

Critical Analysis of Contrast as a stylistic Device in Tsitsi Dangarembga's Works

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Abstract: This study critically examined contrast as a stylistic strategy employed in Tsitsi Dangarembga's books: *Nervous Condition*, *Book of Not* and *This Mournable Body*. The objectives of the study were to analyze identity on contrast, determine class stratification on contrast and assess place where contrast is noted in the selected books. The main argument of this project is that: through presentation of contrast, the writer attempts to empower and motivate the disadvantaged in the selected books. The primary concern to this study is the way the author unleashes the potential of black people. She also shows what is expected of them by the society. The study examined the channel of acquiring wealth. One must be educated and be a male so as to be rich in a case one is an African. Opportunities are given to female characters if there are no male ones in the family. The writer demonstrates the reason to unmask the biased image of Africans and women in the colonial era. The study analyzed the traditions and beliefs that bar Africans progress. This study is useful material for reference to other researchers and readers. The study is guided by Karl Marx's strategic conflict theory. The theory is about the competition of limited resources in the society. The study used textual analysis in analyzing the selected books. It was library based which involved intensive and extensive reading of the selected texts. The three books were selected using purposive sampling technique. The study advocated for the appropriate presentation of contrast so as to avoid being biased against people who should be valued in the society.

Keywords: Juxtaposition in Identity, Class Variation, Place Diversity

Introduction

Theoretical Framework

The study used strategic conflict theory by Karl Max when analyzing contrast in the selected books. According to this theory, the society is in a state of perpetual conflict because people compete over limited resources which are available. Power and domination rather than conformity and consensus strongly holds the society. It suggests that the people in power and wealth hold on to it by all means possible. They end up suppressing the poor and the powerless. Groups and individuals within the society work to maximize their own benefits. The theory assumes that there is an application of threats, promise or influence another person's behaviour. According to Abb Learner (1972, P.259) those who benefit from these activities succeed by giving those who object them something to get them accept their wishes. Conflicting interests rises when one group becomes mobilized for active struggle. Vahabb 2009 argued that people struggle for common interests and for private individual interests. This becomes possible when members of a given group can communicate and share similar traditions. If a group is well organized, the more and longer it can struggle. The less organized ones are more violent and struggle for a short duration. The theory helped the researcher to bring out the objectives of the study which were to analyze identity on contrast, determine class stratification on contrast and assess place where contrast is noted in the selected books by Tsitsi Dangarembga.

Methodology

The study used qualitative research approach. It was exploratory and used descriptive research design to analyze contrast as a stylistic device in Tsitsi Dangarembga's books. Textual analysis method was also used.

Findings and discussions

The study found out that there was contrast in the selected books based on race, sex, level of education and the interaction between white and black people. It was also noted that places were different depending on the people who are living there, either rich or poor.

Identity

Identity is about how people define themselves and defined by others. Contrast based on identity is evident in the selected books. Whites are not treated like the Africans. They enjoy more privileges than the black people. Men are more valued than men. For example, Tambu gets an opportunity to go to school at the mission after the death of her brother Nhamo.

Class

White people are richer than the Africans. They give Africans scholarships and a good example been Babamukuru, Maiguru and Tambu. They are the ones ruling Zimbabwe. The educated Africans like Bbamukuru are richer than the black people who are not educated, the likes of his brother Jeremiah. He depends on him.

Place

Schools for the white people are better than those for Africans. They have all the facilities. South Africa is better than Zimbabwe. There are items available in South Africans because of the ready market and demand unlike Zimbabwe. U.S.A is blessed more abundantly than Ireland.

Conclusion

The study findings revealed that there is contrast in the selected books by Tsitsi Dangarembga. People are not equal. Men are more privileged than women. Africans and whites occupy different positions in the society. Europeans are richer than the Africans. Educated Africans are wealthier than the ones who are not educated. The government schools which do not allow the African students are better than the schools for Africans. Whites live in better places as compared to Africans.

Recommendations

The study recommends some significant changes that should take place in formulating policies concerning contrast as a stylistic device in literature. The government should examine the impact of contrast in the society. Writers should come up with appropriate ways of acquiring wealth and create a room for health competition and punish the corrupt people. Finally, teachers should use the device wisely when teaching to avoid inciting learners since they can turn against a certain section of people in the society.

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