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Probing the Complexities of Cultural Identity in Langston Hughes' Poetry: A Critical Discourse Analysis

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ABSTRACT

This study presents a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) of Langston Hughes' poems "The Negro Speaks of Rivers" and "Theme for English B" based on Fairclough's three models. The analysis examines how Hughes employs rhetorical strategies in his poems to convey his message and explore power dynamics and societal structures. In "Theme for English B," first-person narration and conversational tone, such as "I hear you," emphasize the speaker's individuality and shared humanity, challenging racial divisions. It explores American history and tradition by linking cultural identity to a shared legacy. "Theme for English B" offers a perspective on cultural identity by examining the conflicts between conformity and individuality. Both poems depict the societal ambiance of respective periods by exploring themes such as strife and the quest for recognition. The analysis of Hughes' poetic language reveals the underlying power dynamics, ideologies, and social phenomena within the sociocultural context of the Harlem Renaissance. The study delves into how Hughes' use of imagery, repetition, and historical allusions articulates the complexities of cultural identity. Furthermore, it highlights the pivotal role of poetry in shaping dialogues on race, empowerment, and belonging. Ultimately, this research underscores Hughes' literary legacy, offering valuable insights into the enduring impact of his work on cultural identity and social justice.

Keywords: Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA); Cultural Identity; Power Dynamics; Socio-political Context; Racial Tension

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1. Introduction

Due to his vast influence, Langston Hughes is one of the most widely recognized Harlem Renaissance poets of the 20th Century. Although his emphasis was on the complexities and subtleties of the American experience^[1]. Hughes explores themes of identity in his poetry, interrogating aspects of race, heritage, and belonging. This research examines two poems by Hughes: “The Negro Speaks of Rivers” and “Theme for English B,” to understand how Hughes celebrates and critically examines cultural identity through his literary works.

“The Negro Speaks of Rivers” serves as an evocative first reference for examination, as it exemplifies Hughes’ early investigation of African American history and legacy. Composed in 1920, when Hughes was 17, the poem guides the reader on a voyage across time, evoking a profound kinship with the ancient rivers and civilizations that influenced the African diaspora. In a manner that extends beyond time and place, Hughes forged a significant connection between cultural identity and collective history by comparing the rivers’ enduring strength to African Americans’ resilience^[2].

“Theme for English B” portrays a more reflective and individualistic perspective on cultural identity. Composed in 1951, during a time when racial tensions and the practice of segregating people based on race were still widespread in American society, the poem evokes elements of Hughes’ encounters as a black student with a predominantly white educational establishment. Hughes delves into the intricacies of racial identity, the conflicts between conformity and self-expression, and the quest for acceptability within an academic setting, using the perspective of a young black student assigned to write an assignment^[3].

This study employs Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as a theoretical framework to explore the rhetorical tactics used by Hughes in the aforementioned poems. The target of CDA, as devised by scholars including Norman Fairclough and Teun A. Van Dijk, is to reveal the power structures, ideologies, and societal frameworks concealed within discourse. By analyzing Hughes’s selection of words, repeated themes, and artistic techniques, we can understand how he constructs and honors cultural identity within the broader socio-political circumstances of his era^[4].

This methodology emphasizes the significance of Hughes’ poetry in influencing dialogues concerning African

American identity and experiences. Using the CDA methodology, the study evaluates how Hughes portrays the hardships and triumphs of a marginalized community, contests established power structures, and advocates for a more inclusive and equitable society^[5]. By analyzing “The Negro Speaks of Rivers” and “Theme for English B,” our objective is to reveal the many dimensions of cultural identification that are present in Hughes’ poetry and enhance our understanding of his lasting impact as a literary hero.

2. Research Questions

This study poses the following research questions:

RQ1. How does Langston Hughes reflect the complexities of cultural identity in his poems “The Negro Speaks of Rivers” and “Theme for English B,” and what linguistic and rhetorical devices does he employ to convey his message?

RQ2. What are the underlying power dynamics and social structures embedded within the discourse of these two poems, as revealed through a Critical Discourse Analysis?

RQ3. In what ways does “The Negro Speaks of Rivers” and “Theme for English B” reflect the socio-political context of their respective periods, particularly in terms of racial tensions and the struggle for acceptance?

3. Literature Review

3.1. Introduction

When exploring the complexities of identity in Langston Hughes’ poetry, it is crucial to employ an analytical framework to decipher his selection of underlying meanings and depictions. In his poetry, Hughes, a prominent player in the Harlem Renaissance, frequently delved into topics of race, injustice, and the African American experience. Fairclough’s framework helps us analyze the language, power relations, and social contexts in Hughes’ poetry, thereby uncovering the intricacies of his identity and the broader societal implications embedded in his writing. This examination not only elucidates the various strata of Hughes’ poetry but also deepens our understanding of the intricacies of cultural identity in historical and contemporary discourse. This study seeks to contribute to the ongoing discussion surrounding race, culture, and identity as depicted in literature.

3.2. Langston Hughes and Cultural Identity in His Poetry

Shared experiences, like values and traditions, influence belonging to a group. During the Harlem Renaissance era, it was important for African Americans to reclaim their power amidst challenges and oppression. Hughes' poetry plays a role in shaping the identity of African Americans by honoring their history and individual stories. In "The Negro Speaks of Rivers," Hughes employs rivers as symbols representing shared history to link the speaker's identity with the African diaspora contextually significant within the analysis from the outset helps establish a solid foundation for grasping how Hughes utilizes metaphors, imagery, narrative structures to reinforce this identity amidst a backdrop of racial discrimination. Moreover, Hughes's Poem discusses power dynamics in cultural settings, where issues of race and socioeconomic status take center stage, as evident in the portrayal of systemic injustices faced by African Americans during the early 20th century in America.

As stated above, Langston Hughes was a prominent figure of the Harlem Renaissance and is today widely recognized as one of American literature's most important and acclaimed poets. Born in 1901, Hughes conveyed the core of the human experience via sincere and eloquent verse. His poetry eloquently expresses people's happiness, challenges, and ambitions through a skillful blend of words, cadence, and vivid descriptions. Hughes' poetry deeply connects with readers of diverse backgrounds, surpassing obstacles of race and time and cultivating a sense of cohesion. His writings depicted the societal conditions of his time, delving into subjects such as individuality, prejudice, and the quest for fairness.

In addition to his profoundly influential poetry, Hughes also engaged in playwriting, novel writing, and essay writing as he established himself as a prominent figure championing social justice and advocating for civil rights. Langston Hughes continues to inspire successive generations through his artistic works and activism. His lasting legacy is that of an artist who bravely championed the beauty and strength of the American community. He skillfully captured the traditional culture's rhythms, colloquial idioms, and fundamental beliefs, creating a mosaic of sentiment and identity that encouraged feelings of pride and admiration. Langston Hughes' work has undergone a thorough analysis from multiple critical views. This literature review explores the intricate as-

pects of identity in Langston Hughes' poetry by examining different perspectives and academic frameworks.

Ford emphasizes the essence of the value of Langston Hughes' poetry as attributable to its simple form. Although Hughes achieved acclaim for his poem "The Negro Speaks of Rivers," Ford contends that this single piece does not adequately exemplify his artistic style. Ford asserts that most of Hughes' poetry was composed of disregarded forms. Recognizing that several poems contain hidden intricacies that underlie their seeming simplicity, Ford emphasized the importance of subtly evaluating Hughes' body of work^[6].

Rampersad and Lipking conclude that Hughes is considered the most accomplished poet of the Harlem Renaissance. His work glorifies encounters with the challenges, aesthetics, cadence, and connection to language^[7]. Walker states that Hughes highlighted hidden parts of the United States, reflecting its violence and obscurity while delving into nighttime enigmas^[8]. Langston Hughes confidently proclaimed his identity as a man, deliberately created by God as he was. He saw his role as strove to correct injustices and resolve conflicts. Through his resolute will, unwavering commitment, and exceptional brilliance, he endeavored to transform the United States and the world into a more desirable place to live^[9].

Baldwin remarked that, although Hughes' poetry is centered on African Americans in America, it extends beyond their specific circumstances. He opines that Langston Hughes' African American descent contributed to the constraints imposed upon him and the allure of his literary creations. In his work, he realized one of the most significant achievements of a poet: the development of a strong and unwavering feeling of self-esteem^[10].

Williams examines the comprehensive range of Langston Hughes' literary output, which includes poetry, autobiography, criticism, drama, fiction, and journalism. Williams contends that Hughes' writings foster an appreciation for traditions while providing profound insights into the human experience. Hughes' works embody a concept that both exalts the lives of African Americans and questions the romanticized portrayal of culture^[11].

Obiwu highlights the common understanding of justice and cultural affinity shared by Langston Hughes and the Nigerian politician Nnamdi Azikiwe. Hughes, an American and Azikiwe from Nigeria, attended Lincoln University.

They shared a unique bond that significantly influenced their successors across Africa and the black diaspora. Although the encounters between these two personalities generated valuable ideas, these ideas have yet to garner attention in scholarly discussions^[12].

The studies outlined in this literature review employed a scholarly perspective. In contrast, this study analyzes Hughes's poems linguistically, using CDA to elucidate his poetic language's power dynamics, ideologies, and social phenomena.

3.3. Emergence of Critical Discourse Analysis in Literature

McKerrow presented a theoretical justification for rhetoric, accompanied by eight guiding principles for the practice of criticism. These ideas encompassed two facets: critiquing the exercise of power and the absence of constraints. Both disciplines center on examining power discourse and its influence on various activities. Thus, McKerrow's framework presented critique as a transformative technique highlighting speech's essence. The principles proposed highlighted the importance of acknowledging the existence of alternative interpretations and identifying rhetoric as highly influential and universally valid^[13]. Hart later argued that CDA can be employed to clarify how discourse organization contributes to inequality. Thus, Hart proposed a framework integrating conceptual blended theory with CDA that analyzes metaphors about nation and immigration^[14].

Huckin and Clary-Lemon state that CDA, which was initially developed in Europe, has recently gained popularity in North America, mainly because of its compatibility with emerging trends in rhetoric and composition. This section provides an overview of contemporary literature, highlighting how rhetoric and composition have integrated CDA methodology into various studies on topics such as inequality, ethics, higher education, critical pedagogy, news media, and institutional behaviors. CDA employs meticulous evidence-based techniques, considering specific circumstances and underlying principles, which makes it suitable when evaluating Hughes' work. Over the last twenty years, CDA has been recognized as a significant interdisciplinary method for examining texts and their surrounding circumstances in the public domain^[15].

When exploring the complexities of identity in

Langston Hughes' poetry, it is crucial to employ an analytical framework to analyze his work's underlying meanings and depictions. In his poetry, Hughes frequently delved into topics of race, injustice, and the African American experience. Using Fairclough's CDA framework, it is possible to analyze the language, power dynamics, and social contexts present in Hughes' poetry to uncover the intricacies of his identity and the broader societal implications interwoven in his works. This examination sheds light on the various aspects of Hughes' poetry and deepens our understanding of the intricate issues regarding cultural identity in historical and contemporary contexts.

3.4. Critical Discourse Analysis of Langston Hughes' Poetry Using Fairclough's Framework

Fairclough's CDA framework is a comprehensive approach to analyzing language as a social practice. Linguist Norman Fairclough developed CDA to reveal the embedded power relations and ideologies in language and discourse^[16]. At its core, Fairclough's framework recognizes that language is not a neutral tool of communication but rather a social practice that reflects and shapes social structures and power dynamics^[16]. CDA aims to investigate how language shapes and upholds social inequality, dominance, and resistance.

Fairclough's framework consists of three interconnected dimensions of analysis:

- **Textual Analysis:** This dimension analyzes language in written or spoken texts. Examining linguistic features such as vocabulary, grammar, and rhetorical devices is crucial to comprehending the construction of meanings and the manifestation of power relations in discourse^[17].
- **Discursive Analysis:** This dimension extends beyond individual texts, examining the broader discursive practices and social contexts that shape and interpret texts. It explores how discourse shapes social institutions, ideologies, and power relations^[16].
- **Social Analysis:** This dimension examines discourse's social and political implications. It aims to uncover how discourse contributes to the reproduction or transformation of power relations and social inequalities. It explores identity construction, hegemonic ideologies, and how language influences social action and change^[17].

Fairclough's framework emphasizes the critical aspect of CDA, which involves challenging and exposing hidden ideologies, power imbalances, and social injustices through linguistic analysis^[16]. It provides a systematic and interdisciplinary approach to understanding the role of language in shaping and reflecting social structures, power relations, and ideological systems. It enables researchers to critically analyze and deconstruct discourse, leading to a deeper understanding of how language influences society and its potential for social change. Thus, it can empower marginalized groups and raise awareness about how language can be a tool for oppression or resistance.

When examining Langston Hughes' poetry via Fairclough's framework and considering the complexities of identity, it is crucial to delve into the multiple significance levels in Hughes' poetic statements. Fairclough's framework facilitates the identification of power relations, ideologies, and language techniques in Hughes' work, providing insight into how cultural identity is influenced and contested in his poetry. Using Fairclough's concepts, we may analyze how Hughes explores topics such as race, class, and power relations using his language and rhetorical strategies. This analysis aims to demonstrate how Hughes subverts dominant narratives, amplifies marginalized voices, and interrogates societal conventions through his poetry. This approach reflects the profoundness of Hughes' poetry. Additionally, it provides insights into the wider socio-cultural environment in which his work exists, promoting a detailed examination of the development of cultural identity in poetic discourse.

4. Methodology

This study delves into Langston Hughes's ideas about identity and his nuanced critique of racism during the Harlem Renaissance period. To achieve this, CDA is used as a methodology, employing Fairclough's three models as a framework. The focus is on analyzing two of Hughes's poems: "Theme for English B" and "The Negro Speaks of Rivers," which directly or indirectly explore issues of identity and racism. By employing the CDA approach, the study highlights the significance of language usage and its role in conveying goals and reinforcing preconceptions in research projects. It further emphasizes the importance of context within both CDA methodologies. By integrating

these perspectives, researchers gain a deeper understanding of the intricate mechanisms that shape cultural identity within Langston Hughes' poetic realm.

By examining works from different stages of Hughes's career, this holistic analysis aims to reveal the underlying power dynamics, ideologies, and social phenomena conveyed through his poetic language. The study is organized into three sections: Research Methodology, Texts for Study, and Analytical Frameworks, and seeks to shed light on how discourse reflects and influences the realities of identity and racism within the sociocultural context of the Harlem Renaissance.

4.1. Research Design

This study employs a qualitative approach using CDA as its methodological framework to delve into Langston Hughes's ideas about identity. CDA offers a comprehensive approach to examining the relationships among language, discourse, and societal power dynamics. The analytical structure adopted consists of Fairclough's three models, which span the level, discourse practice level, and sociocultural practice level. This configuration allows for an examination of the complexities of identification in Langston Hughes' poetry, with a specific focus on his poems "The Negro Speaks of Rivers" and "Theme, for English B."

4.2. Corpora of Analysis

This study analyzes two poems by Langston Hughes, namely "The Negro Speaks of Rivers" and "Theme for English B." These poems were selected for their pertinence to the concept of identity. "The Negro Speaks of Rivers" examines the connections between African Americans and rivers and civilizations, while "Theme for English B" delves into the intricacies of identity and societal integration. These poems provide material for analyzing Hughes' use of language, metaphorical phrases, and communication tactics to portray identity. **Table 1** shows the statistical information about Hughes' poems targeted in the analysis.

4.3. Frame of Analysis

The frame of analysis encompasses three subheadings aligned with Fairclough's three models:

Table 1. Statistical Information.

Statistical Items	The Negro Speaks of Rivers	Theme for English B
Words	103	306
Lines	17	46
Stanzas	5	5

4.3.1. Textual Level Analysis

Reviewing the text, we analyze Hughes’ linguistic style, word selection, usage of metaphors, and sentence patterns in the chosen poems. The phrases “My spirit has developed like the flowing rivers” from “The Negro Speaks of Rivers” and “I’m the sole student of color in my class” from “Theme for English B” will be examined to reveal their profound implications in terms of representing cultural identity.

4.3.2. Discourse Practice Level Analysis

The analysis of discourse practices explores the creation, dissemination, and appreciation of the selected poetry. The text examines how Hughes crafts meaning, communicates his creations, and engages in discussions about race and identity on a broad spectrum. This review will consider the historical context, the publication venues, and the poems’ reception to comprehend their significance at the time of writing.

4.3.3. Sociocultural Practice Level Analysis

The examination focuses on the social and cultural contexts that influence the selected poetry at the level of practice. It examines the cultural factors that shape Hughes’ depictions of identity, including racial prejudice, cultural pride, and the struggle for civil rights. The examination will explore how the poems challenge preconceptions, interrogate identity and contribute to broader cultural dialogues. This study analyzes the complexity of cultural identity in Langston Hughes’ poetry using three models within Fairclough’s framework. The analysis focuses on the poet’s understanding of race, heritage, and social power dynamics. It uses CDA to reveal the underlying power dynamics and societal structures in Hughes’ poetry, emphasizing the complexities of identity.

5. Results

This section examines the intricate connections to cultural identity present in Hughes’ works, including “The Negro Speaks of Rivers” and “Theme for English B” using

CDA. It analyzes the texts from textual, discursive, and socio-cultural perspectives. The analysis emphasizes how Hughes’ poetic expressions, creative process, dissemination, and reception within cultural contexts enhance understanding of cultural identity. It questions existing prejudices and promotes the idea of a society that welcomes and values variety and equality.

Accordingly, we employed Fairclough’s framework to examine each poem’s linguistic features, evaluating the process of their creation, dissemination, and reception and diving into their underlying meanings. Our attempt aimed to uncover the inherent elements of identity present within Hughes’ poetry.

5.1. Approaching the Poems at the Textual Level

The poem “The Negro Speaks of Rivers” manifests identity through its use of language and the exploration of thematic elements.

- Lexis and vocabulary:

Hughes uses poignant vocabulary to effectively communicate a feeling of profound historical significance and rich cultural legacy. In the opening lines, he writes:

I’ve known rivers:
I’ve known rivers ancient as the world and
older than the flow of human blood in human
veins.

The use of phrases such as “ancient,” “older than,” and “human blood” emphasize the enduring impact and deep connections between African Americans with storytelling and the human experience. Using these terms establishes a link between the narrator’s interactions and the everlasting nature of rivers, highlighting the cultural richness of belonging.

- Figurative language:

The figurative language in the poem amplifies the pro-

foundness of significance and symbolism, enhancing the depiction of identity. Consider, for instance, this particular line:

My soul has grown deep like the rivers.

The simile suggests a connection between the fundamental nature of the speaker and the symbolic representation of rivers, producing a sense of comprehension and resilience. Hughes emphasizes the impact of cultural identity on an individual's sense of self by drawing a parallel between the depth of one's soul and that of rivers.

- Repetition:

Hughes' poem emphasizes the significance of repetition in exploring one's individuality. An example is the frequent use of "I've known rivers," which emphasizes the speaker's deep connection with rivers. The repeating motif emphasizes the concept of continuity and cultural heritage, suggesting that the experiences of Americans transcend both time and space.

- Historical and cultural references:

Hughes skillfully integrates cultural allusions in the poem, providing a contextual foundation and enhancing the cultural resonance. For instance:

I bathed in the Euphrates when dawns were young
I built my hut near the Congo and it lulled me to sleep

The references to the Euphrates and Congo rivers evoke connections to ancient civilizations and the rich cultural legacy of Africa. Hughes emphasizes Americans' significance and historical value by connecting the speakers' experiences with these significant watercourses.

- Structure and syntax:

The poem has a free verse structure, which imparts it with a fluid and unrestrictive character. Hughes uses enjambment to create a sense of cohesion by allowing lines and sentences to flow continuously without interruption. For example:

My soul has grown deep like the rivers
I bathed in the Euphrates when dawns were young

I built my hut near the Congo and it lulled me to sleep.

The selection of this syntax strengthens the concept of a continuous lineage and the seamless correlation between the speaker's encounters and the referenced rivers.

In "The Negro Speaks of Rivers," Hughes explores the intricacies of identification by employing a variety of literary techniques. The author underscores American society's enduring influence, shared narratives, and abundant cultural legacy by using language, symbolic imagery, repeating themes, and historical references. This inquiry enhances discussions around ethnicity, individual identity, and recognizing one's heritage.

In "Theme for English B," the language and discourse highlight identity elements within the text.

- Lexis and vocabulary:

Hughes uses language that mirrors the speaker's cultural identity and personal encounters as an individual of African American descent. As an example, the speaker declares:

I am the only colored student in my class.

The term "colored" is employed to illustrate the impact of historical racial segregation on the speaker's position within their environment. By selecting this term, the speaker accentuates their individuality and the associated encounters.

- Contrast and paradox:

Hughes uses the literary devices of contrast and paradox to probe into the intricacies of cultural identification. He expresses this in the following line:

I guess being colored doesn't make me not like/the same things other folks like who are other races.

The contrast here is inquisitive—beliefs regarding racial predispositions. While recognizing differences, the statement suggests that the speaker has commonalities with people of other races, highlighting the shared features of human lives. Hughes challenges the notion that cultural belonging is solely determined by one's race by highlighting this paradox, illuminating identity's intricacies.

- Personal reflection and voice:

The poem combines the speaker's introspective musings and distinctive tone, which enhance the examination of cultural identity. As an illustration, the speaker contemplates:

It's not easy to know what is true for you or me
at twenty-two, my age. But I guess I'm what
I feel and see and hear, Harlem, I hear you.

The speaker contemplates their self-perception and acknowledges the influence of their surroundings. By referencing Harlem, a neighborhood with a rich American tradition, the speaker underscores their strong connection to their cultural background. By sharing narratives and emotions, the speaker confirms their sense of inclusion and challenges the notion of having a solitary identity.

- Questions and rhetorical devices:

Hughes uses interrogative sentences and rhetorical tactics to involve the reader and actively stimulate contemplation over cultural identification. The speaker inquires:

So will my page be colored that I write?
Being me, it will not be white.
But it will be
a part of you, instructor.

These questions challenge established standards of what is considered literature and valid life experience. Hughes asks the reader (teacher) to actively engage in the dialogue, fostering comprehension of the speaker's perspective and reflection on the ramifications of cultural self-identification.

In "Theme for English B," Hughes explores the intricacies of cultural self-identification in several ways. Using words, juxtapositions, personal introspection, tone, interrogative language, and rhetorical tactics contribute to discussing race, identity, and cultural self-recognition. Hughes confronts prejudices and highlights the importance of personal agency in establishing one's identity. He also encourages readers to examine their preconceived notions about identification critically.

5.2. Approaching the Poems at the Discourse Practice Level

In "The Negro Speaks of Rivers," we can analyze the construction, dissemination, and appreciation of identity

themes. By employing Fairclough's model to analyze each of these domains and integrating excerpts from the poem, we can understand its importance.

- Production:

Hughes deliberately crafts a narrative that pays tribute to history and challenges dominant narratives disregarding specific experiences. Hughes crafts the poem in this manner to emphasize African Americans' presence, resilience, and cultural influence. The poem commences with the following words:

I've known rivers.
I've known rivers ancient as the world and
older than the flow of human blood in human
veins.

Hughes establishes a tone in the poem's initial lines, affirming a connection to history and cultural origins. The term "known" emphasizes the speaker's direct connection and close familiarity, suggesting they have personally experienced the rivers and their abundant cultural significance.

- Distribution:

Hughes actively disseminated his work and enriched the discourse on race and identity by publishing the poem in prominent periodicals. An exemplary instance occurred when it was included in *The Crisis*, a renowned newspaper associated with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Hughes strategically chose these mediums to disseminate his work, magnify the message of inclusivity and actively participate in the struggle for civil rights. This method helped achieve a wider audience for the poem and ensured that Hughes actively participated in topics about equality and recognition on a broader level.

- Consumption:

The poem urges readers to delve into and engage with the material, urging them to establish a connection with African Americans. It stimulates contemplation of connections to the past and a shared experience of humanity. The poem encourages readers to develop empathy for the hardships experienced by individuals and to acknowledge the strength and impact of African Americans. It pushes readers to actively participate in conversations that address systematic racism and advocate for social fairness.

Moreover, when individuals interact with the poem, they contemplate their comprehension and response to its concepts and interpretations. Paying homage to customs and addressing past disregard fosters a sense of connection and resilience to one's heritage. Engaging with poetry fosters introspection over one's heritage and cultivates recognition of diverse cultural perspectives.

Fairclough's framework allows us to analyze "The Negro Speaks of Rivers" to reveal the various elements present in Hughes' poetry. The genesis, dissemination, and reception of the poem all contribute to the discourse surrounding race, identity, and the recognition of cultural background. Hughes promotes empathy towards the African American experience by creating and sharing his poetry, involving the reader. This promotes a feeling of connectedness and active participation in conversations that question bias and support inclusiveness.

The poem "Theme for English B" explores various aspects of identity, mainly focusing on its formation, dissemination, and comprehension. We will analyze these components using Fairclough's framework, incorporating passages from the poem to enhance our discussion.

- Production:

Hughes deliberately constructs the "Theme for English B" narrative to explore identity matters and challenge societal norms. The narrator expresses perspectives and experiences as a student of American heritage. The poem commences with the following words:

The instructor said,
Go home and write
a page tonight.
And let that page come out of you—
Then, it will be true.

Hughes underscores the significance of viewpoints and narratives in shaping cultural identity through his composition of this poem. By actively participating in the teacher's assignment, he emphasized self-expression and the power of writing as a means of self-discovery. This challenges the notion of a homogeneous cultural identity.

- Distribution:

Hughes ensured a wide dissemination of his compositions, such as "Theme for English B," by disseminating them through various channels. His book "Montage of a Dream

Deferred" published the poem in 1951. Hughes aimed to enhance the viewpoints of African Americans and contribute to the discourse on cultural identity by disseminating his poems in various publications and literary venues.

- Consumption:

Interacting with "Theme, for English B" necessitates readers to analyze and establish a connection with the text. Readers are urged to explore the speaker's contemplations on identity and contemplate their perspectives. The poem encourages readers to challenge ideas and biases that promote embracing cultural diversity. In the poem, Hughes states:

It's not easy to know what is true for you or
me
at twenty-two, my age. But I guess I'm what
I feel and see and hear, Harlem, I hear you.

The verses emphasize the very personal nature of cultural identity, inviting readers to reflect on their experiences and influences. Hughes engages the reader in a dialogue within the poems, encouraging active involvement and deep contemplation.

Furthermore, it encourages the readers to contemplate societal standards regarding identity, engage with the concepts and messages and react. It motivates readers to value other perspectives. Hughes' poem advocates for the cultivation of empathy. It encourages readers to recognize and acknowledge the various components that make up cultural identities.

Fairclough's methodology allows us to analyze "Theme for English B" at the discourse practice level, revealing the identification elements in Hughes' poetry. The poem's inception, dissemination, and reception contribute to the discourse on race, identity, and cultural identification. Hughes stimulates readers to contemplate their cultural heritage and challenge societal norms through his creation, dissemination, and active involvement with his work. This cultivates a more profound feeling of inclusiveness and enhances comprehension of cultural identity.

5.3. Approaching the Poems at the Sociocultural Practice Level

The poem "The Negro Speaks of Rivers" explores various dimensions of identity, particularly concerning sociocul-

tural contexts and as a reaction to broader social and cultural environments. The poem's importance is revealed by applying Fairclough's framework to analyze these circumstances.

- Historical context:

The poem "The Negro Speaks of Rivers" explores the historical context of racial segregation, discrimination, and the ongoing struggle for civil rights. Hughes emphasizes the resilience, importance, and artistic influence of African Americans. The poem commences with the following lines:

I've known rivers:
I've known rivers ancient as the world and
older than the flow of human blood in human
veins.

Hughes emphasizes the cultural legacy of African Americans by resisting narratives that downplay their influence. By drawing comparisons between the speakers' experiences and ancient rivers, he stresses the enduring impact of individuals across history. Opposes attempts to eliminate their cultural heritage.

- Cultural empowerment:

The poem cultivates a feeling of cultural identification and empowerment through commemorating African ancestry. This is clear in the following line:

My soul has grown deep like the rivers.

It suggests that the individual's essence has been shaped and improved by the collective encounters of African Americans. Hughes emphasizes the importance and essential nature of belonging, urging individuals to embrace their origins and resist any attempts to diminish their value.

- Resistance and resilience:

"The Negro Speaks of Rivers" conveys a message of resistance and resilience in the face of oppression. Hughes writes:

I bathed in the Euphrates when dawns were
young
I built my hut near the Congo and it lulled me
to sleep

The profound affinity of the speakers for rivers, which are intertwined with civilizations and African ancestry, is evident in these terms. The speaker highlights their cultural

heritage and honors the strength and determination of African Americans by immersing themselves in these environments.

- Countering stereotypes:

The poetry challenged established beliefs and contributed to broader conversations around race and identity across society. Hughes opposes narratives that portray African Americans as marginalized or disconnected from the broader human experience by acknowledging their origins and emphasizing their ties. By publishing and sharing the poetry, they can reach a broad audience and effectively challenge biases while promoting an inclusive perspective on cultural identity.

"The Negro Speaks of Rivers" reveals the elements of cultural identification that exist in Hughes' poem. The poem engages with its cultural and social environment by advocating resilience, exalting perseverance, questioning preconceived notions, and adding to broader dialogues on race and identity. Hughes invites readers to recognize and appreciate the legacy's profound and significant nature, cultivating a more inclusive and equitable society.

"Theme for English B" reflects identity, which is influenced by broader social and cultural factors. By employing Fairclough's paradigm, we may thoroughly examine these characteristics and comprehend the importance of their meaning.

- Racial segregation and identity:

"Theme for English B" responds to the historical context of racial segregation and the experiences of African Americans in the United States. The poem opens with the lines:

The instructor said,
Go home and write
a page tonight.
And let that page come out of you—
Then, it will be true.

The lines highlight the dynamics of the school system, illustrating a scenario where the speaker is the only student of color in their class. Hughes focuses on the challenges students face in primarily white academic settings by explicitly referencing the teachers' directions and emphasizing the unique circumstances of the speaker. This context is significant in exploring individual identity and expressing

personal perspectives within a society characterized by racial segregation.

- Harlem Renaissance and Cultural Expression:

“Theme for English B” is situated within the context of the Harlem Renaissance, an era of the 1900s that emphasized American artistic, literary, and musical expression. The poem refers to Harlem, a historically significant African American cultural district.

I guess being colored doesn't make me not like
the same things other folks like who are other
races.

So will my page be colored that I write?

Hughes acknowledges and honors the cultural and artistic influence of the American community by specifically referencing Harlem. The poem emphasizes the rejection of stereotypes and the advocacy for individual identity through self-expression. It actively engages in the cultural movement of the Harlem Renaissance by highlighting the significance and genuineness of American perspectives and life encounters.

- Integration and cultural hybridity:

“Theme for English B” also explores the sociocultural phenomenon of integration and the intricate nature of cultural hybridity. Hughes states:

It's not easy to know what is true for you or
me
at twenty-two, my age. But I guess I'm what
I feel and see and hear, Harlem, I hear you.

The lines suggest that the ability to align oneself with a particular culture is a product of the experiences and environment one encounters. The speakers' connection to Harlem exemplifies a fusion of components encompassing African American heritage and broader American culture. Hughes acknowledges the dynamic interaction and delicate equilibrium between different backgrounds, highlighting the intricate nature of cultural identification.

- Resistance and empowerment:

“Theme, for English B” delves into the themes of resistance and empowerment in the face of societal norms and racial inequalities. The poem challenges the concept of iden-

tity and advocates for embracing a variety of viewpoints and life narratives. Hughes writes:

So will my page be colored that I write?
Being me, it will not be white.
But it will be
a part of you, instructor.

In these lines, the speaker underscores their capacity to mold their identity by steadfastly resisting societal norms. Hughes amplifies marginalized voices by highlighting the importance of many perspectives and experiences, fostering a more inclusive and equitable society.

6. Discussion

Fairclough's framework allows us to analyze “Theme for English B” in a way that reveals the various aspects of identity in Hughes' poetry. The poem explores the context of segregation, explores the dynamics of the Harlem Renaissance, analyzes the complexities of cultural fusion, and advocates for resistance and empowerment. Hughes challenges conventional norms and values by examining these elements, embracing the diversity they offer, and advocating for the recognition and empowerment of disadvantaged viewpoints.

Hughes used his poetry to explore the multifaceted dimensions of ethnic identity. Hughes' poems exemplify elements of cultural identity through linguistic strategies. The poem “The Negro Speaks of Rivers” employs phrases and vocabulary that emphasize the enduring influence and profound interrelationships among Americans, both in the historical context and in the realm of human existence. Methods such as parallels and symbolic language help us explore belonging by eliciting shared experiences and resilience. Furthermore, the repetition of phrases and the inclusion of cultural allusions contribute to the concept of coherence and the enduring cultural heritage^[18].

In “Theme for English B,” Hughes uses words and language that effectively convey the speaker's inquiry into prejudices and preconceptions based on their history. The use of contrast and contradictions accentuates the speaker's encounters and associations, particularly with individuals of different racial backgrounds, highlighting the intricate nature of identity. Using personal stories in poetry enhances exploring belonging and its complexities^[19].

Hughes' poems demonstrate how creating, sharing, and reading his work contribute to talks on belonging, particularly when engaging in conversations. Hughes deliberately crafts his poems to recount narratives that pay homage to origins and challenge dominant narratives disregarding alternative viewpoints. Hughes sought to disseminate the idea of cultural affinity and actively participate in the ongoing struggle for equal rights by publishing his work on sites such as *The Crisis* magazine. By reading his poems, listeners can connect with African Americans' experiences and cultural backgrounds, fostering a feeling of belonging and promoting the pursuit of equal rights^[20].

Profoundly, Hughes' poetry embodies and conveys social and cultural contexts, contributing to discussions on race, identity, and recognition. Hughes confronts myths that marginalize African American accomplishments by situating his poems within the context of segregation and bigotry^[21]. His poetry embraces tradition and empowers identity, challenging prejudices and advocating inclusivity. Hughes promotes a viewpoint on identification by exploring themes of resistance, tenacity, and overcoming prejudices.

Fairclough's approach examines power dynamics, ideologies, and societal structures concealed within the discursive practices^[4]. In analyzing "The Negro Speaks of Rivers," it becomes apparent that Hughes uses tactics and poetic language to make a connection between identity and collective history^[22]. Fairclough's theory reveals how the poem reflects the power dynamics and societal structures of its time within the social context of the Harlem Renaissance. The analysis demonstrates how Hughes' use of language, recurring themes, and artistic techniques help depict power dynamics and explore tensions.

Similarly, while analyzing "Theme for English B," Fairclough's framework allows for examining the conflicts that arise from the desire to conform and express oneself in the context of seeking acceptance within an educational setting. The research examines how Hughes' poetic diction and rhetorical techniques elucidate the intricacies of identity and expose the power hierarchies inside the poem^[22]. Using CDA improves understanding of the connection between language, power dynamics, and ideologies portrayed in the text^[23].

Overall, the study findings are consistent with Fairclough's framework, demonstrating how Hughes' poetry ap-

proach conveys power dynamics, attitudes, and societal challenges. Using CDA allows for a deeper understanding of the relationship between language, power, and ideology in the examined literature, enhancing our examination of the complexities of identity in Langston Hughes' poems^[24].

7. Conclusion

Langston Hughes skillfully delves into the complexities of identity, race, and power dynamics in his poems "Theme for English B" and "The Negro Speaks of Rivers." By using Fairclough's three models of discourse analysis, we have unraveled the layers of Hughes's representation of identity and racism, as well as the societal structures and power dynamics woven into his poetry. Through first-person narratives and intentional language choices, he highlights the struggles and experiences of African Americans navigating their identities in a white society. Using imagery, metaphors, personification, repetition, and parallelism, Hughes effectively conveys the importance of one's identity and heritage.

We have discovered perspectives on empowerment and identity reclamation in Hughes's poetry by applying CDA. These interactions challenge ideas of marginalization and oppression while showcasing African Americans' resilience, strength, and contributions. Hughes's poems are a testament to the essence of identity and literature's role in reshaping viewpoints.

Addressing the research queries, our analysis illustrates how Hughes portrays the intricacies of identity through imagery, personal stories, and persuasive techniques. His poems not only depict the experiences of African Americans but also question societal standards and power dynamics, contributing to broader discussions on cultural identity^[25]. Moreover, our exploration of the underlying power struggles and social frameworks within Hughes's poetry reveals a nuanced comprehension of race relations and societal structures. Hughes's depiction of African Americans' strength and cultural legacy in the face of oppression emphasizes the significance of embracing and honoring one's identity.

Regarding the socio-environment, Hughes's poems reflect racial tensions and the quest for identity and recognition during the Harlem Renaissance era. Hughes's poetry catalyzes transformation and cultural empowerment by illuminating African Americans' experiences and challenges^[26].

Essentially, Langston Hughes's works, including "Theme for English B" and "The Negro Speaks of Rivers," endure as timeless pieces that continue to resonate with audiences, offering insights into the complexities of identity, the enduring impact of African American heritage, and languages' ability to question and reshape societal conventions. This study provides valuable insights into how Hughes' poetry continues to resonate and provoke thought on issues of cultural identity and social justice by employing Fairclough's three models of CDA.

Future studies may also explore the influence of Hughes' cultural background experiences and socio-political context on his poetic expression. The evolution of Hughes' approach to cultural identity representation over time and how it reflects broader societal changes would provide valuable insights into the dynamic nature of cultural identity in literature. Further comparative studies that juxtapose Hughes' poetry with other African American poets or poets from different cultural backgrounds could offer new perspectives on how cultural identity is articulated. Further studies could probe into how Hughes's depiction of identity changed over time, about the Civil Rights Movement, by contrasting pieces such as "The Negro Speaks of Rivers" with later poems. Interdisciplinary investigations could explore Hughes's imprint on art genres while scrutinizing his methods might unveil their influence on modern poets like Maya Angelou.

Author Contributions

A.I.A.E. designed the study, conducted the literature review, coordinated data collection, and wrote the initial draft, as well as analyzed "The Negro Speaks of Rivers." Abdelnaeim Elaref, an ambitious researcher in literary studies and criticism, is interested in critical discourse analysis, identity, diaspora studies, and power. Abdelnaeim is currently working as an assistant professor of literature in the Department of English at Majmaah University, Saudi Arabia. S.H.A.A., a passionate advocate for global language awareness and critical language education, is interested in researching the complexities of linguistic diversity, identity, and power. Sami is currently working as an associate professor of applied linguistics in the Department of English at Majmaah University, Saudi Arabia. Sami wrote the part of the methodology and participated in analyzing "Theme for

English B." All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

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Data Availability Statement

The data supporting this study are available upon request from the corresponding author, but are not publicly accessible due to privacy concerns. Researchers can request access by contacting the author directly.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this article. They have no financial or personal relationships that could inappropriately influence their work. All funding sources for this study have been disclosed, and there are no competing interests to report.

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