, it examines the linguistic and social implications of the language used in the book through Ruth Wodak's concentric circular model within the CDA methodology.

Objectives of this research include:

- To navigate each text's racial implications by analyzing its lexical features, including syntax, metaphorical structures, and rhetorical devices.
- To highlight speakers' social roles and backgrounds to make discourse structures intelligible.
- A critical analysis of situations and circumstances under which discourse processes occur.

Following are the research questions corresponding to the objectives of the study:

1. *How is discourse used as social practice in the fictional town of Maycomb to perpetuate racism in Harper Lee's "To Kill a Mockingbird"?*
2. *What are the institutionalized settings in the town of Maycomb, and what are their societal roles regarding racism?*
3. *How do the situations in the book relate to the racial injustice within the Maycomb community?*
4. *Who are the various speakers in the book who contribute to the racial discourse within the novel, and how do their biography and societal roles influence racism?*
5. *What are the various linguistic nuances and metaphorical structures within the novel that give the idea of inequality and racism?*

Literature Review

Recent Researches

A number of recent research studies have examined the racial elements in *To Kill a Mockingbird* from a CDA perspective. CDA is a framework for analyzing how language is used to construct and maintain power relations.

One of the most recent studies, conducted by (Baugh, 2016), found that *To Kill a Mockingbird* can be read as a CDA text that exposes the ways in which language is used to construct and maintain racial inequality. Baugh focuses on the novel's depiction of the trial of Tom Robinson, a black man falsely accused of rape. Baugh argues that the novel's depiction of the trial reveals how the legal system is biased against black people.

Another recent study (Charteris-Black, 2016) found that '*To Kill a Mockingbird*' can be read as a rhetorical text that uses language to persuade readers to adopt a particular view of race. Charteris-Black focuses on the novel's use of metaphors, similes, and other figures of speech to construct a view of race that is sympathetic to black people.

In addition to these two articles, some other recent research studies have examined how '*To Kill a Mockingbird*' can be used to teach about racism and racial discrimination. For example, a study (Smith, 2017) found that students who read '*To Kill a Mockingbird*' were more likely to understand the concept of racism and support racial equality. Smith argues that '*To Kill a Mockingbird*' can be a valuable tool for teaching about racism and racial discrimination.

Another study (Jones, 2018) found that '*To Kill a Mockingbird*' can be an effective tool for helping students develop empathy for people who are different. Jones argues that '*To Kill a Mockingbird*' can help students to understand how racism can impact people's lives.

Research Gaps

Recent research on racial discrimination in "*To Kill a Mockingbird*" has made significant strides in exploring the themes and dynamics of racism within the novel. However, several notable research gaps merit further investigation. Firstly, there is a need for a deeper analysis of the speakers' biographies and social roles in perpetuating or challenging racial discrimination.

Understanding the backgrounds, experiences, and social positions of characters who engage in discriminatory practices can provide valuable insights into the factors influencing their beliefs and actions. Additionally, further exploration of the description of situations in which racial discrimination occurs is necessary. Examining the specific contexts, settings, and events surrounding instances of racism can shed light on the mechanisms contributing to perpetuating discriminatory practices. Moreover, research should delve into the institutional settings portrayed in the novel, such as the legal system and education system, to analyze their roles in reinforcing or challenging racial discrimination. Understanding the influence of these institutions on racial dynamics can provide a comprehensive understanding of the broader societal structures at play. Finally, the research should explore discourse as a social practice in "*To Kill a Mockingbird*." Analyzing characters' language, rhetoric, and discursive strategies can uncover how racial discrimination is constructed, maintained, and contested. Investigating these research gaps related to speakers' biographies and social roles, descriptions of situations, institutional settings, and discourse as social practice will contribute to a more nuanced understanding of racial discrimination in the novel. It will shed light on the complex interplay between individuals, social structures, and discourses that shape racial dynamics within the narrative.

Therefore, we have employed Wodak's concentric circular model for interpreting discourse content, which looks into several layers of analysis and seeks to comprehend how discourse helps to generate and reinforce ideas such as 'race', 'nation' and 'ethnicity' (Wodak, 1996; Wodak & Reisigl, 2001; Wodak et al. 2009) to fill the gaps and add to the existing body of knowledge.

Theoretical Framework

In this research, racial boundaries are distinguished using a model based on Ruth Wodak's discourse historical approach (Wodak, 2001 b). This theoretical framework offers an ethnographic insight into the history of American culture and people's ideologies concerning racism. Moreover, it gives away a well-constructed blueprint to analyze the history of any kind of discourse (Martin & Wodak, 2003).

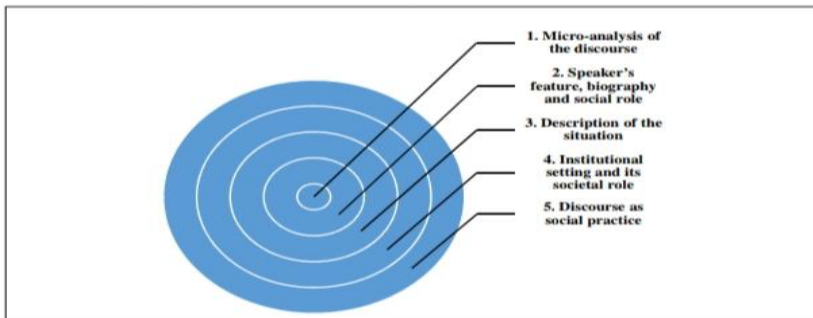
For the precise implementation of her framework, she proposed a concentric circular model

of discourse that gives an in-depth analysis of multiple contextual layers that lead to understanding discourse within a society and its history (Shafaat Hussain, 2015). The first layer requires a micro-analysis of the text, which is fundamental to understanding the text on a lexical level as it describes its syntactic, metaphoric and rhetorical structures (Karreman 2000). The second layer is vital as it reveals the history and biographical details of the speaker. The third stage is about the

circumstances in which discourse is taking place. The fourth stage sheds light upon the societal roles and institutional settings that are built. It can be expanded in terms of its functional and historical development to understand the implications of language. Finally, the last stage examines text extensively by studying discourse as a social practice (Wodak, 1996; Wodak & Reisigl, 2001; Wodak et al., 2009).

Figure 3

Developed from the Wodak Framework (1996)

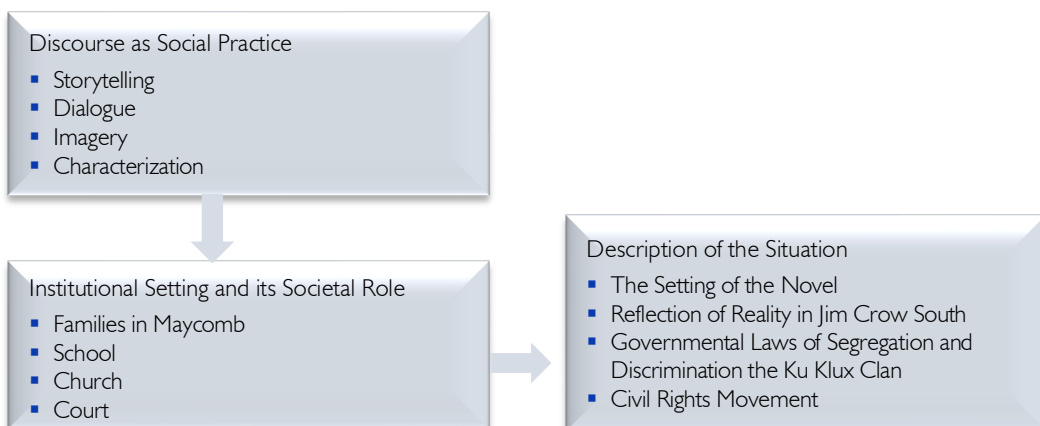


Conceptual Framework

Based on Wodak's analytical framework, there is a need to formulate a conceptual framework that encapsulates the key concepts and examinations that stem from the use of language to maintain power structures in our society. Language and other semiotic practices play a significant role in establishing domination within a society (Reisigl & Wodak, 2009). In this article, one of the aims is to highlight the

institutionalized discourse. Moreover, Fairclough and Wodak's perspectives on shedding contextual layers off and finding the hidden agenda of text and talk is one of the distinguished and relevant concepts discussed in this study. One has to draw out the data systematically to learn more about the context's ideologies and power patterns (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997). Other than macro-level discourse, an investigation of racial and ethnic slurs is also considered.

Figure 2



Research Methodology

This research is being conducted using a qualitative approach to study to elaborate the racist aspects of attitudes of speakers and the social settings in the text that is to be interpreted.

Research Design

We have adopted a Qualitative Case study as the research design to do the in-depth examination of the manifestations and dynamics of racism in Harper Lee's "To Kill a Mockingbird". The case study specifically works out the micro-level analysis of discourse and language choices and also scrutinizes the speaker's features, biography and societal role, institutional settings and social practices using Ruth Wodak's concentric circular model (Wodak, 2009) of interpreting discourse context.

Population and Sampling

The population sampled in this research consists of characters in the novel involved in producing speech or behaviour that can be interpreted under the theme of racism. A discrete characterization of the novel allows us to view the quotes using inclusion criteria to include quotes that hint at both explicit and implicit expressions of racial discrimination, social injustice, and inequality.

Samples to analyze can be extracted from the text using a non-probability sampling technique that has effectively identified the themes under the scope of this research. A purposive or judgmental sampling method offers the liberty to draw samples that contain characteristics pertaining to racism and hence qualify to be approached by Wodak's discourse historical approach.

Research Tools

Textual Analysis, Document Analysis, Reflexivity and Researcher's notes have been used as tools to conduct the study by using Ruth Wodak's Concentric Circular Model to analyze Racial Discrimination in Harper Lee's classic novel "To Kill a Mockingbird".

Data Analysis

Discourse as Social Practice

The outermost and the fifth layer of the concentric circular model analyses "Discourse as a

Social Practice", a theoretical framework that views discourse as a way of doing things in the world. It is not simply a matter of using language but of using language to accomplish social goals. Discourse is shaped by the social context in which it occurs, and it, in turn, shapes the social context.

In Harper Lee's novel, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, discourse is used as a social practice to address the issue of racism. Lee uses storytelling, dialogue, imagery and characterization to portray discourse as a social practice in Maycomb County to disseminate racism.

The novel is told from the perspective of Scout Finch, a young girl who witnesses the injustice of racism firsthand. Scout's storytelling allows the reader to experience the world of racism in the fictional town of Maycomb through her eyes. Being the narrator, Scout uses discourse (language) as a tool; to understand and question racial bias in the neighborhood and overall society and to give opinions about the biases of individuals around her.

The novel also uses dialogue as a discursive practice to address racism. The characters in the novel often talk about racism, and their conversations reveal how people think about and respond to racism. For example, the use of words like "Nigger-lover" and "negro-lover" by Mrs. Dubose for Atticus and deplores him for defending black people (Chapter 11)

The trial of Tom Robinson is also one of the most striking examples of racist discourse in the novel. The prosecutor in the trial uses racist language and stereotypes to convince the jury that Tom Robinson is guilty. For example, the prosecutor refers to Tom Robinson as a "boy" and a "coon," and he suggests that Tom Robinson is not capable of telling the truth because he is black (Chapter 17).

Another example of the portrayal of racism through the use of language is shown when Scout and Jem are walking home from school, They pass by a group of white men who are gathered around a fire. The men are talking about Tom Robinson and using racist language. Scout and Jem are scared, and they run away (Chapter 15).

Moreover, Atticus's words and actions show that racism is wrong and can be overcome. Throughout the novel, he employs speech as a tool for eradicating and fighting against racism by educating his children and society in general. His final speech during the trial of Tom Robinson in court is particularly important to look at the role discourse plays in society (Chapter 20).

Lee also uses imagery Multimodality of Discourse to address the issue of racism prevalent in the society of Maycomb. In 'To Kill a Mockingbird', imagery often depicts the colour line. For example, the town of Maycomb is divided into two sections: white and black. A railroad track separates the two sections. This imagery shows how the colour line is a physical barrier that separates black and white people. In the final chapter of the book Atticus quotes that the case is as simple "as black and white" while talking about racism in society in the courtroom (Chapter 20).

To Kill a Mockingbird often uses birds to symbolize innocence and freedom. For example, Scout compares herself to a mockingbird when she says she is a goner if she does not learn to handle herself like a mockingbird. Mockingbirds are harmless birds that sing beautiful songs. They are often seen as symbols of innocence and freedom. By comparing herself to a mockingbird, Scout is trying to show that she is still innocent and wants to be free from the prejudice and discrimination she witnesses in her town.

To Kill a Mockingbird often uses fire to symbolize hatred and destruction. For example, when Scout and Jem walk home from school, they pass by a group of white men gathered around a fire. The men are talking about Tom Robinson and using racist language. The fire in this scene symbolizes the hatred and destruction that racism can cause.

Institutional Setting and Its Societal Role

"To Kill a Mockingbird" encapsulates striking details about Maycomb's important institutions that ultimately play a major role in constructing racist structures and patterns in their society. Starting from the main family around whom the plot revolves, it is evident that as an institution, Jem and Scout's family preach to them values that are different from the rest of the families in Maycomb. Atticus and the children's caretaker, Calpurnia, both play significant roles in establishing strong foundations against the racial inequality that exists around them.

Throughout the novel, Atticus commits to justice and encourages his children to reject the external institutionalized settings that advocate inequality, telling her daughter to keep her head up and fist down (chapter 9). While Calpurnia, being a black woman, does not get too loud about the treatment she gets and, as a mother figure to Atticus' children, does not encourage them to enquire more about the subject.

She forbids them to question the customs by telling them that the way the world works is either shut your mouth or learn their language (Chapter 12)

Moreover, a strong sense of discrimination can be observed in Maycomb's school, church, and court, central figures in drawing a line between the white and black communities living in the town.

School, as a sanctuary of promoting goodwill and ethical values in children, seemed to be lacking in performing its role as Scout and Jem, two minors, were constantly struggling, listening to other kids saying how the other kids' father tells them about Atticus being a disgrace because he is defending a black man (chapter 9). No actions were taken regarding this action, and the school never lost its routine. This also provides a window to glance into the minds of the remaining families residing in Maycomb and their perceptions of Blacks. Another way we can observe how the school fails to play its role in society is from the fact that African Americans are not allowed to go to schools, something that Calpurnia reveals in chapter 12.

In the same chapter, readers can learn more about the 'First Purchase Church' for Black people, where Calpurnia takes Scout and Jem and introduces them to her people. The different churches for two separate races and the contempt for entering into each other's territory reveal how institutions manifested distinctions.

The most important institution relevant to the plot is Maycomb's court, where the trial of Tom Robinson takes place. Reverend Skye, a spectator in the court, shares how he has never seen the jury decide in favour of a black man against a white man (chapter 21). In addition, Atticus' closing remarks explain the not-so-hidden inequalities of the legislature in the country, saying that the case is as simple as black and white (chapter 20). Finally, an idea of Atticus fighting a lost battle can be taken from when Scout asks him whether he is going to win, and he replies, "No Honey" (Chapter 9), expressing his distrust of the judicial institutions of the town.

Description of the Situation

The third layer of the concentric circular model by Ruth Wodak delves deeper into the "Description of the Situation". The following text attempts to carefully describe the setting and situation of the work by the author. Maycomb, Alabama, is a fictional town created

by Harper Lee for her novel 'To Kill a Mockingbird'. The novel is set in the 1930s, during the Great Depression, and tells the story of a young girl named Scout Finch who witnesses racial injustice firsthand. In Maycomb, African Americans were subjected to various discriminatory practices. They were forced to live in separate neighbourhoods, attend separate schools, and use separate facilities.

This reflected the reality of racial discrimination in the Jim Crow South during the 1930s. The Jim Crow South was a time of widespread racial segregation and discrimination. African Americans were denied basic civil rights and were often treated as second-class citizens.

The Jim Crow laws were a series of laws that were passed in the South in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. These laws enforced racial segregation and discrimination. For example, there were separate schools for black and white children and separate water fountains, bathrooms, and restaurants for black and white people.

African Americans were also denied the right to vote. This was done through a variety of methods, including literacy tests, poll taxes, and grandfather clauses. Literacy tests were designed to be difficult for African Americans to pass, poll taxes were a fee that had to be paid to vote, and grandfather clauses exempted white voters from these restrictions if their grandfathers could vote.

African Americans were often subjected to physical violence by white supremacists. This violence was often used to intimidate and terrorize African Americans and to prevent them from exercising their rights. The Ku Klux Klan was a white supremacist organization founded in the South in the 1860s. The Klan used violence and intimidation to enforce racial segregation and discrimination. Rothstein, Boushey & Strain, and Loewen wrote about this racial discrimination in 2017, 2018 and 1999, respectively.

The Civil Rights Movement was a social movement that fought for the civil rights of African Americans. The movement began in the 1950s and continued into the 1960s. The novel "To Kill a Mockingbird" by Harper Lee was also published in 1960 as a part of the Civil Rights Movement. The movement achieved many important victories, including the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

The racial discrimination depicted in the fictional town of Maycomb profoundly impacted African Americans' lives. It limited their opportunities, restricted their freedom, and made them vulnerable to violence. It also created a climate of fear and intimidation, making it difficult for African Americans to speak out against injustice.

Speaker's Feature, Biography, and Societal Role

In Harper Lee's timeless novel, "To Kill a Mockingbird," many characters assume the role of speakers, utilizing their words to either showcase or alleviate the prevalent racial prejudice that permeates the story. By employing Ruth Wodak's concentric circular model's second layer, which delves into the individual's features, biography, and societal position, we can better understand their motives and the profound impact their discourse carries. All of the text that mentions racism through discourse in the novel has been taken as a sample for analysis from Wodak's perspective. The following text describes the societal role, biography and features of the speakers who spoke about racism, particularly using discourse (speech) as a communicative tool.

The central figure, Atticus Finch, emerges as a formidable voice against racism, making him the resolute protagonist of Harper Lee's "To Kill a Mockingbird." As a compassionate lawyer in the racially divided town of Maycomb, Atticus fearlessly defends an innocent black man, challenging the deeply ingrained prejudices of his community. With his composed demeanour and unwavering moral compass, Atticus employs his persuasive speeches to expose the flaws of racial discrimination and inspire others to strive for justice and equality. Long after the pages of the novel are turned, Atticus's powerful words resonate, leaving an indelible mark on the hearts and minds of readers. The sample text from the book spoken by 'Atticus' reflects Atticus's urge to do the right thing as he would not be able to hold up his head again in town if he did not defend Tom Robinson (Chapter 9). He has been called "Nigger-lover" and "Negro-lover" myriad times in the book, and his work for trying to save Tom Robinson is referred to as "trash"(Chapter 11). Again in Chapter 11, he tells Scout the term "Nigger-lover" does not mean anything and is used by ignorant and trashy people. In one of the quotes from the incredibly brilliant final speech of Atticus in the courtroom, he mentions the case of

Tom being "simply black and white" (Chapter 20), which has a double meaning associated with it.

Scout, the daughter of Atticus Finch, whose birth name is Jean Louise Finch, is also the story's narrator. As a young and inquisitive girl, she keenly observes the world around her and shares her observations with the readers. Scout sheds light on the deeply entrenched racial prejudices permeating Maycomb through her innocent and unbiased perspective. Witnessing the unfair treatment of Tom Robinson, she recognizes the injustice of his situation, even though she is not fully capable of comprehending the complexities of racism. Scout's role as the narrator allows readers to gain insight into the impact of racial bias on the community from the vantage point of a child. For example, once she asked Calpurnia how do we know if we are not Negroes? (Chapter 16)

Another character who exemplifies an attempt to manifest racial bias is Bob Ewell, a destitute and racist white man who accuses Tom Robinson, a black man, of assaulting his daughter. As a member of the white community in Maycomb, Bob Ewell represents the deeply ingrained racial prejudices that exist within the town. Despite Bob's lacking social status or worth within the Maycomb community, the deep-rooted racism in the town grants him advantages over his Black neighbours, even though many possess superior qualities compared to Bob. He uses aggressive language for Tom as "... that black negro yonder ruttin' on my Mayella" (Chapter 17), where he compares him to an animal by using 'rutting' (the term is used for animals) and reducing the status of Mayella being 'passive' in his sentence.

Reverend Sykes, the spiritual leader of the First Purchase African M.E. Church, provides guidance and support to the African-American community in Maycomb. During Tom Robinson's trial, he served as a voice of encouragement and solidarity, urging the congregation to pray for justice and vehemently displaying their opposition to racial discrimination. He makes an announcement to welcome Jem and Scout, honouring their father when Calpurnia accompanies them to the church of Black people ("... We are particularly glad to have company ... You all know their father ...") (Chapter 12).

Another speaker, Lula, a member of Calpurnia's church, was being mean to Scout and Jem as she did not want to see even children of white people in church specific to black people. She tells Calpurnia, "You ain't got no business bringing white chillun here"

(Chapter 12), to which another speaker, Zeebo, the black garbage collector, replies "We're mighty glad to have you all here" and advises Jem not to pay attention to anything Lula says (Chapter 12).

Jem, Scout's older brother, also plays a significant role in exploring racial bias. As he matures throughout the novel, Jem becomes increasingly aware of the racial tensions in Maycomb. He witnesses the injustice surrounding Tom Robinson's trial and develops a deeper understanding of racism. Jem's experiences compel him to grapple with the harsh realities of discrimination, shaping his moral compass. Although Jem may not actively engage in speeches or public discourse, his character development allows readers to witness the profound impact of racism on a young individual and underscores the importance of confronting and challenging prejudice.

Mrs Dubose, an overtly racist old lady living in the same neighbourhood as the children, blatantly insults Jem and Scout every time she sees them because their father is defending "A coloured folk / Negro / Nigger" and itself is a "Nigger-lover/Negro-Lover). The mentioned words have been quoted several times throughout the story by Mrs. Dubose as a sort of insult to the family.

These characters contribute to the narrative by explicitly or implicitly speaking against racial bias or perpetuating racism. They serve as conduits for readers to witness the consequences of racism on individuals and communities, providing a poignant and thought-provoking exploration of the themes of prejudice and discrimination within "To Kill a Mockingbird."

Micro-analysis of the Discourse

Interpretation of the text in terms of its context requires a micro-level analysis. Within the boundaries of this layer, we aim to thoroughly describe the smallest discourse units embedded in the text, including metaphorical, syntactical, and rhetorical structures, the main components of a micro-analysis.

Sample Texts

Sample 1

...put him alongside Negroes (chapter 1)

Being a racial slur, the word "Nigger" has been banned on a societal level. However, the word was considered common in the 1930s, when the story was set. In this particular text, the slur is being used

against the Maycomb criminals, mostly Blacks. The author reveals Sheriff's discontentment over putting a white man within the same prison walls as "negroes". Hence illuminating the discriminatory standards residing in Maycomb.

Sample 2

...that's nigger-talk (Chapter 4)

This speech is given by the narrator of the story, a five-year-old. Her perceptions of blacks reveal the alienation and marginalization of the black community. The use of distinct vocabulary and unnatural word choices portrays linguistic nuances for two separate races living together.

Sample 3

...he nothing but a nigger-lover (chapter 9)

Nigger-lover being said about the protagonist of the novel, Atticus, indicates the hatred he received for defending a black person in a rape case. Here, the word carries implications of mockery and insult as it is about a person loving outcasts who belong to an inferior community.

Sample 4

...coloured folks (Chapter 5)

The word 'coloured' was a common term for blacks in the past. The narrative that suggests that there are folks who are ordinary (whites) and folks who are coloured (blacks) is, in itself, racist.

Sample 5

...niggers and trash (Chapter 11)

Inanimate objects possessing negative connotations are used to refer to the 'people Atticus works for'. As the readers can easily gather Atticus is working for a black man whom he believes is falsely accused, the attacker here is a 'black man'.

Findings

The research explores the element of racism in "To Kill a Mockingbird" by Harper Lee from Wodak's concentric circular model under the umbrella of DHA (Discourse Historical Approach). The outermost layer (i.e., *discourse as a social practice*) analyzes how Harper Lee effectively employs various literary techniques in her novel, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, to explore the pervasive issue of racism through the lens of discourse. Lee skillfully utilizes storytelling, dialogue, vivid imagery, and characterization to depict discourse as a crucial social practice within Maycomb County, employed to perpetuate and spread racist ideologies. The second layer (i.e., *Institutional Settings and their societal role*) sheds light on the institutions portrayed in the book and justifies the inequality and oppression that Atticus fought against. Atticus' prediction of his defeat reveals the might of institutions and how it is impossible to win against establishments that have racist ideologies rooted deep within them. The third layer (i.e., *description of the situation*) delves into the details of the situation in which the novel was set. It looks at the broader level of society of the 1930s, which was re era of the Jim Crow South, governmental racial laws, and the Ku Klux Klan that made society suffocating for not only African Americans but some other racial minorities as well. In the fourth (i.e., *speaker's features, biography and societal role*) layer, we found the important speakers whose discourse played a part in portraying racism in society. Out of all the characters, Atticus, Scout, Bob Ewell, Reverend Sykes, Lula, and Mrs Dubose are the speakers that speak in favour of or against racism in different ways as the story progresses. The fifth and innermost layer (i.e., *Microanalysis of Discourse*) explores particular vocabulary choices and linguistic variations for the black folks, suggesting the mindsets of white locals of Maycomb against the black community.

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