The Discourse of Otherness: Language Use in Bessie Head's *Maru*

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Abstract
This study uncovers how language is deployed in the service of a writer's reconstruction and configuration of Otherness through a detailed close-reading of Bessie Head's *Maru.* This is because of the paucity of scholarship on the ways language is deployed in the fabrication of Otherness in Head's *Maru*.The position of this study is that language is integral and focal in discourse formation in the construction of the novel as an art and a genre of discourse. The scope of analysis in this study includes: the use of deixis to mark territorial otherness, the deployment of lexico-semantic infraction for exoticism and defamiliarisation, transitivity structures, and interrogative structures to uncover the discourse tenor, power structures which naturalises otherness**.** This paper adopts an analytic and descriptive approach within Norman Fairclough's strand of Critical Discourse Analysis (hereafter, *CDA*) which stresses the focal role of language in unveiling the complex realities and regime of social power relations configured in discourse. Fairclough's strand of *CDA* draws from the gains of Roger Fowler's Critical Linguistics model which argues that language put to use in texts or discourses can tell us about a society's worldview, and cultural practices– such as ideology, and also from the Social Theory of Michel Foucault where discourse foregrounds asymmetrical social power. Significantly, this paper demonstrates the transdisciplinary synergy between sociolinguistics, theoretical sociology and literature (the novel) by its provision of how linguistic resource deployed in a literary text underscores Otherness as a phenomenon which is social, relational and dialectical. From the analysis, this paper submits that Otherness or the linguistic labelling of a social group and gender as "the outsider" as facilitated by the encoding power of language is man-made, and symptomatic of the politics and dynamics of social power relation.
Keyword: Language, Discourse, Otherness, Gender, Critical Linguistics

Introduction
A literary text is a variety of discourse genre (see Fowler, 1981), which represents issues about the material-cum-phenomenological aspects of the human society in general. Language is focal in the discourse formation process in literature as it is one of the areas of overlap between a literary imagination and a society. Not only that, language is a vital cognitive tool for construing literary imagination and social tempers. Importantly, every society creates a code system of conceptualization to represent or talk about things, their experiences and cultural practices.

Through language, the socio-cultural worldviews, mode of knowledge or "…the semiotic systems that constitute a culture" (Halliday, 1978, 2) is represented. This is suggestive of what Halliday & Hasan (1989) call "language that is doing some job" (14). And this "language that is doing some job" for instance, in Head's *Maru* is not without a bias, or free from social forces as they encode or reflect forms of discourses wrapped with human, socio-cultural prejudices. Importantly, by examining the linguistic manoeuvres in a work of literature, one can ascertain the nature of discourse theme within the novel, which for *Maru* (1971) includes racialism, the power struggle underlying the scheming and quarrel between two close friends and chieftains (Moleka and Maru) over who marries the Masarwa — Margaret Cadmore—, and the discrimination of the Masarwa in Dilepe, which crystallises as a discourse of Otherness. Discourse as used in this context implies a configuration of the world, the processes, and relations, of thoughts, feelings, beliefs and so forth, of the world (Fairclough, 2003, 124).

M. A. K Halliday's work in Functional Linguistics and Roger Fowler's pioneering work in Critical Linguistics have opened up new vistas on how language and text encode the kind of discourse explored in this paper, that is, Otherness, in order to reveal the social system of beliefs, ideology, and the reproduction of social relation such as "…power – structure and power relations of the society we live in" (Eagleton, 2008, 13).

Our guiding thesis is that language has a socio-functional role and a functionalist model of language analysis not only acknowledges the correlation between language and social forces, it deepens human understanding of the ways language facilitate meaning creation and ideology in discourse genre like the novel. The crux of the foregoing assertion is that language use in a novel is not just for the linguistic meaning language encode, but also, for the social dimensions of discourse that linguistic resources are capable of revealing at the ideological and institutional level since "all discourses are ideologically and institutionally determined" (Birch 1989, 35). This view is succinctly explained and captured in Foucault (1972) in the assertion that "… discourses are composed of signs; but what they do is more than the use of these signs to designate things. It is this *more* that renders them irreducible to the language (langue) and to speech. It is this 'more' that we must reveal and describe" (49). This "more" points to the social power structures within "a discourse [which] defines what can be said, who can speak and who must remain silent, in this way defining their being" (Koul, 2017, 457).

The implication of the foregoing in our study of *Maru* (1971) is that our analysis of the ways language is engaged in the novel can reveal how the boundaries of subjectivity, autonomous agency is permitted or denied to individuals or groups within the semantic universe or community such as Dilepe as construed in the novel. This type of analysis is what *CDA* does. It is important we stress that the *CDA* employed in this study is not the same as the non-CDA approaches, that is, the generic discourse analysis, carried outside linguistics and without the modifier "critical". The critical approach we employ, shows " […] how discourse is shaped by relations of power and ideologies, and the constructive effects discourse has upon social identities, social relations and systems of knowledge and belief, neither of which is normally apparent to discourse participants" (Fairclough, 1992, 12).

In addition, following Fairclough (2013), the incorporation of the term "critical" into discourse speaks of a methodology of textual analysis which seeks to account for the "relations between discourse and other elements of the social process" through a systematic analysis of texts in order to address "social wrongs in their discursive aspects and possible ways of righting or mitigating them" (10). Fairclough's view of discourse draws from the Social & Critical Theory's conceptualisation of discourse by Michel Foucault. But Foucault lacks a critical linguistic basis for the view of discourse he proposed. Thus, what Fairclough did was to incorporate Fowler's critical functional linguistics model to Foucault's discourse to evolve his own strand of discourse analysis which he called *CDA*. According to Fairclough & Fairclough (2012), its main strength is the "critical perspectives on language, drawn from critical theory in the social sciences" (78).

The Discourse of Otherness

Otherness is anthropological, and a consequence of ethnocentric bias (Staszak, 2008, 3). According to Childs & Fowler (2006):

> the other is a construct. It is, moreover, a historically and culturally specific construction that is determined by the discursive practices that shape us into what we are […]. Thus, rather than representing the real and diverse qualities of any given group or entity, such constructions reflect the values and norms of the individual or group that constructs it. (164)

Otherness is a topical and "an important concern in postcolonial studies" (Udumukwu, 2015, .259) as we can see in Said (2003) which explored the Otherness of the Orient, where the Orient is configured as an exotic Other in Euro-western discourses and imagination (1). This imagination of the Orient as the Other undergirds the power and social relation between Europe and Asia which crystallises as British colonial policy in India. We can also find same in Bhabha (1994) *The Location of Culture*,

where Bhabha highlights the cultural implications of Otherness due to British cultural imperialism in India. Another scholar, Spivak (1988) has also explored Otherness within its gendered form via the question "Can the subaltern speak? and Can the subaltern (as woman) speak?" (296). "Speak" as a verbal and nominal category engaged by Spivak suggests both an action and an idea. As an action, it implies utterance, while as an idea it implies presence, identity, a position of power and autonomous agency. Also, Mackinnon (1991) *Towards a Marxist Theory of the State* is another text inspired by a sense of female Otherness within the economic sphere. Other type of Otherness is the economic stratification of nations into first, second and the third world (Ahmad, 1987, 11).

Within African literary imagination, Chinua Achebe's trilogy: *Things Fall Apart*, *Arrow of God* and *No Longer at Ease* reverberate the discourse of Otherness. The conflicts in those novels thrive on the principle of cultural Otherness, between western culture and African culture. Otherness is also captured in Noviolet Bulawayo's *We Need New Names* in terms of the relationship between The NGOs representing western humanitarian interests and extension in Africa (the People of Paradise). Not only that, Western media perception of Africa, in *We Need New Names* is informed by Otherness, that Africa is a waste land. Also, contemporary African women writings are implicated by the discourse of Otherness in its gendered form, in order to uncover the subaltern position of African women in the socio-economic scheme of things in Africa. This is what prompted Molara Ogundipe-Leslie's (2010) essay on Stiwanism which seeks to place African women in the agenda of economic, political and social conversations.

What the foregoing examples and explanations have in common is the view that the discourse of Otherness is not without politics or interest, as it serves the interest of a given dominant, minority or ideological group within a social framework. This paper therefore defines Otherness as identity mapping, a cultural practice encouraged, tolerated, institutionalised and formulated as a discourse by a social group in position of power over another social group who are narrativised as subalterns through systematic devaluation, resulting in socio-political, economic, spiritual, epistemic, historical and geographical occlusion and is legitimatised through language.

Otherness may assume the form of the Osu caste system in Igbo land, gender differentiation in African families where the male child is assumed to be more valuable compared to the female child or the discrimination due to albinism, the ill treatment and the social stratification of the Dalit in India.
Otherness which constitute one of the themes of Head's novel *Maru* (1971) calls attention to a social anomaly in the cultural practices within the fictionalised representation of Botswana, particularly in Dilepe, where the Masarwa people are treated as outsiders. The Otherness represented in *Maru* (1971) is an institutionalised social practice. It thrives because a group such as the Dilepe sees another group such as the Masarwa, as slaves, even if the Masarwa people form part of the community in Dilepe. The Dilepe people treat the Masarwa as lesser humans, outsiders, and "hoi polloi". This also becomes a basis for the discrimination meted out to the Masarwa.

Thus, while the people of Dilepe such as Dikeledi, Moleka, Maru, and Seth, occupy the position of power in Dilepe, they impose their value systems, worldviews and notions of identity on the Masarwa. By doing this, the people of Dilepe fail to acknowledge the autonomous agency and humanity of the Masarwa, instead, the Masarwa are excluded from positions of social, economic, intellectual and even spiritual power.

In a situation of Otherness as we can find in *Maru* (1971), the power of the dominating group is legitimated and naturalised while the Other is interpellated and forced to conform or accept subaltern labels through the institutionalisation of policies and norms, values and laws for the interest of the dominating group. Now, we need to stress that the labels on the Other or the Masarwa are not necessarily "truths" or "doxa".

In *Maru* (1971), a type of Otherness is also evident in the name, Masarwa– a term which means "bushmen". The People of Masarwa are a social group or individuals classified as outsiders, who are assumed by the Dilepe people to be fundamentally different, dissimilar, subalterns and separated

because of social status, birth, physiology, gender, and social codes. Head's narrative portrayal of the Masarwa as outsiders in *Maru* (1971), foregrounds their powerlessness as a marginal group.

The Otherness of the Masarwa crystallises as a form of dehumanisation and objectification or properties to be owned. This is demonstrated in the refusal of the Dilepe and Totem people who are in positions of power or dominance to acknowledge that the Other (Masarwa) is a subject or a legitimate member of their community. We find this in the representation of Margaret Cadmore, a character in *Maru* (1971) who is not accepted into the Dilepe society on the basis that she is fair skinned, or a Masarwa. Margaret is expected by the society and culture in Dilepe which she finds herself in, to remain passive, and invisible as the dominating group refuses to see, acknowledge or recognize Margaret's existence in spite of her intellectual prowess, finesse and beauty.

Review of Literature on Bessie Head's *Maru* (1971)

Studies on Bessie Head's *Maru* (1971) have explored the novel from various dimensions. For instance, Ogede (1995) notes that "to understand Head's work (*Maru*) fully, one must have some basic familiarity withboth South Africa's now defunct apartheid system of government and Botswana'shistory, which Head tends to conflate" (26). The reason is because Head was formally a South African (see Nichols, 1999, 1), even though Botswana occupies a focal position in her literary imagination. Also, the racialism in South African is instrumental to her birth, and migration to Botswana in 1964 (Pucherova, 2011).

In another essay on *Maru*, Koul (2017) examined the interplay of politics, race, power and gender in orderto shed light on the tropes of marginality and subordination which ensure that in female agency, subjectivity is silenced. Koul is concerned with how institutional frameworks organise the politics and power in a culture. For Lloyd-Owen (2011) "*Maru* is the novel in which Head develops her idea of soul power. Her central characters are depicted as 'larger than Botswana', transcending the nation itself, and therefore evaporating bodily into mythologised elements" (2011, 46). This same idea is reflected in Wilhelm (1983), who notes that in "*Maru,* […] Head is breaking new ground in her fluent and convincing discourses on inner power and competing soul-kingdoms" (9). Pangmeshi (2009) on the other hand provides a biographical explanation for the thematic issues in *Maru* (1971) and draws a connection between the Author – Head – with the character Margaret because of her (Head's) "[…] strange birth and origin. This carried with it a question mark" (63).

Odhiambo, Ogembo, and Magak (2013) investigatedthe identity of the woman in *Maru* (1971) with particular interest on the character Margaret, noting that "She is the 'other', an outcast in society by virtue of her Masarwa identity" (86). This is to underscore how stereotype plays out in human society. Lastly, Lopang (2014, 5) accounted for the elements of magic realism in *Maru* (1971) "through the psychological sphere in that her characters are able to enter the souls of other characters through a mental channel" (5), in other to articulate a transcendence sense of existence. The foregoing review has shown that thematic analysis constitutes a greater focus of existing scholarship on *Maru* (1971), while the linguistic dimension to such themes has not been given much attention. This study makes an intervention in this identified gap.

Codes of Otherness in *Maru*

We will begin our analysis on *Maru* (1971) by calling attention to a kind of otherness we note as territorial Otherness and how language use in the novel represents that kind of discourse theme. By territorial Otherness, we mean an Otherness that speaks or calls attention to territorial distinctiveness or difference which also encourages negative labelling and stereotyping on persons within such territory. A language form which points to this territorial otherness is the use of place deixis. Deixis "refers to the orientation of the content of a sentence in relation to time, place and personal participants" (Fowler, 1986, 57). Place deixis points to location or place, or territory. Let us take a look at the excerpt below and pay attention to the words and phrasal groups in boldfaced in the excerpt:

> **In Botswana** they say: Zebras, Lions, Buffalo and Bushmen live in the **Kalahari Desert**. If you can catch a Zebra, you can walk up to it, forcefully open its mouth and examine its

> teeth. The Zebra is not supposed to mind because it is an animal. Scientists do the same to Bushmen and they are not supposed to mind, because there is no one they can still turn round to and say, At least I am not a – Of all things that are said of oppressed people, the worst things are said and done to the Bushmen. Ask the scientists. Haven't they yet written a treatise on how Bushmen are an oddity of the human race, who are half the head of a man and half the body of a donkey? (Head, 1971, 6, bold phased are the author's)

By isolating the boldfaced phrases, we call attention a particular interest to us in this paper as shown below:

Zebras
Lions
[**In Botswana**] they say: Buffalo live [**in the Kalahari Desert**].
Bushmen

The phrase "**in Botswana**" a prepositional phrase composed of PP+NP, "in" (a preposition) + "Botswana" (a noun)] and "**in the Kalahari Desert**", another prepositional phrase made up of a preposition + the definite article , where "Kalahari" the noun component plays the role of an adjective or modifier to the headword "desert" a noun, which speak of a place, a location, a territory.

The narrative voice represented by the use of the third person pronoun "they", a person deixis in its plural sense puts the reader on alert to a publicly held opinion which falls within the domain of "a hear say". In spite of that, it is engrafted into popular discourse as a form of truth in Botswana in order to naturalise the view that "Zebras, Lions, Buffalo and Bushmen live in the **Kalahari Desert".** The statement "they say" constitutes a type of rumour, propaganda or hate speech, for the fact that its source is unidentifiable as we see in the nature of the pronoun which the statement is sourced from. The pronoun which points to the source is indefinite, unclear, and unverifiable which makes it very difficult to hold responsible, or identify, the person the statement emanates from.

We need to note thatthe person deixis represented by the third person pronoun in its plural sense as we see in the term"they", is used in a collective sense too. It is a plural marker, and it speaks of a view, suggestive of an entire community and their thought and system of belief. It is also important to note that the expression is also crafted in a declarative mood, which makes it have a truth or false value. Furthermore, the statement is projected in such a subtle manner that an unwary reader may see and accept the notion of Otherness it reflects as an established truth, a norm, which should be accepted, whereas, it is the view and ideology of an exclusive group in power, the Dilepe, toward the Masarwa.

By the use of the deixis of place or territory, there is a sense of geographical specificity on that statement, "in Botswana", the exact territory which is referenced. A further reading and foray into the novel reveals the particular area of Botswana where such views thrive, the view that zebras, lions, buffalos and Bushmen or Masarwa live in the Kalahari Desert. This is in the Dilepe area. For we are made to know in the novel that the "Dilepe village was the stronghold of some of the most powerful and wealthy chiefs in the country, all of whom owned innumerable Masarwa as slaves" (16). Thus, such forms of discourse justify their domination over the Masarwa people.

The implication is that such discourse creates a syntagmatic sequence where the Masarwa collocates in the same semantic order of arrangement with zebra, lions, and buffalos. The presupposition is that the Masarwa people are in the category of animals of the wild, are less humans and are not to be accorded dignity as humans. Also, by projecting the "they say" statement, dominant groups engage the subtle element of language deceptively to justify and legitimise the social alienation of groups they assume as lesser beings or outsider, as we find in the relationship between the Dilepe people and the Masarwa people. This also is to give legitimacy or normalise the various forms of dehumanisation, stereotype or label associated with the Masarwa, such as "the excreta, horror, oddity of the human race, with half the head of a man and half the body of a donkey" (103). Through the use of deixis of place we see the territoriality of otherness where the fringe of the earth, a place of adverse weather condition is projected as the home of the Masarwa.

By using language to represent the Masarwa people as entities sharing abode with wild beasts, in a specific territory— the Kalahari Desert— we can see how language is deployed to naturalise Otherness as normal; to equate and cognitively banish an entire social group or people such as the Masarwa to the sphere of animals of the wild. It is also these senses of Otherness that informed the cruelty to the dead body of a Masarwa which is left on the floor instead of a stretcher as we see in the manner the corpse of Margaret the Masarwa's biological mother is handled (Head, 1971, 8).

The foregoing, coupled with the encounter with a Masarwa's dead body by Margaret Cadmore, the European, establishes her use of the Masarwa, that is, the daughter of the dead Masarwa woman who she named Margaret Cadmore after herself, for the purpose of her social and behavioural experiment. Hence, Margaret Cadmore (the Masarwa) becomes an experimental object, a lab rat, to ascertain or scientifically verify if the spurious assumption held by both the Dilepe people and white man that the Masarwa, "can't think for themselves. They don't know anything" (88).

Another aspect of language we need to pay attention to is the use of lexico-semantic infraction for exoticism and defamiliarisation of the Other. By lexico-semantic infraction, we mean a way language is used to adore a person such that this language use is in contrast with the previous semantic reference to this person, where the previous semantic reference earlier used to label the person is a negative label. We see this in the linguistic structures which underscore Maru's later view of Margaret Cadmore (the Masarwa). This is conveyed in a stretch of utterances which contradicts the labels the Dilepe people hold towards the Masarwa. Maru views Margaret as "the **sun of his love**" (*Maru*, 1971, 1).

The above statement semantically infracts on Maru's previous semantic label over the Masarwa. What may seem to have prompted this semantic infraction is the sense of fetishism towards Margaret Cadmore (the Masarwa) when Maru encountered her, which also resulted to a sense of exoticism reflected in the statement "He [Maru] wanted a flower garden of yellow daisies, because they were the only **flowers** which resembled the face of his [Maru's] wife [Margaret] and the **sun of his** [Maru's] **love**" (*Maru*, 1971, 1).

The linguistic structure which indicates the lexico-semantic infraction constructed above is a complex sentence, made up of a simple sentence which constitute the main clause and a subordinating sentence introduced by a subordinating conjunction "because". We also need to note the paradigmatic relationship between the phrasal group **[**the face of his wife] and [the **sun of his love]** which are close substitutes. **The sun of his love** as used in the stretch of utterance, is a linguistic structure whose semanticity is infracted because the referent already has a negative label as a "bushman", away from the context which Maru refers to the Masarwa as an entity which brightens his love, just as the sun brightens or offers vitality to the life of plants and other living organisms.

A focus on the entire narrative will show that it is out of place that Maru refers to a Masarwa (Margaret Cadmore) as the "sun of his love", that is, Maru's love, whereas, in several portion of the narrative Maru (considering his social status as a king) had seen the Masarwa as lesser beings, but encountering Margaret and her education invokes a sense of apprehension on Maru as he sees Margaret as a commodity, a rare commodity for exoticism for the fact that she is an educated, beautiful, fair skinned Masarwa. Staszak (2008) notes that "exoticism is characterised by giving value to the other, contrary to ethnocentric bias" (6). We see exoticism demonstrated when Maru marries Margaret. Maru's marriage with Margaret becomes a speech act, which her fellow Masarwa sees as conferring value and humanity on the Masarwa as we see below:

> When people of the Masarwa tribe heard about Maru's marriage to one of their own, a door silently opened on the small, dark airless room in which their souls had been shut for a long time. The wind of freedom, which was blowing throughout the world for all people, turned and flowed into the room. As they breathed in the fresh, clear air their humanity awakened. (103)

The foregoing underscored the fact that conjugal relation between Maru and Margaret conferred a level of honour on Margaret, however on a deeper level it unveils the power structure at work. This is because there were other underlying motivations behind Maru's marriage to Margaret. One of the reasons is the exertions of patriarchal power tussle between Maru and Moleka. We are told that Margaret is a "the kind of wife everybody would loathe from the bottom of their hearts" (2) as she is Masarwa, "the equivalent of 'nigger', a term of contempt which means, obliquely, a low, filthy nation" (6). And to complicate Margaret Cadmore the Masarwa's situation, her mother died giving birth to her on the outskirt of a remote village, and she was classified as **untouchable** (8). This negative descriptive adjectives contrast with Maru's statement, that of Margaret Cadmore the Masarwa being the sun of his love. Maru's use of language, defamiliarises that which is familiar, that is, the negative labels associated with being a Masarwa.

But for Maru, the eponymous character, and "king in their society" (2), Margaret conjures an exotic imagination. This exoticism of the Masarwa is not that which is born from real value or respect, but of an awe at meeting, someone he assumes to be an outcast demonstrating qualities those assumed to be true born such as Dikeledi are associated with such as: refinement and education.This was not the same attitude he expressed earlier towards Margaret Cadmore. In fact, his disdain for Margaret as a Masarwa even without encountering her is captured below, when she heard that Moleka gave a bed to a Masarwa and that Margaret Cadmore the Masarwa sleeps on a bed:

> "I'm not like you, Moleka," he said, with heavy sarcasm. **"I still own the Masarwa as slaves**. All my one hundred thousand cattle and fifty cattle posts aremaintained by theMasarwa. They sleep on the ground, near outdoor fires. Their only blanket is the fire. When the fire warms them on one side, they turn round and warm themselves on the other side. I have seen this with my own eyes. What will they do when they hear that a certain Masarwa in my village is treated as an equal of the Batswana and given a bed from my office? Won't they want beds too, and where do I find all those beds, overnight? I want the bed you loaned to the Masarwa teacher returned, immediately."(46)

This same Masarwa (Margaret) becomes a fetish and an object of desire and power tussle between Maru and Moleka. For Maru, owning Margaret as a wife will ensure his victory in the power tussle with Moleka. But what the marriage between Maru and Margaret Cadmore (the Masarwa) reveals is Maru's display of hegemonic power in the guise of love and marriage for Margaret (the Masarwa), as we see in the excerpt where he sent out a threat and warning to Moleka concerning Margaret Cadmore, and Moleka's threatening reply:

> "Tell Moleka to remember that he enjoys life on this earth. This is not the end for him. He will have a long life." "Since Maru thinks he can send messages to me, through spies, you can also take a message to him. Tell him I say that the day he approaches her, I will burn his house down. He is lucky if I don't kill him too."(Head, 1971, 62)

Another sense of exoticism of the Masarwa as an Other is evident in the expression by Margaret Cadmore (the European) which identifies a Masarwa as a deity. This Otherness reflects the rarity of the Masarwa and the physiology of the dead body of the Masarwa woman which made Margaret (the European) exclaim that "She looks like a Goddess."(9). By elevating the Masarwa to the status of the divine, the lexical term "Goddess" not only defamiliarizes the social status of the Masarwa, it also reveals a sense of exoticism of the Masarwa as a rare species or commodity. It is this exoticism that instigated the seemingly nice treatment to the corpse of the woman (the mother of Margaret the Masarwa).

Transitivity Structures in the Configuration of Otherness

Another language structure worthy of attention in *Maru* to configure otherness is the use of transitivity structures. "Transitivity structures express representational meaning: what the clause is about, which is typically some process, with associated participants and circumstances (Halliday & Mathiessen 2004, 309). It allows the writer, Head, to talk about experiences in the novel as it relates to Otherness. We will look at nominal, verbal and adverbial group and how they configure such

experience. Head configured Otherness through the use of verbal processes. Let us look at the processes below:

> **Shetook** in too much after that: the thin stick legs of malnutrition and the hard caloused feet that had never worn shoes. **She took** in also the hatred of the fortunate, and that if they so hated even a dead body how much more they hated those of this woman's tribe who were still alive. Maybe **she** really **saw** human suffering, close up, for the first time, but it **frightened** her into adopting that part of the woman which was still alive – her child. She had no children, but she **was** an educator of children. **She** was also a scientist in her heart with a lot of fond, pet theories, one of her favourite, sweeping theories being: environment everything; heredity nothing. As **she** put the child to bed that night in her own home, her face **was** aglow. **Shehad** a real, living object for her experiment. Who **knew** what wonder would be created? (9)

The excerpt above, has a third person pronoun (she) which points to Margaret Cadmore (the European) as an antecedent information. The pronoun speaks of the senser of an experience of hate perpetuated by the people of Botswana on the Masarwa. The process which explains this is evident in the verbal group "took". What this structure reveals is the sense of alienation ascribed to the Masarwa even in death which made Margaret Cadmore (the European) to become aware of the discrimination and treatment of the Masarwa as an outsiders. The pronoun also serves to provide a sense of cohesion on the structure. Importantly, the structure above also reveals Margaret Cadmore's (The European's) prejudice over the Masarwa as she sees the baby as an experimental object and not really as a real human being, as we can see in the linguistic structure, "**She** had a real, living object for her experiment. Who knew what wonder would be created?" (9).

Thus for Margaret Cadmore the European, Margaret Cadmore the Masarwa is a lab rat for social experiment. We are told that "The relationship between her and the woman was never that of a child and its mother." (10). Her seemingly acts of kindness were borne of a sense of superiority of her race over Africans. By her kindness, she seeks to "civilise the native" or provide an education where she assumes there is none, this intrigued fellow, Botswana, for it was thus strange to have a Masarwa in school, for "Since when did a Bushy go to school? We take him to the bush where he eat mealie pap, pap, pap." (Head, 1971, 11).

Nonetheless, this was the social experimentation intended by Margaret Cadmore (the European) in proving how an environment conditions an individual. Margaret Cadmore the Masarwa thus, becomes an example of classical conditioning. We are told that "Margaret Cadmore succeeded in only half her experiment – that if an environment provided the stimulus and amenities of learning, any human mind could absorb knowledge, to the limit of its capacities. (12). And a proof of Margaret Cadmore the European's success in her social experiment is the new identity she conferred on the Masarwa girl Margaret Cadmore. Such that "From that eventful evening to a day seventeen years later some wonder had indeed been created". We are told that:

> Margaret Cadmore had **produced** a brilliant student, whose name, identical to hers, was always at the top of the list of passes. That the brilliance was based entirely on social isolation and lack of communication with others, except through books, was too painful for the younger Margaret ever to mention. The old white-haired lady was retiring to England. There was still one term left before her 'experiment' passed out as a fully trained primary school teacher. She came in a car with pretty floral dresses and a pair of white shoes and practical last minute advice. "Don't wear lipstick. It won't suit you, but here's some eye make-up because you have eyes as pretty as stars. Don't forget to shave regularly under your arms and apply this perfumed powder. (12:13)

Let us look at the verbal process "produced" and its usage in the context of the passage. Its semantic implication suggests to make something, to transform through mechanical means, to cause something to bring out something. This implies that Margaret Cadmore, the Masarwa, is a manufactured product, a commodity interpellated with a brand name alien to who she is, but she could do nothing about it. Such interpellation reveals also the power structure in the relationship between Margaret Cadmore the

European and **the produced** Margaret Cadmore the Masarwa which is not based on the principles of equality but on the basis that she is an outcast, marginalised and an outsider who needs help all the time.

Interrogative Mood, Discourse Tenor, Power Structure and Otherness

The tenor of discourse speaks of the relationship that exists between the interlocutors in a speech encounter. Apart from the fact that it identifies the addresser and addressees, it underscores the power structure in a speech situation. Let us analyse the speech exchange between Dikeledi and Margaret Cadmore to unveil the sense of Otherness revealed within their conversation and the power structures within it:

> "What's your name?" she asked at last.
> "Margaret Cadmore," the other said.
> "Is your father a white man?" asked Dikeledi.
> Since the atmosphere between them was so relaxed, the other young girl spoke without hesitation:
> "No," she said. "Margaret Cadmore was the name of my teacher. She was a white woman from England. I am a Masarwa."
> Dikeledi drew in her breath with a sharp, hissing sound. Dilepe village was the stronghold of some of the most powerful and wealthy chiefs in the country, all of whom owned innumerable Masarwa as slaves. "Don't mention this to anyone else," she said, shock making her utter strange words. "If you keep silent about the matter, people will simply assume you are a Coloured. I mistook you for a Coloured until you brought up the other matter." (16)

Dikeledi wants to know more about Margaret Cadmore. The privileges which Dikeledi enjoys such as her social status, class, and education place her in a position of power such that she does the asking of the questions, "unconsciously" showing off her position and dominance. Meanwhile, Margaret's skin colour and education presuppose that she is a new person in the community, and her education offers her privilege too. But when Dikeledi encountered Margaret, her first statement reveals or subtly expresses her display of power in the question "What's your name?" The question speaks of a desire to know Margaret's identity, social background, and stratification all summed in that interrogative sentence. Margaret Cadmore by answering the question reveals her ignorance of the label on the Masarwa and also her openness of mind. But it never ends there. Dikeledi tells Margaret not to announce her identity, "Don't mention this to anyone else,". This is a sentence crafted in the imperative mood. What it foregrounds is that Dikeledi expects Margaret to hide her identity as it is derogatory and instead, accepts her Otherness instead of confronting it. Even subsequent questions posed to Margaret by Seth the principal of the School, Leseding, were attempts to define and assigned a label to her:

> "Excuse the question, **but** are you a Coloured?" he asked.
> "No," she replied. "I am a Masarwa."
> The shock was so great that he almost jumped into the air. Why, he'd be the sensation of the high society circle for a week! He controlled himself. He looked down. He smiled a little. Then he said: "I see." (30)

Other interrogative expressions and structures which mark Otherness are: "Tell me," he said. "Since when is a Bushy a teacher?" (34). Such an interrogation serves a purpose of double articulation as it subtly speaks two meanings, that of status and power. Another sentence structure in *Maru* (1971) which speaks of Otherness is that which uses allusion as we see in the structure, "He kept noting out of the corner of his eye that **the** Masarwa (she was no longer a human being) seemed to be extraordinarily friendly with Dikeledi, who, in his eyes, was royalty of royalty. (30). This utterance came after Margaret tells Seth the principal that she is Masarwa, and it changes his perception of Margaret and breeds hate and negative allusion of the Masarwa as an object, bushman and not a human being.

Other forms of language use to configure Otherness is in terms of contrastive conjunction, for example: “It was only when they washed the body that they exposed their prejudice, and the reason why the body was not on a stretcher but on the stone floor” (8). The structure “the body was not on a stretcher” contrasts with“on the stone floor”, and the use of the contrastive coordinating conjunction “but” captures that. It speaks of how cultural belief system such as Otherness affects human relationship and also how the dead is treated especially if this dead is the Other. There is also the use of prepositional contrast to mark otherness “she slowly became conscious of her life in the home of the missionaries and conscious of herself as a person. A big hole was there because, **unlike** other children, she was never able to say: “I am this or that. My parents are this or that.” (9). The contrastive preposition “unlike” as used in the expression marks the contrast between Margaret the Masarwa and other children, her school mates and those within her immediate environment. From childhood, she felt that sense of difference through the way she was treated.

There are re-occurring adjectives which play important roles in the discourse of Otherness. This is in terms of reoccurring words in syntagmatic relations which describe the Masarwa. We see such adjectives in the boldfaced structures in the excerpt, there is no one “who did not hesitate to tell her that she was a **Bushman, mixed breed, half breed, low breed or bastard**” (5). The structure and arrangement: Bushman, mixed breed, half breed, low breed or bastard are lexical arrays of labelling which also speak of the Otherness of the Masarwa people. While the marriage between Maru and Margaret Cadmore the Masarwa may appear to have conferred a sense of value, or dignity to the Masarwa, it is impossible not to note that Margaret Cadmore the Masarwa is powerless and could not say no to Maru. Not because she loves Maru, but because she has come to understand the power dynamics behind Maru’s desire to own her as a wife.

Conclusion

In this paper, we have explored the language use in the discourse of Otherness in Bessie Head’s novel: *Maru* (1971). Specifically, we have looked at the use of deixis to mark territorial otherness, the deployment of lexico-semantic infraction for exoticism and defamiliarisation of the Other, transitivity structures, interrogative structures to reveal the discourse tenor, power structures which naturalises otherness and reoccurring adjective as lexical arrays which cognitively describe the Masarwa as the Other**.** We have shown that language is capable of unveiling the complex realities and regime of social power relations configured in an asymmetrical social power relation. We also note that this paper significantly contributes to the transdisciplinary synergy between sociolinguistics, theoretical sociology and literature. Lastly, we submit in this paper that Otherness or the treatment of a social group and gender as an outsider as facilitated by the encoding power of language is human-made, and symptomatic of the politics and dynamics of social power relation.

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