

THE ROLE OF STYLISTIC ANALYSIS OF FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE IN SHAPING THE THEME OF RACE IN CHIMAMANDA ADICHIE'S "AMERICANAH"

Mr. Luciano Paulo Jago Dojack^{1*}, Dr. Zahir Abu-Obeida²

^{1*}Lecturer at Upper Nile University, Department of English Language and Literature, Faculty of Education, Republic of South Sudan- Currently, a PhD Student, University of Gezira.

²Associate Professor of Applied Linguistics, University of Gezira, Faculty of Education.

***Corresponding Author:**

Abstract

The article aimed at stylistic study of figurative language and its role in reflecting the theme of race in Chimamanda Adichie's *Americanah*. The article aimed at studying the impressive style of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie. The researcher used a qualitative approach, besides critical analytical descriptive method. The researcher adopted two theories of Postcolonial Theory and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) for the theoretical framework. Some findings of the study are as follows: figurative language plays a great role in reflecting the theme of race in an impressive manner; Chimamanda Adichie uses figurative language in an effective way that reflects race theme vividly. Some recommendations are as follows: introducing teaching of figurative language in all educational stages to produce more future creative African writers; handling race issue in a constructive way that leads to positive outcome when writing literary works that discuss this sensitive theme.

Keywords: Stylistics – Style – Semantics – Figurative Language – Race – Theme

1-INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background

As well as many other many other novelists, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie pays attention to addressing race issues in literary works. Being a Nigerian and African American, Chimamanda Adichie would be one of the best choices in carrying out race issues in her fictional works. Although her novel ‘Americanah’ is a fictional genre, her actual experience in living in the American society contributes a lot and gives her advantage to tackle this sensitive issue with full insight.

Chimamanda Adichie’s style takes the audience into the worlds of amazement, for she knows how to handle her work with great skill. There are so many reasons and justifications that encouraged the researcher to carry out this study. One of the most important reasons is that this study deals with the way how figurative language is used and how it serves in giving more emphasis to the theme of race. By studying the mutual role of figurative language and race theme, the stylistic analysis will interpret messages Chimamanda Adichie intends to convey.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Race is one of the topics that people have been talking and continue to talk about in different contexts. Literature, as one of human sciences branches, has contributed creatively and aesthetically to that matter. Chimamanda is one of those writers who have tackled race issues in their literary works. This study wants to shed light on Chimamanda’s style and how race theme is reflected through the use of figurative language in her novel “Americanah”

1.2 Objectives of the Study

- 1- To stylistically analyse the role of figures of speech in reflecting the theme of race in “Americanah”
- 2- To discover how figures of speech are employed to effectively reflect the theme of race in “Americanah”

1.3 Questions of the Study

- 1- What is the stylistic role of figures of speech in reflecting the theme of race in “Americanah”?
- 2- How are figures of speech employed to effectively reflect the theme of race in “Americanah”?

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study will contribute to the stylistic study of African literature in general and novels in particular. The study will show stylistics plays influential role in interpreting African fictional works objectively. The study will motivate researchers and stylisticians to study Chimamanda Adichie’s style from different perspectives.

1.5 Methodology of the Study

A qualitative approach will be used. A critical analytical descriptive method will be adopted to carry out the study. The novel “Americanah” will be the only primary source. After displaying the synopsis, the extracted texts will be stylistically analysed using the critical discourse analysis (CDA) method.

1.6 Limits of the Study:

The study will focus on Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s *Americanah*. The stylistic study will be limited to the figurative language embedded in theme of *race*.

2- LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

The researcher has surveyed the Sudanese universities looking for previous studies on Chimamanda Adichie’s works, but he did not find any. Therefore, this study is carried out based on literature on her works by international universities, books, journals, periodicals, theses and websites. This chapter is allocated for literature review as the base for carrying out the study. The reviewed literature consists of *Chimamanda Adichie’s profile summary, stylistics, semantics, and figures of speech, besides themes of religion, war and race*. All the chosen topics will be traced thoroughly, and they will be an example that helps in stylistically analysing and interpreting the three novels written by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie.

2.1 Stylistics

Stylistics is one of the major branches of applied linguistics. Although it is considered as a new field if compared with other fields of linguistics, it plays a great role in studying language. Items displayed and discussed below will give a full insight about stylistics.

2. 1.1 What is a Style?

style is one of the less debated terms in the field of linguistics and literary studies in terms of agreement on its definition. Most scholars made no controversial arguments in defining the term *style*. In interpreting the word (style), Leech and Short stated the straight forwardness of the (style) meaning. To both of them, it is related to the way of language usage in a specific context by a particular person for a crystal clear purpose and so forth. Leech & Short (2007:9). So, style is the way of language usage by people for different reasons and purposes.

Herrmann et al. (2015: 25-52). What is stated by Herrmann, J. et al reveals the mutuality between style and text. Therefore, it is mentioned that style is a property of texts in which the formal features could be studied by focusing on the amount of their number or evaluating them.

From the deliberated points on the meaning of style, it is observed and agreed that any style of writing is for a reason or purpose. ‘...style does not arise out of a vacuum but that its production, purpose, and effect are deeply embedded in the context...’ Verdonk, (2002).

Style differs from person to another. Some writing styles are poor and others are impressive and creative.

2.1.2 What is Stylistics?

According to Toolan, (2021) ‘Stylistics is the principled, systematic and rigorous analysis of texts (mainly literary), using linguistic description.’ Toolan’s definition of stylistics asserts that it is a science for being carried out rigorously and systematically when it comes to analysing literary texts by using linguistic description.

‘Stylistics, simply defined as the (linguistic) study of style, is rarely undertaken for its own sake, simply as an exercise in describing what use is made of language. We normally study style because we want to explain something, and in general, literary stylistics has, implicitly or explicitly, the goal of explaining the relation between language and artistic function.’ Leech & Short (2007:11). Leech and Short state it clear that any stylistic study is made for a purpose. Literary stylistics is carried out to show how a language is used creatively to serve the artistic function in literary works.

2.1.3 Purpose of Stylistics

For Khattak et al. (2012:97), practicing stylistic analysis always results in realising two objectives: it provides the reader with rigorous comprehension of the text which leads to successful interpretation of the text. The other main objective of stylistics is elaborating the general knowledge of the language hand in hand with the awareness of the language. It appears that stylistics helps in interpretation of texts and raises the general knowledge about language for learners. Other objectives could be added to the previously mentioned two main objectives. Stylistics empowers learners/readers to have a full insight on the language learned; and it leads to meaningful interpretation of texts. All these useful outcomes of stylistics encourage stylisticians to campaign and push for the adoption of stylistics in all levels of learning for better interpretation of texts and thinking critically and objectively.

Through stylistic analysis we can explore and explain why a certain writer chooses certain words or linguistic features. Stylistic analysis is the best tool to interpretation of texts. Khan, et al. (2015: 11-14), state that ‘...stylistic analysis tends to explore and explain the particular choices made by the writer/author in the selection of words and sentence structure.’ Hence, exploring and explaining author’s/writer’s choice of words eases the understanding of the text and adds more colours to portray the text to create a detailed view.

According to Crystal (1987:66), there are two broad types of style: *evaluative* and *descriptive*. The style is studied critically in the first type. The latter is different from the first for it lacks value judgments. Based on the two types of style mentioned by Crystal, any stylistic analysis would not divert from one of them. Therefore, the researcher has decided to study Chimamanda Adichie’s style in an evaluative method through her novels.

2.1.4 Importance of Stylistics

Stylistics plays a key role in second language learning. It increases and develops the proficiency of the second language learner. However, those who are against this notion will claim the possibility of learning a second language without any need to stylistics. Geoff Hall reveals a heated debate on the best way of learning a second language. One team is calling for intensive reading as a useful means for absorbing the second language. However, another team is calling for and encouraging stylistics as a means for improving and enhancing language proficiency. They attribute this proficiency to the scientific nature of stylistics where the values of conscious attention to different linguistic features are embedded in the text through different means and techniques in presenting linguistic features. All the mentioned factors contribute efficiently to meaning. Watson & Zyngier (2007:4).

Argument made by Hall is convincing and logical because what stylistics advocates for is the conscious knowledge of the linguistic elements which leads to a thorough understanding of the text.

2.1.5 Stylistics and Literature

Scott (2014), in an article entitled ‘*Creative Writing and Stylistics*’, shows the impact of combining stylistics and creative writing and the chances it can provide in knowing how we can write, or avoid certain mistakes when writing. In other words, it gives us good knowledge in successful choice of words when writing. The researcher could add to what Jeremy stated that readers’ knowledge of stylistics in creative writing increases awareness of knowing the secrets of language in depth; for it gives them full insight about the creative use of language.

Once stylistics established itself as a theoretical and practical tool to link between linguistics and literary criticism, its role is always done in an academic form where completed literary discourse is linguistically analysed. Saito (1997). From what

is mentioned by Saito, it is clear that stylistics is a task connected to the academia. He, as well, states that stylistics could not be done for incomplete works. For any literary work to undergo stylistic analysis, it should be completed work.

2.2: Semantics

For this study, semantics has a crucial role to play in understanding the language nature to reach a better interpretation of the written discourse through the semantic study of linguistic expressions.

2.2.1 What is Semantics?

According to Reimer, (2010:2), "Any attempt to understand the nature of language must try to describe and explain the ways in which linguistic expressions have meaning." What Reimer states to define semantics takes us a step forward to the ways of studying texts semantically to reach reasonable interpretation. To him, semantics is the act of describing and explaining the ways in which linguistic expressions have meanings. Thus, it is observed that linguistic expressions are the backbone of semantic study. The phrase '*linguistic expressions*' is debatable in reaching the best meaning. That is to say, any semantic study depends on the prior knowledge degree of the person carrying out the semantic study. His/her understanding of certain '*linguistic expressions*' will affect, negatively or positively, the outcome of the semantic study which will result in accurate or inaccurate definition and explanation of meaning.

Semantics is the matter of organising thoughts that are expressed and communicated through a language. If we look into semantics attentively, we will realise and reach the conclusion that language has its own function in which thoughts are expressed and communicated. The role of semantics is observed in organising the thoughts which are expressed linguistically. Jackendoff (2002:123). By facing language and semantics, Jackendoff succeeded in defining semantics and made it understandable that semantics is the organisation of thoughts. From his statement, the researcher comes out with a conclusion that well organised thoughts lead to better understanding of meaning and vice versa.

2.2.2 History of Semantics

History of semantics within modern linguistic theory started in the early to mid-1970s. That was the period when modern semantics existed. 'It is probably fair to say that modern formal semantics as a subfield within linguistic theory began in the early to mid-1970s with the cross-fertilization of linguistic theory and philosophy of language (including semantics) sparked by Barbara Partee, Richmond Thomason, David Lewis, and others.' Jacobson (2014:10).

2.2.3 Meaning in Context as a Scientific Approach

According to Cruse (2000:13), when dealing with semantics, it should be put into account that words meanings are not static. All meanings of linguistic expressions differ according to the context in which they appear. It is true that meanings of the same words become different according to their different contextual occurrences. If there is something to add is that meanings of words do not only change when they appear in different contexts, meaning of some words can change through ages of time.

Palmer raises a question of what should be considered as the basic unit of meaning. To him, word is not after all the basic unit of meaning; he goes further and crowns the sentence as the basic unit of meaning. 'Apart from all the problems concerning the word itself, there is the question whether the basic unit of meaning is not the word after all, but the sentence. For it is, surely, with sentences that we communicate, and this is reflected in the traditional definition of the sentence as 'the expression of a complete thought'. If words have meaning, it could be argued, it is derived from their function as parts of sentences.' Palmer, (1976, 1981:37). What is raised by Palmer rhymes with the notion of extracting the meaning from the context.

Cruse, Palmer and Leech show their general tendency to finding meaning from context. All linguists and stylisticians have no any argument on meaning in context as a scientific approach.

2.2.4 Major Goals and Concerns of Semantics

For sure, semantics has many goals and objectives to fulfil. According to Kroeger (2019:217), one of the major objectives of semantics is finding the relationship between meanings of sentences and their parts' meanings as a way of explaining the meaning. So, through explanation, meaning will be understandable and the message conveyed will be crystal clear.

2.2.5 Semantic Change

According to Martines & Montserrat (2015), semantic change is considered as one of the linguistic areas that continues to gain more interest in the recent years. This growing interest is built on two dimensions. The first is built around the *meaning-oriented and usage-based* approaches to language. The second is built around *development of text corpora* in which old and contemporary language are dealt with by finding the appropriate approach when using language communicatively. So, for both of them, semantic change influences the way we approach to communicate effectively when using a language.

2.3 Figurative Language

Since figurative language is the main subject of this study, tracing its role in details will help in better understanding of the selected texts embedding them in the novels under study.

2.3.1 What is Figurative Language?

According to Ashtiani & Derakhshesh (2015), figurative language has so many definitions, but the shared ground of all these definitions is its deviation from the ordinary language when we come to express feeling in a non-traditional way. Irrespective of different definitions of figurative language, all linguists and language learners agree on unconventionality of the feeling expressed by using figurative language. In other words, this type of language is an extraordinary language that should not be interpreted literally.

2.3.2 Purpose and Function of Figurative Language

Koech (2013) maintains that, “The figurative language used by artists strives to describe and convey meaning of people, place, actions or things around us, but does so in an indirect way by using metaphors, symbolisms proverbs and personification.” It is comprehensible as stated by Koech that the usage of figurative language by artists is to convey meanings in different perspectives or situations. The difference between conveying meaning in everyday language and the artistic language is that through the use of figurative language meanings are conveyed in an indirect way.

Marijani (2014) believes that “One important point to consider is that each artistic work intends to convey a particular message to the audience by the use of particular mechanisms. The main devices associated with it, include language manipulations as well”. Marijani agrees with what Garagni mentioned above. It is realised that the use of language in a particular way and its manipulation, whether through figurative language or any other particular mechanism, has a specific message to convey to the audience. The researcher reaches a conclusion that every use of figurative language or any manipulation of language done by any author is done for a reason.

According to Yeibo (2012: 180-187), “The role played by figurative language in encoding the meaning of a literary text cannot be over emphasized. Specifically, it serves both functional and artistic purposes. This infers that, figurative language acts as semantic signifiers in texts and also helps the literary artist in achieving beauty in form.” It is transparent that figurative language serves both functional and artistic purposes; it acts as semantic signifiers and helps in achieving the text’s beauty. Yeibo, in a nutshell, displays the function and purposes of using figurative language.

For Regmi (2014), figures of speech primarily deal with other linguistic elements so as to transform the expression of language to add more beauty and effectiveness. Regmi’s statement confirms and reasserts the influential role played by figures of speech in beautifying the expression which, in return, catches the audience attention.

2.3.3 Impact of Figurative Language on Readers

However, it is not in all cases that readers enjoy reading for their love of figurative language. If figures of speech are not chosen appropriately, the reader will be discouraged to continue reading. But, the appropriate choice of figurative language will keep the momentum of reading and the fire of passion burning on the reader. If figurative language is used appropriately, it will have a positive impact on the aesthetic value. This reasonable use of figurative language will raise the reader’s interest to visualise the meaning of such figures of speech and interpret the language conveyed. Padillah, et al (2016).

2.3.4 Challenges of Comprehending Figurative Language

‘The contribution of literal meaning aspects during figurative processing marks one of the dividing lines between competing theories.’ Weiland, et al. (2014). This view is asserted by Deamer (2013) when he says, ‘There is no theoretical consensus on how figurative language interpretation should be accounted for.’ The point both Weiland and Deamer agree on has justification that what makes it difficult to reach a consensus over a certain theory in interpreting figurative language is that there are so many disciplines involved in dealing with figurative language. That results in applying wide range of theories that suit each discipline to reach a meaningful and reasonable interpretation of figurative language and meanings.

Figuring out the author’s meaning is always challenging for using some words beyond their ordinary meaning. The reader’s imagination is needed to reach the meant interpretation or message of the author. ‘. Figurative language uses some words that go beyond their ordinary meaning. It requires the readers to use his/ her imagination to figure out the author’s meaning.’ Harya (2016).

2.3.5 Figurative Language Stylistics

Concerning figurative language stylistics, Akun & Winnie (2008) cited from Leech & Short (1981: 78), that the author’s style can be recognised via his/her use of figurative language in his/her literary work. The essential parts that figurative language stylistics deals with are the choice of figurative language, the meaning of figurative language and the purpose of using figurative language and its employment by the writer.

3- Synopsis, Analysis and Discussion

3.1 Americanah Synopsis

This novel tells the story of Ifemelu, a young Nigerian woman who travels for the United States of America for study. The story starts when she is on the train going to Princeton for hair braiding preparing, preparing to go back to Nigeria after spending 15 years in the US.

While on the train, the novel flashbacks and she recalls her life in Nigeria: she dates Obinze, her first love in the high school. Both, Ifemelu and Obinze, Nsukka University, but Ifemelu leaves to the United States. She stays there with Aunt Uju and her son. Ifemelu faces difficulties to find work for having a student's visa. She works with a tennis coach who exploits her body. She feels degraded and depressed. Ifemelu stops communication with Obinze. She establishes a blog that discusses issues of gender and race in the United States of America.

Obinze travels to England and works there. British authorities deport him back to Nigeria because of his visa expiry. He becomes wealthy and marries a beautiful girl and has a daughter. Obinze still loves Ifemelu.

Ifemelu has the same feeling towards Obinze. She breaks up with Curt and begins a new relationship with an African American called Blaine. This new relationship ends up as well.

Back in Nigeria, the old love revives when she meets Obinze. Ifemelu has a new blog to discuss Nigerian issues. Obinze leaves his wife and daughter, reunites with his old love Ifemelu.

3.2 Stylistic Analysis of Figurative Language Role in Reflecting Race Theme

Race is considered as one of the issues that many societies are divided over. It is generally known that race and racial discrimination is a result of long history of slavery, imposed on Africans and some other parts of the world, by European and Americans. Racism still exists in the so called first world countries. Americanah discusses race in America as one of the main themes. Therefore, the following extracts which are to be stylistically analysed are taken from Americanah by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie.

I. Ifemelu's Reaction to Insulting Comments

Globalisation has come out with its tools that have become part of our daily life. The internet, networking and social media platforms are used by billions of people. Despite their role in connecting people and exchanging experiences, these social media platforms are used by many in a very destructive way where hate speech and racist comments are existing.

Ifemelu is extremely concerned with race issues. That leads her to launch a blog which discusses race issues in the United States. Some comments by her audience make her nervous, but that do not let her quit discussing racial topics. The following extract from page (15) reveals how Ifemelu reacts to some readers' comments:

Readers like Sapphic Derrida, who reeled off statistics and used words like "reify" in their comments, made Ifemelu nervous, eager to be fresh and to impress, so that *she began, over time, to feel like a vulture hacking into the carcasses of people's stories for something she could use. Sometimes making fragile links to race.*

* Extract (1)

As shown in the extract, some readers' comments fill her with strong desire to carry on her mission. A simile is used in the same extract to show how Ifemelu deals with racism issues in a very sensitive manner. This is the part where simile is used: "... so that she began, over time, to feel like a vulture hacking into the carcasses of people's stories for something she could use. Sometimes making fragile links to race." Ifemelu, in this figure of speech, is compared to a vulture that hacking into the carcasses. In other words, Ifemelu gives race issues a very high consideration. Therefore, she tries tirelessly to go deep beyond the lines of what people write when they comment on her blog. Ifemelu is very obsessed about race and racism. Consequently, she looks for any thread that could have a link to race. The use of the word "carcasses" in this figure of speech is not done by accident. It indicates that racism has a very unpleasant smell. Despite this, the vulture or Ifemelu hacks into it, because she thinks this issue should be addressed with all its sensitivity. The use of simile in this extract has served in showing the reader the personality of Ifemelu and the way she deals and reacts to race issues when running her personal blog.

II. American Race Ladder

Race is a big issue in America. Through race you would be stereotyped and put in a certain position or rank that goes with your race. You would be given a status that suits your race in society. That is what Ifemelu finds when she is in the United States of America for the first time.

On her blog, Ifemelu shows how different racial groups are stereotyped in the American society. The extract from page (126) gives more details:

Hispanic means the frequent companions of American blacks in poverty rankings, *Hispanic means a slight step above American blacks in the American race ladder.*

* Extract (2)

The extract shows the stereotyping of Hispanic and American blacks. In special cases, stereotype is construed as figurative language. Both Hispanic and American blacks are stereotyped as poor communities when they are part of the whole

American society. Hispanic are considered a bit higher than the American blacks in the so called “American race ladder”. So, this is reaffirmation of racial stereotyping in the American society. That means, your colour determines your status in society. As if different races are put in different zones that they should not leave.

III. Opposing a Racist Word

Some words are considered racist ones. For their insulting nature, people are discouraged from using them. Even some of these words are globally known as racist. Therefore, when uttering or typing them, everyone will react showing surprise and resentment.

Professor Moore, in a lecture, asks students to talk about historical representation in films, in the extract on page (161):

“Let’s talk about historical representation in film,” Professor Moore said. A firm, female voice from the back of the class, with a non-American accent, asked, “Why was ‘*nigger*’ bleeped out?” *And a collective sigh, like a small wind, swept through the class.*

* Extract (3)

The young lady in the class pronounces a contemptuous word for black people. The word she utters is “nigger”. As a reaction, for what she says, a simile is used: “... *And a collective sigh like a small wind, swept through the class.*” The collective sigh is compared to a sound of a small wind. It means that the reaction is very strong for the use of this offensive and unfair remark about black people. To show the refusal of the word by many people, they just put the letter (N) instead of pronouncing the word. Some people go further for calling for the eradication of this word from the English dictionary. So, the use of simile as figurative language in this extract has shown how students strongly oppose the use of the word (N).

IV. American Ladder of Racial Hierarchy

As mentioned earlier about how people are grouped and categorised according to their race, this time there is a ladder of racial hierarchy where a certain race is positioned on the top of that ladder and the other is at the bottom.

Again, on her blog, Ifemelu states the so called ladder of social hierarchy in America. It is found in the extract on page (216):

Finally, race. *There’s a ladder of racial hierarchy in America. White is always on top, specifically White Anglo-Saxon Protestant, otherwise known as WASP, and American Black is always on the bottom, and what’s in the middle depends on time and place.*

* Extract (4)

The mentioned racial hierarchy is kind of stereotyping. This discriminative ladder puts White Americans on the top, and the Black Americans on the bottom. By saying: “... *what’s in the middle depends on time and place*” is to state that there would be some minor exceptions, but not influential in changing the American ladder of racial hierarchy. So, through her blog Ifemelu tries to reflect the racial stereotyping in the United States of America. This figure of speech is significant in describing the race issue in the U.S. A.

V. Watermelon

In many societies, some objects are mentioned or used to be symbols that have racial messages. Watermelon, in the American society, is used as a racist tool to discriminate against African Americans. Ifemelu tells her classmates what a white classmate in the undergrad said to her in the extract on page (256):

(In *undergrad a white classmate asks if I like watermelon*, I say yes, and another classmate says, oh my God that is so racist, and I’m confused. “Wait, how?”)

* Extract (5)

Watermelon is used figuratively as a symbol of being independent. In other words, if you are an African American who runs his/her own affairs independently, the white Americans call you a watermelon. Historically, African Americans were known as people who liked watermelon so much. It had been said that freed slaves grew, ate and sold watermelons. Therefore, it had become a symbol of their freedom.

While Ifemelu telling this story innocently, she does not know that it is a racist expression. If a white person calls an African a watermelon, it means recalling the history of slavery. When such history is recalled, it signifies that all the black

people's achievements, progress and advancement will not be recognised because they are watermelons. Although watermelon is a symbol of independence, it also carries racial messages of contempt.

VI. Racism is not a Myth

On the blog, Ifemelu uses stereotyping to explain racism and racists. The stereotype for both blacks and whites has a long historical background. For it is known who used to lynch and whom was considered as a bloodsucking monster. Ifemelu tries to face this historical notion with type of racists in our modern time. The extract on page (361) gives more details:

So if you haven't lynched somebody then you can't be called a racist. If you're not a bloodsucking monster, then you can't be called a racist. Somebody has to be able to say that racists are not monsters. They are people with loving families, regular folk who pay taxes.

* Extract (6)

By studying this extract carefully, we will discover that racism is not a myth story, racism is real. Racists are not monsters or creatures from other planet. Racists are those ordinary people we meet everywhere, at school, at work, at the market ... etc. This is an explicit admission about the existence of racism. Racists are those people we live with them, we meet them, they are found in different communities and professions. It is a fact that we could not deny. Trying to deny this truth is like trying to cover the sun rays with your hands to not allow its light to reach people.

VII. King Kong

One of the hardest and unbearable racial discriminations is when people resemble a human being to an animal. Ifemelu mentions a story in her blog in which an African visits Mexico and how people there look at him because of his black skin. The following extract from page (379) describes what happens:

I go to Mexico and they're staring at me. It's not hostile at all, but it just makes you know you stick out, kind of like they like you but you're still King Kong."

* Extract (7)

In many societies, King Kong has become a symbol for all those with black or dark skin. In other words, King Kong is a symbol of inferiority of human beings from African origin. If we take this part: "... *kind of like they like you but you're still King Kong.*" This extract describes the feeling of that African person when people stare at him as a strange creature. Being still King Kong means that you have not reached a status in which you could be called a human being without being discriminated against. What a shocking symbol and what a bad feeling the symbol of King Kong could make!

VIII. Handling Race Issues

When talking or writing about race, that should be done with cautions and high degree of sensitivity. Talking or writing about racism is like walking into a minefield. Some people discuss it as bear fact without embellishment of facts and ugliness. Another school takes an opposite path in discussing racial issues. The following extract is taken from the talk of Shan to Ashanti on pages (383-384):

*My editor reads the manuscript and says, 'I understand that race is important here but we have to make sure the book transcends race, so that it's not just about race. And I'm thinking, But why do I have to transcend race? You know, like **race is a brew best served mild, tempered with other liquids, otherwise white folk can't swallow it.**'"*

* Extract (8)

The views of Shan's editor is a sample of some people who do not want to speak about race and who want to remain in the status of denial of the existence of race issues and racial discrimination in some societies. A metaphor is used when he says: "... *You know, like race is a brew best served mild, tempered with other liquids, otherwise white folk can't swallow it.*" The use of this metaphor, when race is considered a brew, is very successful. For the taste of brew is sour, race as well has the same taste. Of course, if something is sour or bitter it will not be easy for you to swallow.

The editor's opinion of relieving the sour taste of race so that the white people would be able to swallow it is one of the issues society divided over. The editor's character and opinion about race is displayed by Adichie to give us an example of some people's thoughts about race and how racial issues to be handled. Most importantly, the use of metaphor in the chosen extract plays a significant role in reflecting the theme of race.

IX. Public Figures' Racial Expressions

If stereotyping is done by those considered public figures, who interact with people from different cultural and racial background, its effect will be a heavy burden and more divisive. The chosen extract for this subheading reveals how racial expressions are deeply rooted in the society, even within those who are religious figures. Although religion calls for love, respect and brotherhood, some religious men and women use insulting racial expressions. That is very strange and contradicts with their faith. The following extract shows stereotyping against a teenager by a religious figure. The extract is on page (400):

He told her about the pastor at church, a white woman, who had said hello to all the other kids but when she came to him, she said, "What's up, bro?" "I feel like I have vegetables instead of ears, like large broccoli sticking out of my head,"

* Extract (9)

In the extract, Dike talks to Ifemelu, tells her how the pastor at church stereotyped him because he is black. The stereotype as figurative language appears when she greets him differently by saying: "What's up bro?" This expression is to be categorised as means of racial discrimination. When we look at how Dike reacts, he reacts by using sarcasm in describing his feeling. He feels as if his ears turn into large broccoli. If we look beyond the use of stereotype in the first place, it has been used to show discrimination between persons from different races. Sarcasm, which is another figure of speech, used by Dike is refusal to what the pastor has said, and he wishes if the pastor has not said this expression. Although Dike is a kid, but he could know and feel the racial message intended by the pastor. For the pastor to do that before kids, it means that she is giving the flag of racial discrimination to the coming generation, and this vicious circle continues and lasts for a very long time.

X. 'Monkey' and 'Jungle' as Racist Words

Racism is not only expressed in the real world. It is found and practiced in the cyber space and social media platforms as well. Racism is also used in the political world through the means of social media. Chat rooms are full with words that carry racial indications, words such as 'monkey' and 'jungle'. Both words are usually used against people of African origin. Barack Obama candidacy for the president of the United States made this white man breathe these flames of hatred and racism. The following extract is what Ifemelu reads from chat rooms. It is on pages (404-405):

How can a monkey be president? Somebody do us a favor and put a bullet in this guy. Send him back to the African jungle. A black man will never be in the white house, dude, it's called the white house for a reason.

* Extract (10)

All these harsh and racist words are because of Barack Obama's candidacy for the president of the United States of America. Calling him a monkey is a racial expression that is said to anyone from African origin. It means inferiority. So, according to the person who types this comment, a black man whom he put into the same degree of animals could not be a president. The use of monkey as a symbol to discriminate against black people is one of the severe racial expressions. This symbolism is followed by sarcasm when he calls for sending him back to the African Jungle. He wants to send a message that uncivilised person cannot rule civilised white folks. *White House* has been used, according to the commentator, as a place for white presidents exclusively. The use of symbol and sarcasm is to show how some people are typically racists for the extent that could not be imagined. Therefore, the figurative language has served in portraying racism theme. The use of symbolism and sarcasm in this context by Chimamanda Adichie is reinstating of the existence of these racist words in societies considered advanced, civilised and developed. It is very effective to use such figurative language so as to show the ugly side of some human beings.

4- Conclusion, Findings and Recommendations

4.0 Introduction

This is the final part of the article that stylistically studied "Americanah" by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie looking for the role of figurative language in shaping race theme. This section presents a conclusion for the study in addition to findings and recommendations.

4.1 Conclusion

"Americanah", by the Nigerian novelist Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, has been stylistically studied to find out figurative language role in shaping the theme of *race*. The study has taken into consideration the importance of visiting stylistics, semantics, figures of speech and themes under study for a solid and rigorous ground for the study. To handle the study, research method, tools of data collection and analysis have been identified. In the theoretical framework, the study has adopted the two theories of *Postcolonial Literature* and *Critical Discourse Analysis*. The study has stylistically analysed the role of figurative language in reflecting the theme of race in *Americanah*.

4.2 Findings

1. Figurative language adds more details to the theme of race.
2. Figurative language plays a great role in reflecting the theme of race in an impressive manner.
3. Figurative language leads to better understanding of the author's messages.
4. Chimamanda Adichie uses figurative language in an effective way that reflects race theme vividly.
5. The successful use of figurative language by Adichie makes the reader be involved in the scenes described.

4.3 Recommendations

1. Introducing teaching of figurative language in all stages of education to produce more future creative African writers.

2. Handling race issue in a constructive way that leads to positive outcome when writing literary works that discuss this sensitive theme.
3. Initiating African stylistics conference under the supervision of African higher institutions for remarkable influential role of African literature around the globe.
4. Making stylistics as part of the curriculum in general education.
5. Showing the important role of stylistics in understanding diverse texts.

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