

## عن الافتراض: دراسة أسلوبية نقدية في رواية زورا نيل هيرستون " عيونهم تراقب الله "

ناصر كريم ناصر

جامعة البصرة-كلية الآداب -قسم اللغة الانجليزية- العراق

[nasser.kareem@uobasrah.edu.iq](mailto:nasser.kareem@uobasrah.edu.iq)

نزار عبد الحافظ عبيد

جامعة البصرة- كلية الآداب -قسم اللغة الانجليزية- العراق

[nazar.abdulhafidh@uobasrah.edu.iq](mailto:nazar.abdulhafidh@uobasrah.edu.iq)

### الملخص

يركز هذا البحث على الأسلوبية النقدية لدراسة كيفية إسهام بناء الافتراض في تشكيل الأيديولوجيا في رواية زورا نيل هيرستون (1937) (عيونهم تراقب الله). تطورت الأسلوبية النقدية من الأسلوبية ومن تحليل الخطاب النقدي وهي ان تُبقي النص نفسه بوصفه الدليل الرئيس للتفسير. يسلم البحث الضوء على وظيفة نصية-مفهومية تُعدّ "طرفية" هي الافتراض؛ فرغم أنها لا تظهر في كل جملة، فإنها مهمة لأنها تكشف كيف يصوغ المتكلمون واقعاً بديلاً، وكيف يديرون المسؤولية، وكيف يوجهون منظور القارئ. يوظف البحث نموذج جيفريز (2010a) ورؤية هاليداى للمودالية، جامعاً بين التحليل النوعي (الوصف والتفسير) ودعم كمي بسيط. تم ترميز مقتطفات مختارة من الرواية وفق أنماط المودالية: الإبتيمية (المعرفية/الاحتمالية)، والديوننتية (الإلزامية/الواجب)، والبولومائية (الرعوية/الإرادية)، والشرطية، إلى جانب أنماط المتكلمين. وتُظهر النتائج أنّ هيرستون تُكثر من توظيف المودالية الإبتيمية لتوجيه الشك والاستدلال، ولا سيما في خطاب "جلسات الشرف". كما تكشف الصيغ الديوننتية عن دلالات النص والضبط الاجتماعي. أما المودالية البولومائية فتعكس الرغبة والعناية والنية. وبوجه عام، تُعدّ المودالية في الرواية خياراً أسلوبياً مهماً لتشكيل الأيديولوجيا، ولا سيما ما يتصل بالمجتمع، وسلطة النوع الاجتماعي، والوكالة/الفاعلية الفردية.

الكلمات المفتاحية : الأسلوبية النقدية, تحليل الخطاب النقدي, الأيديولوجية, الافتراض

## On Hypothesizing: A Critical Stylistic Study in Zora Neale Hurston's "Their Eyes Were Watching God"

Nasser Kareem Nasser

University of Basrah, College of Arts, Dept. of English-Iraq

[nasser.kareem@uobasrah.edu.iq](mailto:nasser.kareem@uobasrah.edu.iq)

Nazar Abdulhafidh Ubeid

University of Basrah, College of Arts, Dept. of English- Iraq

[nazar.abdulhafidh@uobasrah.edu.iq](mailto:nazar.abdulhafidh@uobasrah.edu.iq)

### Abstract

This research focuses on Critical Stylistics to scrutinize how hypothesizing helps constructing ideology in Zora Neale Hurston's "Their Eyes Were Watching God" (1937). Critical Stylistics has been developed from stylistics and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). It preserves the text itself as the key evidence for interpretation. The research emphasizes the "peripheral" textual-conceptual function, hypothesizing. The research utilizes Jeffries' (2010a) odel and Halliday's view of modality. It combines qualitative analysis in terms of description and interpretation with simple quantitative support using IBM SPSS Statistics 20 and Excel. The selected extracts from the novel are coded for modality types including epistemic, deontic, boulomaic, and conditional as well as speaker patterns. The findings display that Hurston frequently uses epistemic modality within modal verbs to direct uncertainty and inference, particularly in porch discourse. Deontic forms frequently indicate advice and social control. whereas boulomaic modality expresses desire, care, and intention. Overall, modality in the novel is an important stylistic choice for shaping ideology particularly about community, gender-power, and personal-agency.

**Keywords:** Critical stylistics, Hypothesizing, Modality, CDA, Ideology

## 1. Introduction

Critical stylistics has developed as a response to the increasing relevance of critical discourse analysis, particularly in understanding how language conveys ideology. Although critical discourse analysis and stylistics share a common foundation, Roger Fowler being a prominent figure in both these fields have gradually diverged over time. Jeffries and McIntyre (2010) emphasize that "the fundamental foundation of all stylistics remains the text itself." This new branch of stylistics aims to uphold this foundational principle while demonstrating that stylistic analysis can offer valuable insights into nonfiction texts, just as it does with literary works. In fact, the emergence of a specific ideological or "critical" stylistics underscores that the analytical tools necessary for different types of text analysis are essentially similar. Regardless of the form, be it poetry, novels, journalistic articles, or political manifestos, texts generate meaning in fundamentally comparable ways.

This research focuses on analyzing Hypothesizing in Hurston's "Their Eyes Were Watching God". The novel is written by American writer Zora Neale Hurston, first published in 1937. It is considered a classic of the Harlem Renaissance and Hurston's best-known work. The novel has received significant acknowledgment over the years, although it was not widely celebrated at the time of its original publication in 1937. Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God* is a powerful and complex work of literature that continues to be studied and appreciated for its profound exploration of the African American experience, the legacy of slavery, and the enduring effects of trauma on individuals and communities. It is a challenging but rewarding read that invites readers to grapple with its themes and characters on multiple levels.

## 2. The Problem of the Study

This study examines peripheral forms in literary works. It is assumed that the subject has not acquired enough attention from researchers, particularly from a critical stylistic perspective. Therefore, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, not every sentence or text will include hypothesizing. This peripheral textual-conceptual functions, nevertheless, can be the most interesting cases in analyzing the ideation of a text, so its peripheral nature is quantitative rather than qualitative.

The major problem is the lack of detailed examination of peripheral forms in literary works, particularly from a critical stylistic perspective. Despite their significance in analyzing ideation in texts, this peripheral textual-conceptual function has not been sufficiently explored by major frameworks, leading to a gap in understanding their role and impact in literary analysis. Within the research problem, the study tries to answer the following research questions:

1. How does Neale Hurston employ Hypothesizing to convey her ideologies in "Their Eyes Were Watching God"?
2. How is modality used to reveal Hurston's stylistic choices?
3. What are the most frequently used peripheral forms in the selected novel?

### 3.Literature Review

#### 3.1 Style and stylistics

The word "style" comes from the Latin term "stilus,". It refers to a short and flattened stick that Romans used to write on wax tablets. Currently, this term is used in numerous different contexts. they make its meaning slightly vague (Tayeva&Orazbekova,2020).Wales(2011) points out that style is understood through various fields, including translation studies, literary criticism, sociolinguistics, and stylistics. As a result, it is linked to several disciplines and can be defined in numerous ways.

The word style is normally understood as the manner used in a specific context by a particular individual for a distinct purpose (Leech & Short, 2007). However, scholars differ in their interpretations of this concept. Broadly speaking, style encompasses both spoken and written language, as well as literary and everyday communication. In literary contexts, it may refer to an author's distinctive linguistic approach, such as Dickensian style, or to the characteristics of a particular genre, period, or literary movement, as seen in terms like epistolary style or early eighteenth-century style (Leech & Short, 2007).

Leech and Short (1981,p.11) define style as “the way in which language is used in a given context, by a given person, for a given purpose, and so on.” This means that style is not limited to the writing of a specific author; it can also reflect the characteristics of a situation, a character, a particular text, or a specific linguistic expression that is examined over time. Therefore, style can be understood as a unique way of writing or speaking.

#### 3.2 Critical stylistics

This section is divided into two parts: the first explains the emergence of Critical Stylistics (CS) as a development by Jeffries in response to Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and the lack of clear methodology. The second part compares CS and CDA, showing that while both address language and ideology, CS offers a more systematic, text-based toolkit, whereas CDA draws from multiple disciplines and is less focused on detailed linguistic analysis.

##### 3.2.1 .Emergence and Development

Critical Stylistics (CS) is a recent development of CDA and stylistics. It was firstly used by (Jeffries, 2007) in her book "Textual Construction of the Female Body: A Critical Discourse Approach". It was formally established in(2010a) within the publication of Jeffries' "Critical Stylistics: The Power of English". Jeffries (2014) points out that her approach is developed as a "“reaction to the rise of critical discourse analysis as an increasingly influential approach to ideology in language”". It attempts to answer "“a feeling of frustration in the face of critical discourse analysis’s deliberate lack of methodology or framework and its apparent abandonment of many of the achievements of linguistics in its scientific phase of development”"(Jeffries, 2014,p.408-409 ). In general, CS is realized as"“mainstream text-based stylistics with a particular (critical) purpose”" (Jeffries, 2016,p.159). therefore, it is principally developed by Lesley Jeffries (2007, 2010a), and built on the foundations of CDA by employing detailed

linguistic analysis to reveal the connections between language, ideology, and power (Fairclough, 1989).

Simpson (1993) explains that text-producers regularly practice stylistic choices to deliver specific meaning though concealing others. These stylistic choices can only be understood fully by the analysis of language beyond its surface. Widdowson(1998)emphasizes the idea that CS aims at uncovering the ideological aspects of texts. This happens via several systematic techniques that are drawn on critical linguistics and Halliday's social semiotics.

Norgaard, et.al (2010) note that CS is appreciated for understanding how social meanings can be built through language, and, it shares goals with Simpson's(1993)idea of stylistics. Though CDA is often seen as a broader framework encompassing both CS and critical linguistics, the three are closely connected in their focus on uncovering hidden ideologies in texts.

### **3.2.2Critical Stylistics Rather Than Critical Discourse Analysis**

CDA faced criticism for its theoretical clarity, interpretative practices and methodology. However it is valued for its focus on interdisciplinary as well as how language shapes power and ideology in a society(Hassan, 2019). CS in response is developed as a more systematic alternative. Unlike CDA which lacks consistent linguistic toolkit,Jeffries(2010)notes that CS connects approaches from stylistics, critical linguistics (CL), and CDA. It offers a more comprehensive analytical model. Widdowson(2004)critiques CDA for "producing partial or subjective interpretations by selectively focusing on certain textual features." whileCS stresses objectivity through text-based-analysis(Jeffries,2010). Jeffries (2010a,p.1) also points out that CDA tends to "prioritize vague contextual elements over structured linguistic tools, whereas CS focuses on how language itself encodes ideology and guides readers toward certain viewpoints" (Jeffries,2014).

Additionally, since CDA often follows Fairclough's three-stage model of description, interpretation, and explanation, CS concentrates primarily on the first two stages (Jeffries, 2010). Moreover, the term "critical" in CDA often implies a "Marxist or socialist stance", though in CS it denotes the systematic effort to expose ideological effects in any type of text (Jeffries,2014).

Critical Stylistics (CS) and CDA are two powerful analytical frameworks that have emerged from the intersection of linguistics, cultural studies, and social theory (Melrose, 1996). While they share common roots, each has developed its unique approach to analyzing language, ideology, and power relations (Qassim & Ubeid,2017,p.2). CS focuses on the subtle ways language constructs meaning and ideology within texts, regularly through detailed stylistic analysis. CDA emphasizes the broader social and political contexts in which discourse is produced and interpreted. These differences highlight the complementary nature of the two frameworks, allowing for a more comprehensive understanding of how language shapes and is shaped by societal power dynamics (Ahmed, 2022). CS aims to "assemble the main general functions that a text has in representing reality" (Jeffries, 2010,p.14). it is considered as a development of CDA in terms of both theory and methodology(Jeffries,2007,2010a). One of the main criticisms of CDA is that it has not yet developed a full inventory of tools for the analyst to

work with. CS attempts to counter this by introducing a systematic model of analysis which merges tools from stylistics and critical linguistics in order to uncover the linguistic choices of text producers and their possible ideological implications (Jeffries, 2007, 2010). She offers a Critical Stylistic framework that "combines the text analysis of stylistics with the ideological awareness of CDA" in order to uncover the hidden meaning of texts by using linguistic features (Jeffries & McIntyre, 2010, p.94).

The toolkit that is provided by Jeffries is not completely new. It is a collection of previous tools that are used by critical discourse analysts, Fairclough (1989), critical linguists Fowler (1991) and Simpson (1993). She also adds new tools which work in a similar way to the more traditional tools such as "transitivity and modality" (Jeffries, 2010, p.15). CS toolkit differs from the previous CDA and critical linguistic tools in that the tools are presented in the form of a list of functions that may be represented by more than one linguistic feature. The reason behind this is to overcome "the lack of form-function mapping" (p.15) as in CDA and its forerunner CL.

## 4. Research Methodology

### 4.1. Research Design

A critical stylistic analysis will be used to analyse the data that has been gathered. The critical tool framework is connected to Jeffries stylistic analysis (2010a). This tool will be used with some illustratively representative extracts from the novel. On the other hand, statistical analysis will be carried out with the intention of quantitatively validating the findings of the stylistic analysis. The analytical model of the study implies the analysis incorporates several levels of moves. It will begin by highlighting the linguistic components of Hypothesizing in the chosen novel. It will thereafter broaden to include qualitative analysis including description and interpretation. In this analysis, the study focuses on Hypothesizing in reference to Halliday's concept of modality. Yet, this does not presuppose that all these forms are available within the data being analyzed.

### 4.2. Data Collection

The selected novel under scrutiny is Zora Neale Hurston's "Their Eyes Were Watching God". It has a distinctive narrative style. The protagonist Janie Crawford recounts her life to her friend Pheoby Watson. The novel, therefore, is built around a frame narrative creating a dialogue between a storyteller and listener. This style emphasizes the significance of African-American culture and their oral tradition and community. Since the novel is lengthy, it is important to note that unbiased illustrative representative extracts will be analyzed because it is not possible to analyse all of the data that has been collected. The aforementioned novel serves as the source for the information gathered. To find those forms relevant to the subject of the current study, all extracts that convey Hypothesizing would be looked for. The following steps will be taken in the present study:

- i. Reading the novel allows for the isolation of certain forms that illustrate ideology and textual meaning.

- ii. The highlighted extracts are subsequently examined and analyzed qualitatively and coded in accordance with the units of analysis.
- iii. A statistical analysis will be performed after quantifying each unit of analysis.
- iv. Some statistical software and tools will be utilised to statistically analyse the data under consideration and respond to the research questions. IBM SPSS Statistics20 and Microsoft Excel 2010 are among the statistical applications.

### 4.3. Model of Analysis

The model of analysis is adopted from Jeffries (2010a). She provides an exhaustive typology of critical tools labeled as “textual conceptual functions”. The tools are ten linguistic devices including Naming and Describing; Representing Actions/Events/States; Exemplifying and Enumerating; Prioritizing; Negating; Presenting other's Speech and Thoughts; Equating and Contrasting; Assuming and Implying; Hypothesizing; and Representing Time, Space and Society (Jeffries, 2010a). However, the present research is mainly concerned with peripheral textual conceptual function including Hypothesizing only. Therefore, analyzing this critical tools is interesting to identify the ideation of the text.

In Halliday’s framework, modality is often treated as an interpersonal system because it reflects the speaker’s or writer’s stance. Still, from a critical stylistics perspective where all textual-conceptual functions are understood as ways to present the speaker’s worldview modality can also be considered ideational. It contributes directly to the construction of meaning in a text (Jeffries,2014:416).

The meanings of modal forms fall into two main categories. On the one hand, they concern the likelihood (or unlikelihood) of something being the case. Thus, she might come will convey the speaker’s doubts about it, and I am sure she’ll come conveys the speaker’s certainty. This kind of meaning is known as epistemic meaning, and relates to the range of certainty that a speaker may express, including strong certainty as well as weak certainty. The other main category, which divides again into two subcategories, is that of the desirability of something being the case, which further divides into obligation (deontic modality) as in You should take more exercise and desire (boulomaic modality) as in I wish you would phone your mother (Jeffries:2010).

Therefore, modality of all kinds can have the effect of creating a hypothetical or alternative world/situation conceptually for the reader/hearer, and in turn this alternative reality may have a number of potentially ideological effects on the recipient of such texts (ibid).

Typically, modality is expressed through modal verbs (like could, should, might), but it also includes a range of other, less central forms—even non-verbal cues such as a shrug can convey modal meaning. Therefore, modality is a typical textual-conceptual function in having a clear prototypical form, the modal verb, while also having a large number of increasingly peripheral forms to the extent that some forms of modality are not even linguistic. What makes modality ideologically significant is that it enables speakers to express uncertainty or possibility without committing fully, allowing them to make claims while distancing themselves from full responsibility for those claims (Jeffries & McIntyre:2010).

Moreover, Jeffries (2010,p:117-119) shows that modality in English can be expressed through various forms, primarily modal auxiliary verbs such as may, must, might, should, and could, which indicate degrees of certainty (epistemic), obligation (deontic), or desire (boulomaic), depending on context—for example:

"She might come" (epistemic)

"You should take more exercise" (deontic), and

"I wish you would phone your mother" (boulomaic).

These modal meanings can also be conveyed through lexical verbs like think, wish, hope, and require; modal adverbs such as probably or hopefully; modal adjectives like certain or obligatory; and conditional structures for example:

"If you leave now, you might catch the train"

Additionally, evaluative language like:

"I hate the increasing surveillance"

and expressive word choices (e.g., guffawed) function to reveal the speaker's viewpoint and reinforce modality. Simpson's model of narrative point of view further integrates modality by linking it to first- or third-person narration, showing how modality (positive, negative, or neutral) contributes to the ideological framing of a text. Thus, modality operates not only as a grammatical feature but also as a powerful tool for constructing attitudes, beliefs, and alternative realities.

#### 4.5.Data Analysis

This section introduces some representative illustrative extracts gathered from the novel. The analysis carried out by two stages, description and interpretation. While Fairclough's CDA model includes description, interpretation, and explanation, Critical Stylistics is primarily concerned with the first two stages. It analyses the linguistic features of texts (description) and examines how these features shape readers' interpretations. The third stage, explanation, which requires a sociological analysis of discourse practices, lies beyond the scope of critical stylistics and is therefore not the focus of the present study.

##### **Extracts (1): Porch sitter (gossip)“Maybe us don't know into things lak you do...”**

**A. Description:** This extract is built on hypothesizing, principally via the modal adverb "maybe". The latter functions as an epistemic marker of uncertainty and possibility. Combining of an epistemic modal adverb with a negative cognitive claim results in an alternative conceptual reality: the possibility that knowledge is unevenly distributed, yet the speaker avoids direct accusation or absolute judgment.

**B. Interpretation:** Ideologically, "maybe" is used to allow the person sitting on the balcony to hint at something socially sensitive such as the other person having access to "things" or

knowledge the group lacks without fully committing to that claim. Simpson's framework places this inside a Category B, narratorial presentation of dialogue, shaded toward negative epistemic uncertainty, because statement foregrounds incomplete access for truth rather than self-confident appraisal.

**Extract (2) Narrator: "Janie must be round that side".**

**A. Description:** This extract is also built on hypothesizing, principally through the auxiliary verb "must". It shows a high epistemic modality of a strong inference. Thus, the auxiliary verb "must" restrict the scope of informative side. It presents hypothesizing on available evidence.

**B. Interpretation:** Although the word "must" expresses strong certainty, it is still merely a hypothesizing statement and not a factual. This is exactly where critical stylistics perceives the ideological usefulness of style. The narrator guides readers in the direction of a precise interpretation though retaining the grammatical form of perceptive rather than certainty. This will likely to be classified as Category B, third-person narration, it can lean to either narratorial authority or indicator viewpoint depending on context.

**Extract (3): Mrs. Sumpkins: "De boogerman might ketch yuh".**

**A. Description:** The hypothesizing component in this extract is supported by the auxiliary modal "might". It signals a low-epistemic-certainty and presents the possibility not a prediction. This phrase depicts a hypothetical future situation it is falling into the controls of "the scary man", without any claim that it drives what will happen. Thus, the word "might" moderates the hypothesis. It makes it speculative. However the colloquialism ("ketch yuh") preserves the authenticity of the discourse. It makes it reliable with the practices of community speech.

**B. Interpretation:** The ideological function of hypothesis-making at this point is particularly social and interpersonal. The speaker invoke a culturally familiar character ("the scary man") as a tool of control, using the technique to regulate behavior while avoiding responsibility for certainty. Therefore, The word "might" serves as a defensive device for the speaker . if the threat does not happen, she cannot be suspect of lying. Simpson's shading is definitely negative because the model highlights the uncertainty that is related with perception not hope or moral appraisal.

**Extract (4): Sam Watson: "Ah b'lieve yo' buddy is all tied up with dat Tea Cake"...**

**A. Description:** Hypothesizing is constructed not via the modal auxiliary, nevertheless through the lexical verb "believe,". It signals epistemic stance. "Ah b'lieve" clearly indicates that the suggestion is the speaker's inference, not an established fact. It also serves as a protection. the speaker shows a declaration about somebody's relationship ("all tied up with dat Tea Cake") as a belief, not evidence.

**B. Interpretation:** Ideologically, this sort of hypothesis-making achieves an influential social function in societal discourse. It distributes interpretations of relations and status despite the fact that it maintains a superficial attitude of bias ("I believe"). In Simpson's model, this resembles Category A in the sense that it is explicitly rooted in a speaker's subjective viewpoint.

**Extract (5): Lulu Moss: “You bettah go see how she feel. You kin let de rest of us know”.**

**A.Description:** The hypothesizing strength is seen via the deontic modal expression “bettah” (African- American vernacular) which means (better). It functions like advice with strong obligation-like-pressure. The auxiliary “kin” meaning (can), that signal permission. The phrase “You bettah go”, is structurally an instruction. But it becomes softer to some extent by the comparative modal form “better,” This makes guidance a form of wise advice rather than an absolute command.

**B.Interpretation:** Ideologically, this extract displays how deontic modality employed as a societal judgment in Hurston's portrayal of porch speech among African-Americans. Lulu Moss hypothesises a future situation in which the receiver becomes a messenger. the modal “bettah” (better) makes the role natural and socially certified.

**Extract (5): Joe Starks: “Janie, Ah reckon you better go fetch me dem old black gaiters”.**

**A.Description:** The extract has two modal forms. First, the lexical epistemic marker “Ah reckon” and ,second, the deontic suggestive modal “better.” The phrase “Ah reckon” schemes the obligation as the judgment of the speaker, not an impersonal necessity. The phrase “you better go fetch” shshapes the action like desirable but functioning as a directive.

**B.Interpretation:** The Ideological effect is how deontic modality reproduces unequal gendered power. while it is maintaining the presence of rationality. Joe’s words, “Ah reckon”, put him as the inspector of what may be necessary. And “you better” is constructing a world wherever Janie’s compliance is shaped. According to Simpson’s terms, this example can be delivered as Category A within discourse. However, the ideological effect is not personal but structural. modality becomes a mechanism of male-controlled control that is rooted efficiently within everyday conversation.

**Extract (6): Janie: “They oughta be shamed... now they got tuh finish devilin’ ’im tuh death”.**

**A. Description:** The deontic modality is show by two forms. First, the modal auxiliary “oughta”(ought to), and, second, the obligation structure “got tuh” (got to). The former encodes moral necessity(what should be happening according to ethical nors). The expresses a strong obligation, it is suggesting an obligatory maintenance of cruelty.

**B.Interpretation:** From a critical stylistic standpoint, this is an hypothesizing because the imperative style forces readers to realize that morality is not fixed. rather, it is socially negotiated and authority controls which obligations are performed on. The modal “oughta” signifies Janie’s moral resistance to common norms. But the phrase “got tuh” signals how group-behavior becomes a ritual and obsessive.

**Extract (7): Janie: “Wisht Ah had mah way wid ’em all”.**

**A. Description: this extract shows** hypothesizing. The latter is boulomaic. It realized through the lexical verb “Wisht”, meaning (wished) that is related to desire. The phrase “Ah had mah way”

presents a hypothetical state and it is counterfactual in structure. The state is not currently exist. This shows that Janie is not describing reality but constructing an alternative world shaped by her will.

**B. Interpretation:** Ideologically speaking, the function of this boulomaic modality lies in demonstrating Janie's prejudice as a black woman conveying power. An imagined reality is constructed by the wish in which Janie had control that is stated in the phrase "wid 'em all," . she suggests that in her real world she experienced restrictions forced by other community, referring to men or social anticipations. this aligns strongly with Category A narration-voice according to Simpson's point-of view. It is explicitly internal and personal. It shows positive shading in the sense that it foregrounds affect and desire rather than uncertainty or fear.

**Extract (8): Pheoby Watson: "Ah'm bound to go take her some supper".**

**A. Description:** The semi-modal construction "bound to," expresses boulomaic modality in this extract. It presents a strong intention and commitment. Also, it can sometimes imply predictability and in this extract it is functioning as a statement of will. The infinitive clause "to go take her some supper" shows a purposeful action. while the first person form "Ah'm" (I'm) foregrounds the speaker (Pheoby) as agent. Therefore, this structure plans a future action and is personally motivated. It creates a hypothetical world in the sense that the speaker's intention becomes reality.

**B. Interpretation:** Ideologically, the cultural importance of public care and relational responsibility in African American discourse community is reflected via Pheoby's intention. The boulomaic modality "bound to" hypothesizes an ethical future. This states that support is not optional. It is fundamentally tied to identity as a friend and community member. It is hypothesizing because it produces an another world built on predictable action. However, it is also ideological because it controls solidarity as an predictable form of social conduct. the extract conveys a positive shading. it expresses purposeful intention and care. It is presenting interpersonal support as a reality that is chosen instead of a required obligation.

**Extract (9): Pheoby (to Janie): "Ah sho hope you know what you doin".'**

**A. Description:** This extract shows a boulomaic modality marked by the lexical verb "hope", and intensified by the adverb "surely". The lexical verb "hope" overtly expresses desire and emotion in a future outcome that is not certain. the clause "you know what you doin" carries a proposition whose truth is not clear-cut. Thus, the lexical verb "hope" shapes it as a desired possibility instead of certainty. It builds an affective alternative world.

**B. Interpretation:** Ideologically, a dual action is performed by the lexical verb "hope". First, it presents care but, second, reveals social anxiety on female autonomy. the speaker uses boulomaic modality as a guidance of behavior through anxiety rather than authority. It is a shared discourse strategy in communities in which direct control might be unfortunate. This shows that "hope" presents positive shading (a verb of feeling) according to Simpson's perspective.

**Extract (10): Pheoby Watson: “nobody don’t know if it’s anything to tell or not”.**

**A. Description:** This extract shows hypothesizing that is realised by "if-condition". It is embedded within a clause of epistemic uncertainty( “nobody don’t know”). The conditional structure “if” did not give a full conditional sentence, if...then.... It functions as an questioning subordinator that indicates indeterminacy on the existence of something worth mentioned.

**B. Interpretation:** Ideologically, this conditional structure reproduces a common stance to narrative as something that is essential to be earned or established. It hypothesises a world where storytelling is conditional on the occurrence of an important experience, “if it’s anything to tell.” This helps to manage opportunities and resists the community’s entitlement to personal history.

**Extract (11): Pheoby Watson: “If she got anything to tell yuh, you’ll hear it”.**

**A. Description:** This is a full if...then... conditional sentence with the protasis “If she got anything to tell yuh” and the apodosis “you’ll hear it.” The condition clause is outlined over the indefinite pronoun “anything,”. The latter implies directness and uncertainty in regard to what is existed to be told. The modal auxiliary “will” in the phrase, “you’ll hear it”, enhances predictive certainty about the consequence when the condition is met.

**B. Interpretation:** The Ideological effect of this conditional report declares Janie’s independence over narrative revelation. a hypothetical world is constructed and is governed by Janie’s agency. This weakens the porch sitters’ entitlement to gossip by imposing a rule of access. the conditional clause creates a social boundary. It links knowledge to authorization. “will” makes the boundary sound unavoidable and legitimate. The ideological effect is , therefore, subtle empowerment.

#### **4.6.Data Discussion**

The analysis of the study shows that the epistemic modality is most frequently used among other types of modality. The shows the uncertainty, inference and the limitation of knowledge of the speakers which reflects the narrator style and ideology in discourse e.g. maybe, might, believe, must. On the other hand, the second type appeared within the analysis is the deontic modality. This displays advice, obligation, and directive pressure e.g., better, oughta, got tuh. This is ideologically significant because deontic forms indicate how to tell what should happen. Even when deontic forms are made softer like “advice” ( better), they continue creating a hierarchy between the speakers who describe what is essential and the listeners who are predictable to fulfill. Thus, deontic modality is tied to everyday power-relations. This includes gendered-authority and community-regulation. Boulomaic modality is also predictable but it is the less frequently used among other types of modality. It focuses on intention ,desire and emotional status. It opens a possible world of the speakers' needs, pains and hopes. Therefore, it is significant in the sense that it is ideologically support the idea of care, solidarity and personal agency. Finally, among the types of modality, conditional one is the least frequently occurred in the data. If- construction still significant because it sets up norms for admission and control e.g. who is allowed to do and know something and in which condition. Conditionals can have a strong ideological effect even though they are less frequent among the other types. They describe

the relationships beneath which information become available. The types of modality are presented in table (1):

Table (1): Modality Type Distribution

Modality Type	Frequency	Percent%
Epistemic	4	36.4
Deontic	3	27.3
Boulomaic	3	27.3
Conditional	1	9.1
Total	11	100%

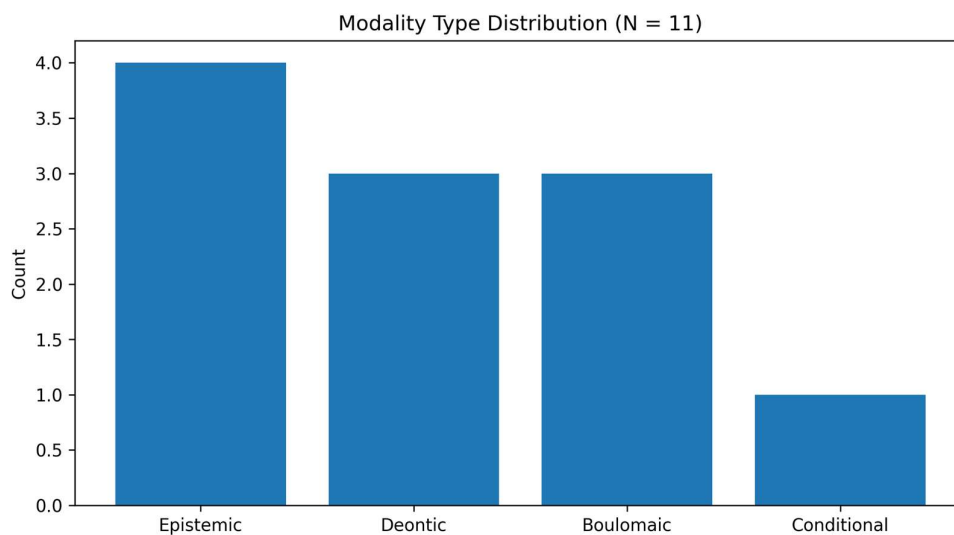


Figure (1): Modality Type Distribution

The speaker pattern displays that Pheoby Watson appears to be the most often and followed by Janie. whereas the other speakers seem once each. This designates affects interpretation since Pheoby and Janie are central figures, their modality choices carry more narrative and ideological importance than single-instance speakers.

Table 2. Speakers Distribution

Speaker	Frequency	Percent
Pheoby Watson	3	27.3
Janie	2	18.2
Porch sitter (gossip)	1	9.1
Narrator	1	9.1
Mrs. Sumpkins	1	9.1
Sam Watson	1	9.1
Lulu Moss	1	9.1
Joe Starks	1	9.1

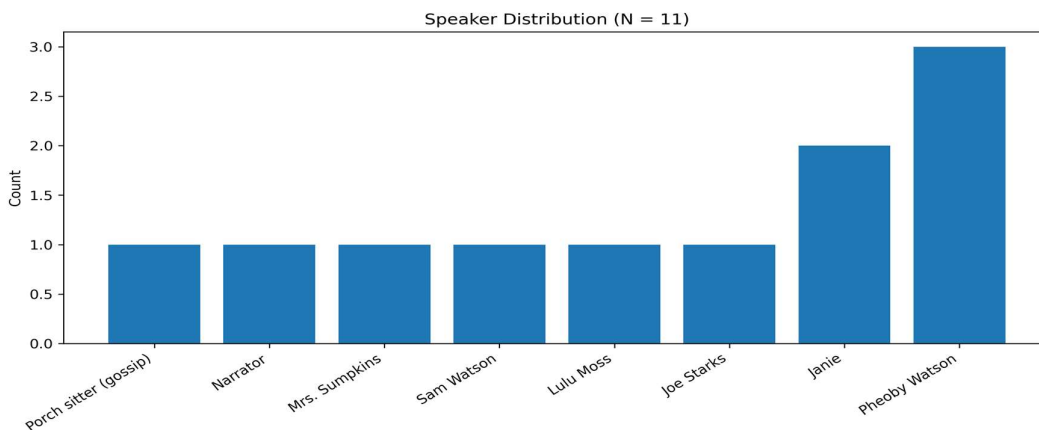


Figure (2): Speakers Distribution

Moreover, epistemic modality is spread out across narrator and community voices. while deontic modality groups in directive contexts (Lulu Moss, Joe Starks, Janie). Finally, boulomaic modality focuses on Janie and Pheoby, aligning with desire ,intent and interpersonal care. This displayed in table (3):

Table (3): Speakers and Modality Types

Speaker	Epistemic	Deontic	Boulomaic	Conditional	Row Total
Porch sitter (gossip)	1	0	0	0	1
Narrator	1	0	0	0	1
Mrs. Sumpkins	1	0	0	0	1
Sam Watson	1	0	0	0	1
Lulu Moss	0	1	0	0	1
Joe Starks	0	1	0	0	1
Janie	0	1	1	0	2
Pheoby Watson	0	0	2	1	3
Column Total	4	3	3	1	11

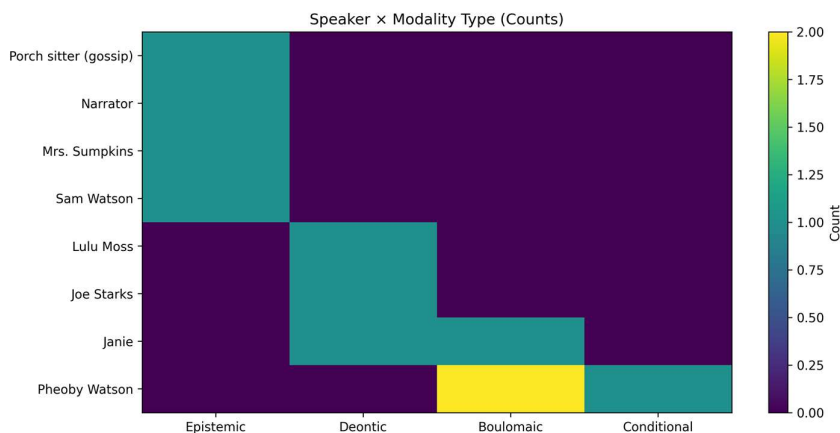


Figure (3): Speakers and Modality Types

## 5. Conclusion

This research examines how Zora Neale Hurston utilised hypothesizing in terms of Halliday's modality to present ideology in "Their Eyes Were Watching God". The study similarly looked for the most common peripheral modality forms in the selected data. The analysis displays hypothesizing as one of Hurston's significant tools. She regularly eludes to express meanings as static facts. speakers, instead, practice epistemic modality markers such as maybe, might, must, reckon, and believe in order to suggest possibilities and manage uncertainty. This idea is identical in porch discourse. speaker spread out opinions and social truths in an indirect way. They protect themselves in this way. Yet they still effect how other people think.

Modality correspondingly shows Hurston's stylistic choices. Within the novel, truth and authority are frequently conveyed via modal verbs. Strong epistemic modality like "must", on the one hand, pushes the readers towards a particular interpretation. However, the statement still sounds like an inference and not a certainty. Deontic modality on the other hand like "better, oughta, and got to" display advice, obligation, and moral judgment. They reflect social and everyday norms. Boulomaic modality, like "wish, hope, and bound to" direct desire and intention. It creates imagined and future-worlds formed by emotional states and care. All together, these modalities prove Hurston's central concerns such as the struggle between community-control and personal-freedom, and male-power and women's-agency.

Finally, The statistical numbers similarly support that the most frequent modality forms in the selected extracts are epistemic modality markers like "uncertainty and inference". Deontic modality forms comes second which denoting "obligation and advice. Boulomaic forms like "hope/intention" come third in the analysed data. The less frequent forms are conditionals. Yet they still significant. They limit access to knowledge. They also decide who has the right to "speak or judge". Moreover, these extracts are representative to Hurston's use of ideology and choices she made in her novel. This shows that hypothesizing in her perspective are not merely casual discourse, but it shapes her strong ideology stylistic choices. She uses modality effectively to express her ideological effect on readers while she maintained discourse natural and realistic.

## References

- Ahmed, H. A. (2022). Critical Stylistics vs. Critical Discourse Analysis: A General Review of the Two Main Critical Approaches to Language Studies. *resmilitaris*, 12(2), 6789-6801.
- Ali, A. Q., & Ubeid, N. A. (2017). *A critical discourse analysis of President Barack Obama's statement on Iran nuclear agreement. Journal of Basrah Researches for Human Science*, 42(1), 11–26. <https://doi.org/10.33762/0694-042-001-010>
- Fairclough, N. (1985). Critical and descriptive goals in discourse analysis. *Journal of pragmatics*, 9, 6.739-763.
- Fairclough, N. (1989). *Language and power*. London: Longman.
- Fairclough, N. (1992). *Discourse and social change*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Fairclough, N. (1995) *Critical Discourse Analysis: the Critical Study of Language*. London: Longman.
- Fairclough, N. (2013). *Critical discourse analysis: The critical study of language*. Routledge.
- Fairclough, N. (2014). *Language and power*. New York/ London: Routledge.
- Fairclough, N., & Wodak, R. (1997). Critical discourse analysis. In van Dijk, TA (ed.) *Discourse as Social Interaction (Discourse Studies: A Multidisciplinary Introduction, vol. 2)*. London: Sage.
- Fairclough, N., and Chouliaraki, L. (1999). *Discourse in late modernity : Rethinking critical discourse analysis*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Fowler, R. (1991). *Language in the News: Language and Ideology in the Press*. London: Routledge.
- Fowler, R., Hodge, B., Kress, G., & Trew, T. (1979). *Language and Control*. London: Routledge.
- Hassan, S. (2019). *Media portrayals of Abrahamic religions in broadsheet newspapers: A corpus-based critical stylistic analysis*. [Doctoral Dissertation, University of Huddersfield]. <http://eprints.hud.ac.uk/id/eprint/34862/>
- Jeffries, L. (2006) *Discovering Language: The Structure of Modern English*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Jeffries, L. (2007). *Textual construction of the female body: A critical discourse approach*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Jeffries, L. (2010a). *Critical Stylitics : The power of English*. Basingstoke: Palgarve Macmillan.

- Jeffries, L. (2014). *Critical Stylistics*. In M. Burke (Ed.), *The Routledge Handbook of Stylistics*. London : Routledge.
- Jeffries, L. (2016). *Critical Stylistics* In V. Sotirova (Ed.), *The Bloomsbury Companion To Stylistics* (pp. 157-176) London: Bloomsbury
- Jeffries, L. (2022). *The Language of contemporary poetry: a framework for poetic analysis*. Springer Nature.
- Jeffries, L. and McIntyre, D., (2010). *Stylistics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Jeffries, L. and Walker, B., (2012). *Key words in the press: A critical corpus-driven analysis of ideology in the Blair years (1998–2007)*. *English Text Construction*, 5 (2), 208–229.
- Jeffries, L., & Walker, B. (2017). *Keywords in the press: The New Labour years*.
- Jeffries, L., (2007). *Textual construction of the female body*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan
- Jeffries, L., (2010b). *Opposition in discourse*. London: Continuum.
- Jeffries, L., (2014). *Interpretation*. In: P. Stockwell and S. Whiteley, eds. *The handbook of stylistics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 469–486.
- Leech, G. and Short, M. (1981), *Style in Fiction: A Linguistic Introduction to English fictional prose*. Longman.
- Leech, G., and Short, M. (2007). *Style in fiction: A linguistic introduction to English fictional prose*. Harlow: Pearson Education Limited.
- Melrose, R. (1996). *The margins of meaning: Arguments for a postmodern approach to language and text* (Vol. 109). Rodopi.
- Norgaard, N., Montoro, R., & Busse, B. (2010). *Key terms in stylistics*. Continuum International Publishing Group.
- Olaluwoye, L. (2015). *A Critical Stylistic Analysis of the Identity of Minority Groups in the Nigerian Print Media*. *Journal of Literature, Languages and Linguistics* www.iiste.org ISSN 2422-8435 An International Peer-reviewed Journal Vol.16, 2015
- Simpson, P. (1993). *Language, Ideology, and Point of View*. London: Routledge.
- Simpson, P. (2004). *Stylistics: A resource book for students*. London: Routledge.
- van Dijk, T. A. (1993). *Elite discourse and racism*. Newbury Part: Sage.
- Van Dijk, T. A. (1996). *Discourse, power and access*. In C. a. C. Caldas-Coulthard, M. (Ed.), *Texts and practices: Readings in critical discourse analysis* (Vol. 84104) London: Routledge.
- Van Dijk, T. A. (2011). *Discourse studies: A multidisciplinary introduction*. London: Sage.

- 
- Van Leeuwen, T. (1996). The representation of social actors. In M. Coulthard (Ed.), *Texts and practices: Readings in critical discourse analysis* (Vol. 1, pp. 32-70) London: Routledge.
- Wales, K., 2011. *A dictionary of stylistics*. 3rd ed. London: Longman.
- Widdowson, H. (2004). *Text, context, pretext: Critical issues in discourse analysis*. Blackwell
- Widdowson, H. G. (1998). The theory and practice of critical discourse analysis. *Applied Linguistics*, 19(1), 136-151
- Wodak, R., & Meyer, M. (Eds.). (2009). *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis*. London: SAGE Publications.