

MAPPING MEANING: A PRAGMA-DISCOURSE STUDY OF STRUCTURAL METAPHORS AND IDEOLOGICAL REPRESENTATION IN *AMERICANAH* AND *PURPLE HIBISCUS*

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ABSTRACT

This study analyzed the structural metaphors and the ideologies they represent in the novels Americanah and Purple Hibiscus of Chimamanda Ngozie Adichie using a pragma-discourse analysis, an interdisciplinary approach combining elements from both Pragmatics and Discourse Analysis. The study used qualitative analysis, drawing on the theory of conceptual metaphor presented by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson to unveil the intricate layers of conceptual metaphors and ideologies used in the dialogues of the selected novels. The Pragglejaz Metaphor Identification Procedure (2007) was used to recognize the metaphorical language expressions. Data collected from both the novels was analyzed in two phases, in the first phase the conceptual/cognitive metaphor analysis was applied that follows three steps of analysis; identification, interpretation, and explanation. Only conceptual metaphors that met the requirements were identified. In the second phase, the identified metaphors were rigorously evaluated to determine that the metaphors were employed figuratively as a choice and not as a standard. The study explained the conceptual domains that are source and target domains into a tabulated form by deducing their in-depth meaning that underpins the language of the characters in the selected novels. The analysis of conceptual metaphors was based on conceptual /critical metaphor analysis in the field of pragmatic discourse. The major findings were related to structural metaphor and its sub-category money metaphor which was identified in the dialogues of the characters in the mentioned two novels. Finally, their source and target domains were mapped onto each other for getting into the ideological underpinnings of the characters.

Keywords: *Americanah, Purple Hibiscus, conceptual metaphors, Metaphor Identification Procedure, structural metaphor.*

INTRODUCTION

The expression of linguistic components has the ability to influence the thoughts of people. Language is the fundamental element of discourse as discourse practices- or any part of them- cannot be separated from language. Human language is a necessary tool for making the discourse effective enough to demonstrate its dominance over listeners and readers. In this regard, it is imperative to study human language with regard to the structural and pragmatic cognitive aspects which is not possible without the field of linguistics. Linguistics studies language and the abstract version of human thoughts through the possible instances of life by using various types of discursive elements. The use of linguistics and cognitive metaphors is ubiquitous where the meanings are polarized in different manners.

This particular realization of language in literary text has been observed for a long time in Postcolonial literature which is imbued with plethora of such examples because language is used to describe and promote each of these aspects, creating a distinct discourse. Lakoff and Johnson

(1999) claim that our conscious processes are based on mechanisms that govern our spatial movements of embodied minds. Likewise, the implied meanings have some ideological positioning and cognitive mappings that need exploration through discourse analysis. The use of language also serves as a tool for disseminating the ideologies of the writers and speakers. Their motivations are enumerated in a type of speech that is frequently embedded and made accessible to the intelligence of readers for which language has an instrumental value for propagating and disseminating ideologies (Jones & Peccei, 2004).

In this connection, conceptual metaphors which are also called cognitive metaphors are used for the purpose of mapping the concepts for concretization of the abstract ideas. There are various categories of conceptual metaphors namely; orientational, ontological and structural metaphors. Among these, structural metaphor is the one in which understanding of one concept is embedded in another structured concept. In the current study, the focus is on structural elements of metaphors that are utilized in the discourse which has an indirect connection with human ideologies. In this manner, it is true to state that ideologies are promulgated through discourse and discourse is constructed and construed out of the structural positioning of concepts.

The study of ideology is not a common approach for getting into the real life instances and mindsets of the writers in any particular work. According to Geertz (2014) who defines ideology as “a set of collectively held ideas about society, usually promoted to justify a certain type of political action”. He further elaborates on the explanatory function of ideologies by saying that they explicate the issues and facts of social life. In such a manner it enables the individuals to adjust themselves following the society. He also states that ideologies also have evaluative functions which provide a road map to overcome the issues existing in a society and improve the social conditions. In addition, he says that most of the ideologies have fundamentals of politics and they can identify and differentiate between the “evils” and goods of society. Van Dijk (2013) in his book *Ideology and Discourse* defines ideology as the basic shared systems of social cognitions of groups living in a community. He claims that ideologies can do wonders like control group attitudes, can affect the thinking patterns of people related to specific experiences and events.

Ideologies have the power to manage collective beliefs like the belief system of divorce, immigration, abortion, and other topics through which the mental constructs regarding particular experiences and occurrences are built. All facets of ideological discourse, including themes, vocabulary, meanings, interaction, and goals, are governed by polarized (Us against them). Enhancing our good things and their bad things and mitigating our bad things and their good things at all Levels of discourse structure is the overarching strategy of Ideological discourse, or what is known as the "Ideological Square" (Van Dijk 2013). Xu (2014) claims that in the social sciences in general and discourse studies in particular, the idea of ideology is essential because it facilitates our understanding of the complicated relationship between language use and systems of power. In such a manner Ideology analysis advances a comprehensive, multifaceted, and intricate understanding of discourse.

Ideology and Discourse

Van Dijk (2013) has presented a thorough discussion of the relationship between ideologies and discourses. He talks about the ideological discourses and throws light on their various aspects. He is of the view that by its very nature, ideological discourse is predicated on underlying ideologies, and it frequently displays some of these ideologies' structural elements. Text and conversation are among the best sources of data for studying ideologies because they allow the contents of them to be explicitly articulated, justified, or explained. Methodologically speaking, this does not imply

that we can derive ideologies from discourse and discourse from ideologies in a circular fashion because they will also influence a wide range of other social practices, including the resistance to oppression and discrimination and its manifestations. Hence, the forms and contents of ideologies differ from how they are employed or articulated in discourse and other social activities.

Thus, it is not always possible to read off the underlying ideology in a discourse. A portion of the underlying ideologies and intermediate stages of discourse creation can be used to explain ideological discourse structures and other ideological behaviors. Ideological discourses are also governed by an excessive number of non-ideological restraints, such as the participants' present objectives, knowledge, and perception of their current setting. This could imply that ideologies are either completely absent from conversation in some communicative contexts or they are presented indirectly and in altered form (Van Dijk, 2011).

Xu (2014) also claims that ideology contributes to the multifaceted and holistic comprehension and understanding of discourses. He further added that ideology is very crucial in the field of social sciences and especially in discourse studies. Ideology enables the population to understand the interconnected and multifaceted relationship between systems of power and language (Ahmad et al., 2022; Amjad et al., 2021; Khan et al., 2017). Beetz, Herzog, et al. (2021) in their research study believe that ideology is a method of political speech used to impose authority and influence. It is viewed as a modality that controls the subject's interaction with a particular political action knowledge system, where the "subjectivization" process itself suppresses the political power component.

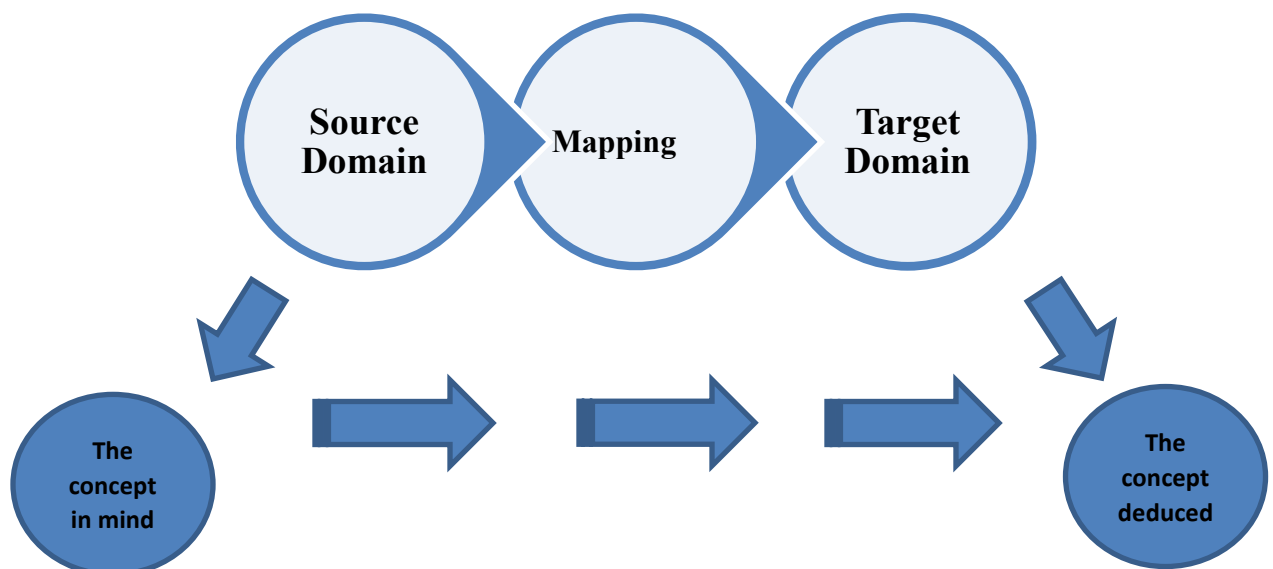
In order to identify structural elements of ideologies in a piece of literature where the text and discourse are two distinct concepts with distinct meanings (Li & Akram, 2023, 2024; Nawaz et al., 2021). Text falls under the linguistic domain, whereas discourse restricts its focus to social domains (Ramzan & Khan, 2024). The social context serves as the source of data for both fields. Their priorities for social and linguistic orientations are primarily where they diverge. Text is the medium through which discourse finds its expression. However there are contradictory relationships between discourse and text, so the relationship is not simple. Language components alone do not constitute discourse. The result of discourse would be real language used by real people in the real world when the topic of discourse is discussed because language is a social activity. Discourse is typically thought of as a blend of language and context. In general, language serves as the fundamental building block of human communication, whereas context is the culmination of all of our past experiences, presumptions, and expectations. No matter whether individuals engage in social practice or other practices, changes in context affect how we make sense of the world and how we interact with others. Every person contributes their unique significance to the social setting (Rina, 2010).

LITERATURE REVEIW

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is extensively used in literature which looks into the plot to reveal the ideological underpinnings of the writers. It is utilized to understand how the novel creates and supports prevailing beliefs to examine the narrative development and character interactions (Fairclough, 2015). For instance, CDA can show how a novel is set in a specific historical era by mimicking and challenging social standards. Novels frequently act as a stage for the growth of characters and the investigation of identities. In CDA, characters' identities, decisions, and conflicts are examined concerning language and discourse (Fairclough, 2015). It reveals the verbal cues characters employ to manage their identities and the expectations of society. Our grasp of how novels deal with identity crises and the complexity of character development is deepened by this field.

As racial and cultural depictions are frequently discussed in the story of novels. Likewise, the ability to analyze language decisions, racial prejudices, and the representation of cultural identities is made possible by CDA (Richardson, 2007). In the analysis of a novel, CDA adds to conversations about race, ethnicity, and cultural diversity by exposing instances of racial bias or resistance (Akram et al., 2020, 2022; Ramzan et al., 2025, 2023). The linguistic diversity of novels provides a wealth of data for research in critical discourse analysis (CDA). It is used to understand how language reflects the histories of characters and social circumstances and how linguistic norms, language regionalisms, and language differences are used in dialogues (Milroy, 1999). Similarly, Conceptual Metaphor Theory emerged in the 1980s, presented by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson in their book named *Metaphors We Live By*. Lakoff was a linguist and cognitive scientist while Johnson was a philosopher and cognitive scientist. Until this time when the theory was practically studied, metaphor was deemed irrational and was ignored for the most part because it was restricted to language only. The traditional approach to metaphor holds the view that metaphor has nothing to do with thoughts and actions. It was Lakoff and Johnson who challenged this traditional view and stated that metaphor should not be dealt with only in terms of language but it should be viewed in terms of thought and action. In other words, it is not only a linguistic tool that is used in discourse rather it is a cognitive tool that is utilized for the meaning-making process. They discussed the cognitive side of metaphor, saying that metaphor is used widely in daily life, not only in words that are spoken but in written communication that reflects thought and action. In the mentioned book, Lakoff (1980) proposed a metaphor "Argument is war" to further clarify the link between the words we use and the cognition or concept that is formed in our mind. He was of the view that looking at arguments in terms of war, the conceptualization of arguments as a kind of war is taken into consideration. This way, the process of cognition is structured when it comes to arguments with varying degrees from culture to culture (Lakoff, 1980). This metaphorical link is called metaphorization as shown in the diagram below:

Figure 1
Process of Metaphorization

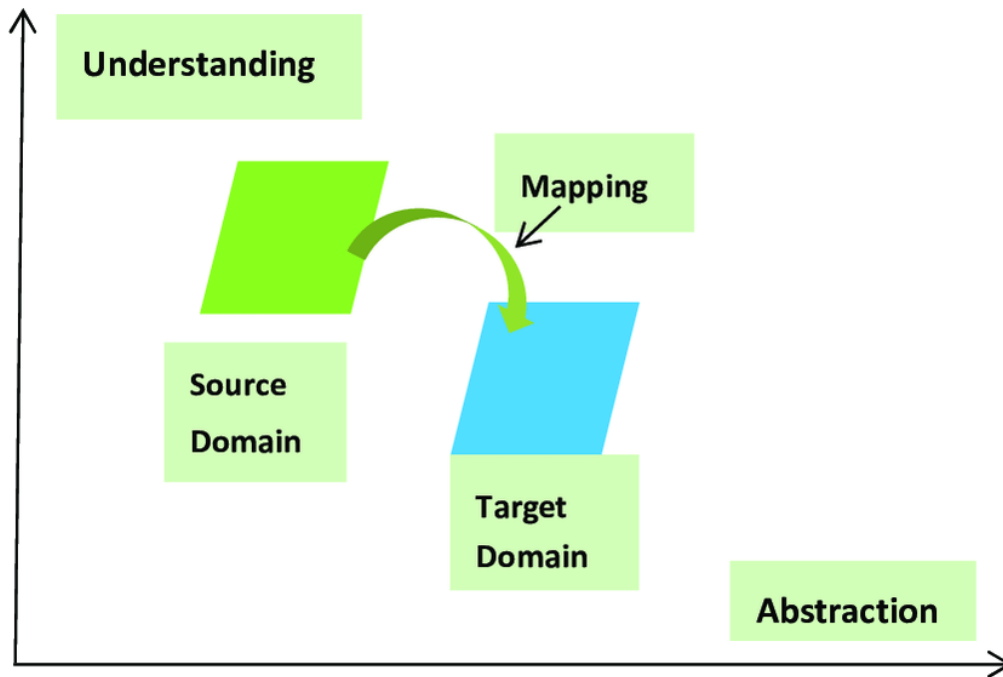


Metaphorical Mapping

The mapping of conceptual metaphors take place by going through the internal process of source domain and the target domain. The source domain carries a concept that is often abstract and conceptualized in the mind for which the process of “Metaphorization” takes place. This process shifts the source domain into the target domain to give a concrete picture for the common understanding. In this connection, Lakoff (1980) states that there is a systematic relationship between metaphorical expressions and metaphorical concepts. Due to the systematic relationship between the two, we can use the linguistic expression to understand the concept. He proposes another metaphor "Time is Money" to highlight how can we understand the underlying concept through the words used in speaking. Thus, it is clear that spending time the way money is spent and wasting time the way money is wasted are the same in association. Lakoff (1980) proposed further examples of metaphorical expressions which are not just a part of language but linked to human thoughts and actions. Some examples are; "love is a journey", the way we experience love is like the way we go through a hard journey; "Ideas are food", the way we devour food is similar to the way we devour ideas; "Theories are buildings", the way we construct and develop buildings is similar to the way we develop theories. Lakoff believes that through such similarities between abstract ideas and concrete things, we make the abstract thing more understandable. It becomes hard to understand love without any comparison to a concrete thing like a journey or something (Lakoff, 1980).

Lakoff, G., & Johnson, M. (2008) claim that metaphor shapes our implicit structure of perceptions and actions. They consider metaphor to be the element that structures the basic understanding of our experiences about various subjects and objects in the universe around us. In a nutshell, it is made vibrant that metaphors are not merely literary devices but they manifest themselves inside concepts. Similarly, Vicente, P.N (2020) believes in his study about CMT that figurative language plays a key role in human understanding and expression. The fundamental claim is that metaphor is not only a literary device for human expression of thoughts but it also reflects how the conceptual domains about various entities are cognitively manufactured in a structured way. The domain of abstraction and understanding is illustrated as:

Figure 2
Mapping of Source and Target Domains



The above-mentioned diagram suggests the view of Kövecses, Z (2017) who defines Conceptual Metaphor in his book *Introduction to Conceptual Metaphor Theory* “A conceptual metaphor is understanding one domain of experience (typically abstract) in terms of another domain (typically concrete)”. He uses another term for this correspondence between domains as “Mapping” which according to him is the relation between the source domain and the target domain. He also uses the term “process” for the cognitive understating of one domain and the term “product” for the conceptual pattern of another domain. These two aspects of process and product are further evaluated with the claim that metaphors reside both in our language as well as in our thoughts. Thus, we use metaphors to understand and speak about the different aspects of various entities around the world. Keeping this discussion in view, Kovecses (2017) argues that metaphors may be channelized the way we perceive certain things given that metaphors are conceptual in nature which may alter the way we conceive things metaphorically in our surroundings. Since it can be concluded from his view of CMT that metaphors govern our conceptual system thus, we may often act metaphorically in the world.

Conceptual Metaphors are classified in terms of their pragmatic cognitive roles since a conceptual metaphor that stretches from one conceptual structure to another is referred to as a structural metaphor. Stated differently, a structural metaphor is the understanding and expression of one notion in terms of another that is clearly defined and structured. We can utilize the terms pertaining to one concept to discuss another with the use of the structural metaphor. When speakers can comprehend the target idea in terms of the source domain's structure through the linguistic correspondence between the two domains, they are using structural metaphors, which occur when the source domain has an enhanced knowledge base to comprehend the target domain which is also termed as “conceptual mapping”.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This is a qualitative study, the goal of qualitative research is to comprehend social phenomena in their entirety and in their context too. The analysis of novels emphasizes the richness of qualitative data by enabling a thorough investigation of the meanings and ideologies embedded in the text. Novels frequently explore the human condition and in this way, interpretivism is a useful framework for examining the narrators' subjective experiences, feelings, and points of view. Understanding the subjective interpretations and meanings ascribed by characters or hinted at in the dialogues of the characters was a prerequisite for conceptual metaphors.

Data Collection

In this research, the main sources of data were Chimamanda Ngozie Adichie's two novels *Americanah* and *Purple Hibiscus*. The novels were textually studied in the very first phase, after that, the conceptual metaphors were studied through the process of identification, interpretation and explanation along with ideologies embedded in the novels.

Data Analysis

The data was analyzed by applying the conceptual/critical metaphor analysis which is considered a model of analysis for conceptual metaphors that follows three steps of analysis; identification, interpretation, and explanation. Using the Pragglejaz Metaphor Identification Procedure (2007), metaphorical language expressions were recognized and the source domains that provide the metaphors' meaning were given. Interpretation and explanation are two steps that go hand in hand with a slight difference in inclusion from ideological standpoints. Only conceptual metaphors that met the requirements were identified. The identified metaphors were rigorously evaluated in the second phase to determine whether or not they are employed figuratively as a choice rather than a standard.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Extract No.1

No	Source Text	Identification	Source Domain	Target Domain
2.	"Then, feeling reckless, she composed an e-mail to Obinze and, without permitting herself to reread it, she sent it off."	Structural Metaphor	Sending Email	Communication

Conceptual metaphors are employed in this paragraph to illustrate the characters' cognitive mapping. Ifemelu states, "Then, feeling reckless, she composed an e-mail to Obinze and, without permitting herself to reread it, she sent it off," she is utilizing the conceptual metaphor of a journey. Sending an email has been cognitively mapped onto the target domain in this context for communication, and the email itself has been designed as a journey metaphor in the passage to highlight the anxiety associated with a busy schedule. This demonstrates a wide range of intricate metaphorically expressed emotive and interpersonal connotations.

Extract No. 2

No	Source Text	Identification	Source Domain	Target Domain
3.	"Are you a half-caste?"	Structural Metaphor	Half-caste	Mixed Heritage

Mixed ancestry is a distinct example of a conceptual metaphor. For instance, due to her pale skin, "Are you a half-caste?" The target domain of mixed heritage and racial origin is represented by the source domain of 'fair skin'. In this sense, having white or fair skin is associated with being

mixed race. Here, it is assumed that others may recognize that Asa has a mixed ethnic background due to his pale complexion which functions as a structural metaphor in the context of this discourse.

Asa's discourse in the excerpt raises questions pertaining to identity. The speaker in the dialogue comes across an unpleasant situation because Asa's joy at being mistaken for a mixed-race person suggests the existence of a worldview centered around race and identity. The speaker's uneasiness suggests that she is going through challenging emotions related to racial stereotypes and expectations. When Asa was questioned, "Is your mother white? What is meant by "half-caste"?" expose a belief that a person's race can only be inferred from their physical appearance. This supports the notion that a person's race is determined by their physical attributes and demonstrates a propensity for stereotyping.

The section of this dialogue also touches on how challenging it may be to identify one's race, particularly for people who do not easily fall into predetermined classifications. Asa's pale complexion casts doubt on her lineage, highlighting the intricacies of racial identity. It appears that there is a widespread perception that being mixed-race makes one more attractive or different because Asa seems to like it when people presume she is. This may be due to societal or cultural views that find people of mixed ethnic heritage to be interesting or unique.

DISCUSSION

Structural metaphors have also been used in the context of both novels for giving a comprehensive analysis of the concepts. Structural metaphors solely depend on the source and target domain comparison and the application of these domains for conclusion. Structural metaphors are used by their relevant subgroups that have a significant function of structural aspects. Ifemelu employs the structural conceptual metaphor when she writes, "Then, feeling reckless, she composed an e-mail to Obinze and, without permitting herself to reread it, she sent it off." In this instance, sending an email has been cognitively mapped onto the target domain for communication, and the email itself is structured as a conceptual metaphor to emphasize the worry that comes with having a busy schedule in the passage. This exhibits a broad spectrum of complex metaphorically conveyed interpersonal and emotional meanings.

In addition, the other example taken from *Americanah*, suggests a mixed heritage when the speaker says "Are you a half-caste?" because of her pale complexion. The source domain of "fair skin" represents the target domain of mixed heritage and racial origin. In this way, being mixed-race is linked to having a white or fair complexion. Here, it's considered that Asa's pale complexion indicates to others that he comes from a mixed ethnic background. The other occasion when race is discussed pervasively uses the concept of race as a source domain, cascading the development of race when the speaker says, "No genetic variation between two black people than there is between a black person and a white person". This is a predetermined concept emphasizes how race is conceptualized as an abstract and socially created notion, mapping onto both the source and target domains. Furthermore, the given example suggests that there is no greater genetic variety between two Black individuals than there is between a Black and a White one. In addition, "So what's the deal, is race an invention or not" implies that various individuals have varying racial groups associated with them, placing them in distinctly diverse social classes. The other side of race is its questionable character, which turns it into a mystery that has to be solved. In this sense, it is evident that the metaphor of race has been presented as a riddle of paradoxes that requires resolution.

Furthermore, in *Purple Hibiscus*, we have still another example of the colonial mentality in the form of a refined and civilized culture. The dialogue's line, "We had to sound civilized in public,

he told us; we had to speak English," suggests that "linguistic choices or public behaviour" is the target domain, while "civility and refinement" is the source domain. It expands on the notion of explaining one's actions and language selections made throughout a conversation. Said another way, language use and speech patterns are linked to one's assessment of one's suitability or lack thereof for a civilized society. In the continuation of these discussions, both the novels are dense with racial issues and the statements are several times expressed to promulgate the idea. The statements like; "Why didn't she just ask 'Was it the white girl or the black girl'" and "The conservative will tell you that you are the real racist" also suggest the same idea of racial issues that stand as structural metaphors for race.

Money Metaphor

Money metaphor is the sub-group of structural metaphor that discusses the concept of buying, paying, selling and expenses. In the dialogues of *Americanah*, the conversation about the cost of the braids in this text serves as the conceptual metaphor of money. The interchange "I paid one sixty last month" and the bargaining imply a metaphorical mapping of monetary transactions onto the concept of a partnership. In this exchange of ideas, both sides are trying to come to a settlement that will satisfy them both, demonstrating how relationship negotiation is similar to negotiating over costs in the workplace. In one other instance, the speaker says, "Make small-small braids that will last long, it's very expensive to make hair here" which suggests overpricing. The source domain of "small-small braids" is used, metaphorically, to represent the concept of expenses. The implication is that Ifemelu should be frugal and select an affordable choice, just as short braids are more affordable and long-lasting. There is another instance "How much money I had" in which the point of affordability of Nigerian people is highlighted.

Moreover, in *Purple Hibiscus*, "Ifeoma could not afford it" uses the target domain of "affordability" in the context of this debate to refer to the source domain of "financial transaction." The goal of mapping both domains onto one another is conceptually metaphorical which represents a financial difficulty. It illustrates Ifeoma's financial affordability challenges and limitations beyond transactions with money. There is another instance "Even Eugene's money will not buy everything" which indicates Eugene's financial situation. In this case, the target domain of "control" has been metaphorically represented by the "purchasing power" as a source domain. To illustrate Eugene's effect over purchases in terms of money, both domains are mapped onto one another. It subtly conveys the limitations of a person's ability to purchase something even if they can afford the costs.

CONCLUSION

The theoretical developments in the current study have also been within the context of Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT). It does so by presenting examples of how CMT can be used as a frame of reference for unpacking postcolonial discourses and gendered processes. The conceptual metaphors also show power analysis while finding the ways that people in Adichie's novels talk about the world. It suggests that conceptual metaphors are not just tools of language; they are locations of power struggle. This calls for a reconsideration of CMT in relation to literature and ideology where the metaphors bear political, race and sex connotations. By extension this theoretical implication challenges scholars to delve deeper into the relationship between metaphor and power.

The current work places the research in between pragmatics and critical discourse analysis within the ongoing debate of how language and ideologies manifest in literary texts. During the analysis, the characters were analyzed and their linguistic nuances were properly described with the help of

implicatures and conceptual metaphors. This implication supports the argument that prior popular theories of pragmatics need to be extended to accommodate ideology operating in a discourse. Further, Analysing two novels *Americanah* and *Purple Hibiscus* it is possible to show how characters use language as a form of colonial and neocolonial discourse, based on conversational implicatures and conceptual metaphors. Such discovery enriches postcolonial discursive studies arguing that linguistic indicators including those found in African literature underlined as useful means of defying Western imperialistic tendencies and asserting postcolonial subjectivities.

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