

**Mental Spaces of Marginalization and Resistance in
Maya Angelou's *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*
A Discourse-Historical Approach**

Enjy Salah Ibrahim Abdel Salam
Teaching Assistant of English
English Department
Linguistics and Translation Section
Helwan University

1. Abstract

I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings (1969) is the first of seven autobiographical books by the American author Maya Angelou. The book recounts Angelou's childhood and adolescence from age 3 through 16. She narrates her unsettled and traumatic childhood through the themes of intimidation, racism, rape, displacement and family. Her adolescence is narrated through themes of empowerment and resistance. The present study adopts a discourse historical approach (DHA) which is primarily concerned with the integration of the social and political backgrounds of the discursive events. Besides, DHA is highly relevant to discourse studies of inequality and national identity. Its analytical categories reveal the discursive construction of 'self' and 'other' in discourse either positively or negatively (Reisigl & Wodak, 2001). The paper incorporates the five discursive strategies with Fauconnier's (1985, 1997) Mental Space Theory (MST) which represents the study's cognitive aspect. Mental spaces help illustrate the speakers reality as opposed to their wishes, attitudes and attributes. The study aims to examine how strategies of marginalization and resistance are discursively represented. It also seeks to demonstrate the effect of those strategies on the construction of Angelou's identity by revealing their conceptual structure. Finally, the study reveals the power imbalance in relationships by examining the notion of marginalization through which intimidation and racism are discursively represented. Confronting these techniques, the analyses shed light on Angelou's discourse of resistance.

Key words: *Discourse historical approach; national identity; mental space theory; marginalization; resistance; power.*

الأفضية الذهنية للتمهيش و المقاومة في مذكرات مايا أنجلو "أنا أعرف لماذا يغني الطائر
الحبب"
دراسة نقدية معرفية
المستخلص

"أنا أعرف لماذا يغني الطائر الحبب" (١٩٦٩) هو أول جزء من مذكرات المؤلفة الأمريكية مايا أنجلو. يروي الكتاب طفولة أنجلو ومراهقتها من سن الثالثة إلى السادسة عشر. تروي أنجلو طفولتها المضطربة من خلال خطابات التخويف والعنصرية والاعتصاب والأسرة. يتم سرد فترة مراهقتها من خلال خطابات التمكين والمقاومة. تتبنى الدراسة الحالية منهج التحليل التاريخي للخطاب حيث يهتم بشكل أساسي بدمج الخلفيات الاجتماعية والسياسية للأحداث الخطابية. إلى جانب ذلك، فإنه وثيق الصلة بدراسات الخطاب حول عدم المساواة والهوية الوطنية. تكشف تصنيفاته التحليلية عن البناء الخطابى لـ "الذات" و "الآخر" في الخطاب إما بشكل إيجابي أو سلبي. كما تدمج الورقة الاستراتيجيات الخطابية الخمس مع نظرية الأفضية الذهنية والتي تمثل الجانب المعرفي للدراسة. تساعد الأفضية الذهنية في توضيح واقع المتحدث و من ثم مقارنته برغباته ومواقفه وصفاته. كما تهدف الدراسة إلى التركيز على كيفية تمثيل استراتيجيات التهميش والمقاومة بشكل استطرادي و إظهار تأثير تلك الاستراتيجيات على بناء هوية أنجلو من خلال الكشف عن الجوانب المعرفية للخطاب. أخيرًا، تكشف الدراسة عن اختلال توازن القوى في العلاقات من خلال خطاب التهميش الذي يتم من خلاله تمثيل التخويف والعنصرية بشكل استطرادي. في مواجهة هذه التقنيات، سلطت التحليلات الضوء على خطاب المقاومة لدى أنجلو.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التحليل التاريخي للخطاب – الهوية القومية – نظرية الأفضية الذهنية – التهميش – المقاومة – القوة

**Mental Spaces of Marginalization and Resistance in
Maya Angelou's *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*
A Discourse-Historical Approach**

Enjy Salah Ibrahim Abdel Salam
Teaching Assistant of English
English Department
Linguistics and Translation Section
Helwan University

2. Background

Maya Angelou was born in 1928 in St. Louis, Missouri. She is an acclaimed American poet, author, and autobiographer. She is known for her series of autobiographies; each of which covers a certain period of her life. *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* is what brought Angelou to international acclaim and recognition. It is considered as a blend between two genres of autobiography and literary fiction. Like the majority of African American writers, the book tackles themes of racism, identity and resistance. In first person, she recounts her childhood incidents and memories from her point of view as a child and her perspective as an adult. The book covers the time period between the 1930s to the 1950s. When her parents got divorced, she and her brother "Bailey Jr." were sent to her paternal Grandmother "Mrs. Annie Henderson" in Arkansas where she experiences the hardships of racism. She becomes insecure as a girl who went through several traumatic experiences (e.g., her parents' divorce and being raped by her stepfather) most of her childhood. As for the setting, it is constantly changing as she goes through debilitating displacement that deeply affects her sense of belonging to a particular home. Between the ages of three and sixteen, Angelou lived in sixteen different homes.

The study aims to show the discursive construction of Angelou's identity in her autobiography by employing the discourse historical approach's (DHA) discursive strategies together with mental space theory. Previous studies have used either DHA's discursive strategies or mental spaces to examine different discourses. This study attempts to use both to better illustrate how discourses of intimidation, bias, empowerment, and resistance are represented discursively and cognitively. The different experiences she goes through define and influence her personality and expression, both of which can be very indicative of her sense of identity

and belonging. By employing the DHA's discursive strategies, the study reveals the discursive construction of social actors and the various processes and actions they go through. To enhance the effect of these strategies, the study illustrates the mental spaces conjured by the writer.

3. Discourse Historical Approach (DHA)

The framework for this study is Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) due to its relevance to identifying power abuse and the way it is enacted by the more powerful and dominant groups in society. Because of its theoretical importance to political problems, the study adopts the Discourse Historical Approach (DHA) (Reisigl, 2018; Reisigl & Wodak, 2009; Wodak, 2002; Wodak, 2009; Wodak, 2011; Wodak & Reisigl, 2001) and focuses on the historical dimension and meaning of the data of which history is an intrinsic factor. The discursive strategies of DHA are remarkable in revealing positive self-representation and negative other-representation.

Wodak (2011) notes that this crucial approach is specifically aimed at realistic implementation as it attempts to review and incorporate relevant background knowledge in analyzing the various layers of discourse, from the wider social-political and historical context to the internal co-text of utterances, taking into account different layers of context. Wodak (2002) states that we can study “the interconnectedness of discursive practices and extra-linguistic social structures [by employing] the principle of triangulation, i.e. various interdisciplinary, methodological and source-specific approaches are combined to investigate a particular discourse phenomenon” considering background information which confirms the importance of 'context' as an inherent part of DHA (p.149).

Wodak & Reisigl (2001) clarify that the context of situation focuses on the place and time, the level of formality, the participants and their positions and ideologies in the communicative event. As for the socio-political and historical context, they point out that it relates to “the history of the discursive event as well as the history to which the discursive topics are related” (p.385). DHA has been used in a number of studies and is described as an approach that is three-dimensional: *contents or topics* of a specific discourse (e.g., discourses with racist, anti-Semitic, or ethicist features), *discursive strategies* (referential, predicational, argumentation,

perspectivation, and intensification/mitigation strategies) and finally “*linguistic means* (as types) and the specific context-dependent *linguistic realisations* (as tokens)” (p.44).

Referential strategies help construct in-groups and out-groups by providing information on the way social actors are named or referred to. These strategies are linguistically realized in *membership categorization devices*, *deictics*, *anthroponyms*, *metaphors*, *metonymies*, *synecdoches* in addition to *verbs* and *nouns* used to denote processes and actions (Reisigl & Wodak, 2001). As for predicational strategies, they highlight social actors' characteristics and features. They are linguistically realized in the stereotypical, evaluative attributions of negative or positive traits (e.g., in the form of *adjectives*, *appositions*, *prepositional phrases*, *relative clauses*, and *particular clauses or groups*). Wodak (2009) argues that nomination and predication strategies cannot be easily distinguished from one another for the latter function to label people either positively or negatively. In other words, Reisigl & Wodak state that “[s]ome of the referential strategies can be considered to be specific forms of predicational strategies” (p.386).

Argumentation strategies are explained by Reisigl & Wodak (2001) in terms of discourse structures of *topoi* and *fallacies*. Additionally, they stress the significance of perspectivation strategies in revealing the point of view of those involved in the speech event through examining *direct speech*, *reported speech* and *different means of creating involvement*. Finally, the intensification and mitigation strategies are equally crucial in highlighting the epistemic status of certain claims through modifying their illocutionary force.

It is worth noting that one of DHA's distinctive features is its relevance to functional pragmatics (Reisigl, 2018). The analytical framework of functional pragmatics offers a distinctive way of dealing with the linguistic realities of discourse for it investigates two dimensions of language forms: “the social differentiation of language functions and the involvement of mental activities” (Sauer, 2002, p.113). Consequently, the incorporation of mental spaces is of considerable relevance since the connection between mental spaces is achieved by a pragmatic function called the *identification principle* as discussed subsequently.

4. Mental Space Theory (MST)

Mental space theory is a cognitive model initiated by Gilles Fauconnier in 1985 and was developed later on (Dancygier et al., 2012; Fauconnier 1994, 1997; Fauconnier & Turner 1998, 2002; Sweetser and Fauconnier 1996;). The theory was originally constructed in correspondence to possible worlds theory in truth-conditional semantics that primarily focus on calculating the truth-value of a sentence. MST went a step further beyond the truth-value of an utterance to explore the cognitive operations in a reader's mind and instigate the way these operations assist meaning construction. Stockwell (2002) argues that MST “offers a unified and consistent means of understanding reference, co-reference, and the comprehension of stories and descriptions whether they are currently real, historical, imagined, hypothesized or happening remotely” (p.96).

MST is described as “breaking the mold of a truth-conditional semantics [for it] blurs the boundary between semantics and pragmatics, with its conception of sentence meaning as a product of a conceptual process – and one which occurs in context” (Brandt, 2013, p.203). This conception is based on Fauconnier's (1994) argument that sentences are studied “not as self-supporting, meaning-bearing forms, but as steps in the complete meaning construction process” (p. xxvii). In other words, Fauconnier emphasizes the importance of a context or the implicit construction of a discourse to interpret a sentence that is examined in isolation. Coulson & Matlock (2009) describe the theory by relating the process of meaning construction to that of partitioning the representation of sentence meaning into domains or spaces.

The *Access Principle* (or *Identification Principle*) is explained by Fauconnier (1997) as one of the language's most notable features since the identification of elements is possible through cognitive constructions and conceptual links. He describes that this principle “states that an expression that names or describes an element in one mental space can be used to *access* a counterpart of that element in another mental space” (p.41). The tenses, he adds, reflect the relationship between the different mental spaces as they are used “to reflect *epistemic distance*, i.e. whether a space is hypothetical or counterfactual with respect to its parent space” (p.2). Accordingly, he differentiates between relative time which is simply “a relation between times of events in the two spaces” and epistemic distance which is “the 'reality' status of one space with respect to another” (p.72).

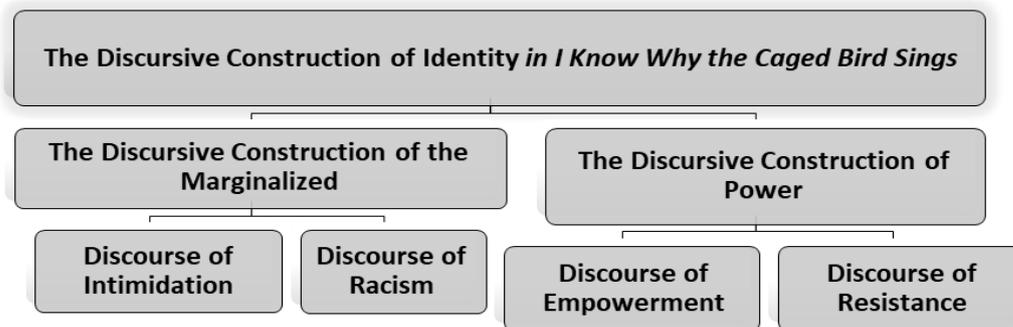
According to Fauconnier (1997, pp. 40- 41), certain grammatical devices “**Space Builders**” can construct and connect different mental spaces. These include *prepositional phrases*, *adverbials*, *subject verb complexes*, and *conditionals*. Based on the kind of space builders used, Fauconnier (1994) classifies mental spaces based on their kind into four main types: *time*, *space*, *domain*, and *hypothetical*. However, these four types do not cover all conceptual structures due to the diversity of mental spaces, Brandt (2013) argues. She explains that conceptual structures can be established by expressions of, for example, “emotive investment (cf. e.g., desire spaces) as well as aspectual structure and epistemic investment (e.g., belief spaces, factual spaces, hypothetical spaces, counterfactual spaces) among other constitutive facets of the mind's organization of thought contents” (p.207). Consequently, she states that to date there is no comprehensive account of the different conceptual organizational structures with respect to space building. Nonetheless, there is a wide range of mental space types and space builders that can be extracted from the context of cognitive analysis besides the non-exhaustive lists and classifications.

5. Methodology

The data is selected from Maya Angelou’s 2013 autobiography *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*. The selected excerpts are those which reflect strategies of marginalization such as intimidation and racism as well as strategies of empowerment and resistance. The analysis focuses on examining the selected examples in terms of the five discursive strategies which either positively or negatively represent the social actors, actions and processes involved in the selected discourses. Referential strategies are in bold type and predications are underlined. In addition, mental spaces representations are illustrated and incorporated with the DHA analysis by revealing the conceptual base underlying certain statements that are representative of the discourse in question.

6. Analysis and Discussion

The following figure illustrates the organization of the analysis:



5.1 The Discursive Construction of the Marginalized

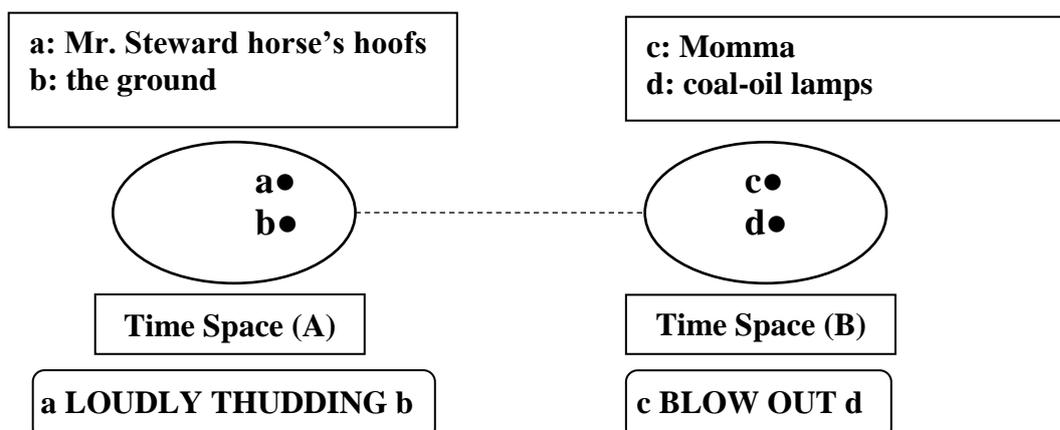
The data in this section is classified into two main subdivisions: discourse of intimidation and that of racism. Each discourse is discussed in the light of the five discursive strategies as well as mental spaces.

(a) 5.1.1 Discourse of Intimidation

This section focuses on the different forms of intimidation Angelou and her family were subjected to.

1. “Immediately, while **his [used-to-be sheriff] horse's hoofs** were still loudly thudding the ground, **Momma** blew out the coal-oil lamps....

We were told to take the potatoes and onions out of their bins.... Then with a tedious and fearful slowness **Uncle Willie** gave me his rubber-tipped cane and bent down to get into the now-enlarged empty bin. It took forever before **he** lay down flat, and then **we** covered him with potatoes and onions, layer upon layer, like a casserole. **Grandmother** knelt praying in the darkened Store.” (p.18)



This example is mentioned when the used-to-be sheriff,

Mr. Steward, drove into Annie Henderson's yard to warn her of the KKK's night ride. He mentioned that a black man "messed with" a white woman and told her to make Willie hide. The temporal adverbs "immediately" and "still" and conjunction "while" construct the two time spaces (A) and (B). These adverbs are used to signal the intensity of fear and terror Mrs. Henderson felt by showing the speed with which she acted upon Mr. Steward's warning. The difference between the elements in the two spaces shows how the same time dimension is shared, but experienced in different ways and in turn reflective of different realities. The way Angelou describes the end of the conversation between her grandmother and Mr. Steward highlights the latter's strength and power - by mentioning the loud thudding of his horse's hoofs on the ground- as opposed to the former's intimidation -by blowing out the Store's lamps.

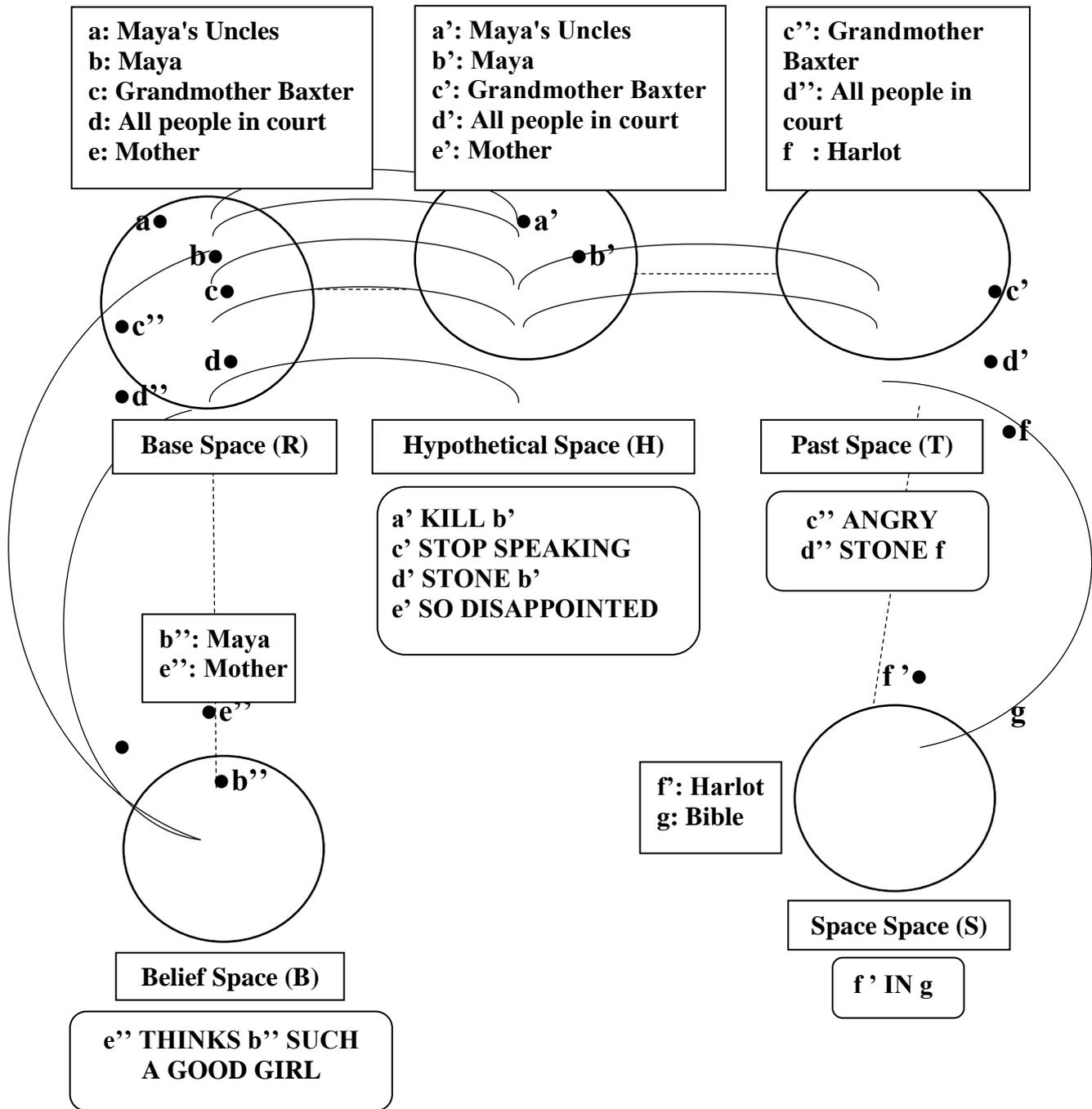
Referential strategies are evident in Angelou's use of the kinship terms "Momma", "Uncle", and "grandmother" which direct the reader's attention that her family are all at risk. Perspectivation strategies can be noticed in the use of the spatial deictic locatives "out of their bins" and "into the now-enlarged empty bin" to highlight the contrast between the contents of the bins (i.e., potatoes and onions as opposed to a human being). In addition, the way Angelou emphasizes the helplessness of her crippled uncle reveals her perspective. She mentions that he gave her "his rubber-tipped cane" which made him in control of his movement as a sign of relinquishing control altogether. The simile "like a casserole" dehumanizes her uncle since he occupied the same place that contained potatoes and onions and was covered with them.

The use of prepositional phrases in this example is also very reflective of the sense of intimidation and the humiliation associated with it. The prepositional phrase “with a tedious and fearful slowness” is an example of relational deixis (perspectivization) since it includes evaluative words which describe the way he got into the bin. In the same way, the prepositional phrase “with potatoes and onions” shed the light on the humiliating position an innocent black man took for fear of being punished for something he did not do. This effect is intensified by the time adverb “forever” to emphasize the difficulty of lying down for Uncle Willie whom she describes his body as Z-shaped earlier.

Moreover, predicational strategies in the verbs “bent down”, “lay down”, “covered”, and the verbal complement “knelt praying” reflect both the humiliation and intimidation Angelou’s uncle and grandmother felt. Finally, the adjective “darkened” (instead of “dark”) in the spatial locative “in the darkened Store” reflects Angelou’s awareness that being in the dark is a conscious choice that her grandmother made by blowing out the coal-oil lamps to hide from the night riders.

In the light of the above discursive strategies, it can be seen that Angelou negatively represents her family as opposed to Mr. Steward whose horse hoofs are loudly thudding the ground in which her uncle hides. The sense of fear is instilled in Angelou’s identity from a very early age and affects her subsequently.

2. “My uncles would kill me and Grandmother Baxter would stop speaking, as she often did when she was angry. And all those people in the court would stone me as they had stoned the harlot in the Bible. And Mother, who thought I was such a good girl, would be so disappointed.” (p.85)



In this example, Angelou describes her thoughts during the trial of Mr. Freeman, her stepfather, for raping her. The unnerving experience and the amount of pressure that she felt from Mr. Freeman's lawyer besides her fear from the reaction of her mother's family and all the people in court intimidated her from admitting that Mr. Freeman had molested her before the time he raped her. Her mind constructs a series of hypothetical scenarios in case she said the truth. Her sense of intimidation is quite evident in the above illustration of mental spaces.

Given that nothing is happening from any of the base space elements shows how young Angelou was totally driven by her fears at that moment. Her fear is represented in the hypothetical spaces in which all of the passive elements in the base space are threatening to Maya. The threats are more related to her family members which are referred to using the kinship terms “my uncles, grandmother, and mother”. Predicational strategies can be seen in the verbs used in space (H) such as “kill, stop speaking, and stone” besides the intensified adjective “so disappointed”, which show how she was overpowered by these hypothetical threats. Intensifying strategies are also manifest in Angelou’s use of polysyndeton (i.e., the repetitive use of ‘and’) to enumerate the threats. Besides, the use of “would” conveys her high degree of certainty that she is going to be punished which in turn emphasizes her fear.

In this way, the aforementioned discursive strategies reveal Angelou’s negative other presentation since she negatively portrays her family members’ and the people in court reactions towards her saying the truth. The deeply instilled fear in Angelou’s identity stops her from saying the truth. It makes her fear her own family as she does the whites. She grows up fearing lynchings by extremist white groups; however, this fear extends to include death at the hands of her uncles.

However, Angelou gives weight to her hypothetical fears by relating them to a past time space, constructed by “when”, in which her maternal grandmother actually stop speaking when angry and biblical incident of stoning Harlot by people like the ones in court. Taking into account the way Angelou was raised by her devout Christian paternal grandmother, stories in the bible are highly credible for her. The space space is built by the preposition phrase “in the bible”. Hence, anchoring the hypothetical space to a past time space and a space space validates her fears and allows them to intimidate her from telling the truth. Her reference to these past spaces can also be understood in the light of argumentative strategies, particularly in terms of the topos of history.

In addition, the belief space Angelou creates for her mother is tied to her reality, but epistemically shifted through the use of the past tense “thought”. Her conception of her mother’s beliefs can be related to perspectivation strategies as this reveals her perspective and perception of herself in the eyes of her mother. Thus, any change in her mother’s belief

space would affect Maya's reality. In other words, she does not want her mother to stop believing that she is a good girl. Her search for love and approval from her mother is another strong reason for young Maya to lie at the trial. Finally, it is also worth noting that the effect of the epistemically shifted hypothetical space (i.e., marked by past tense) is minimized by Angelou's reliance on past time space and belief space.

(b) 5.1.2 Discourse of Racism

Examples in this section illustrate the different ways racism was enacted on different levels and how black people dealt with the oppression they encountered in their daily life.

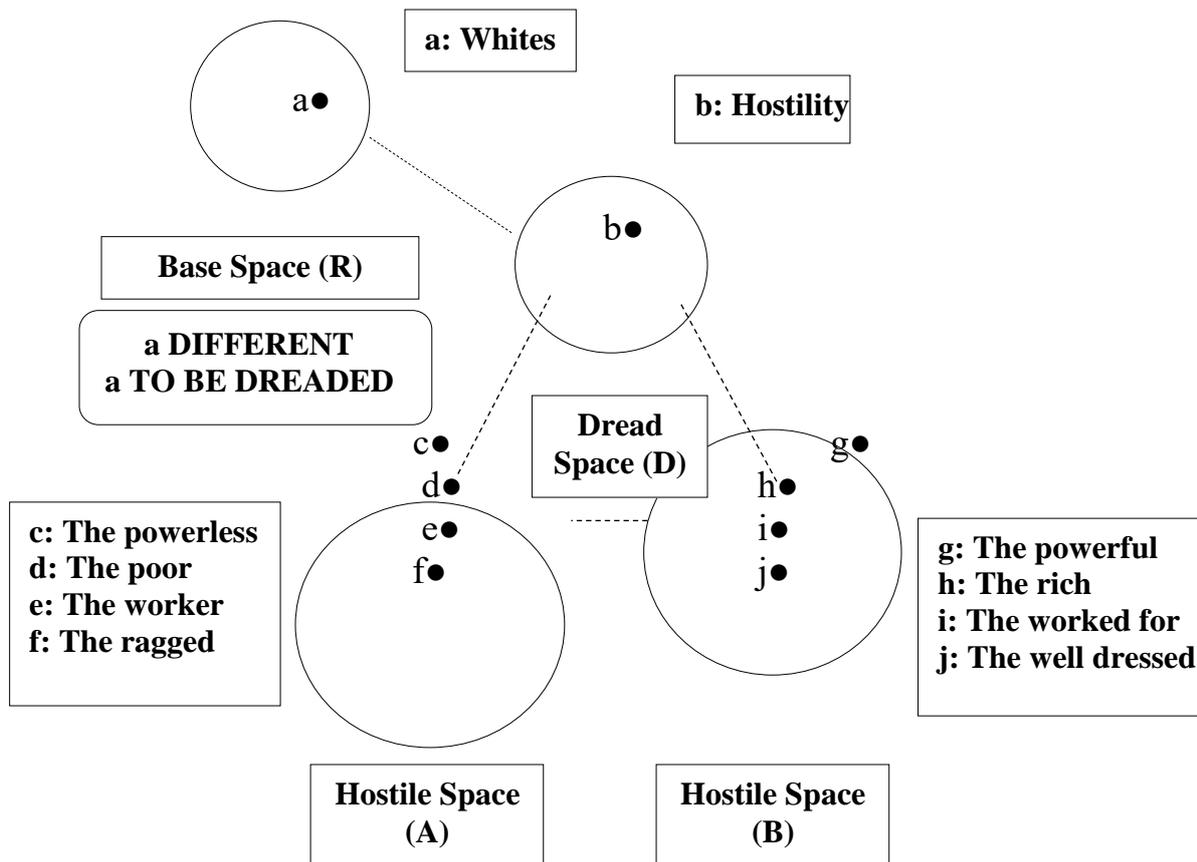
1. Other than that **they** [whites] were different, to be dreaded, and in that dread was included **the hostility of the powerless against the powerful, the poor against the rich, the worker against the worked for and the ragged against the well dressed**. (p.25)

The previous example highlights the gap between the two races by negative self-representation and positive-other representation through referential strategies. In the base space, Angelou simply mentions that white people are different and have to be feared. Her representation of the dichotomy between the whites and blacks can be analyzed in terms of referential strategies since she uses econonyms (i.e., anthroponyms referring to people in terms of their possessions) such as “the powerless, the poor, the ragged, the powerful, the rich, and the well dressed” and professionyms (i.e., anthroponyms referring to people in terms of their professions) such as “the worker and the worked for”. This series of negative embedded spaces is explained by breaking down the hostility space into two forces against each other. These two forces are not described in terms of their attributions rather than races.

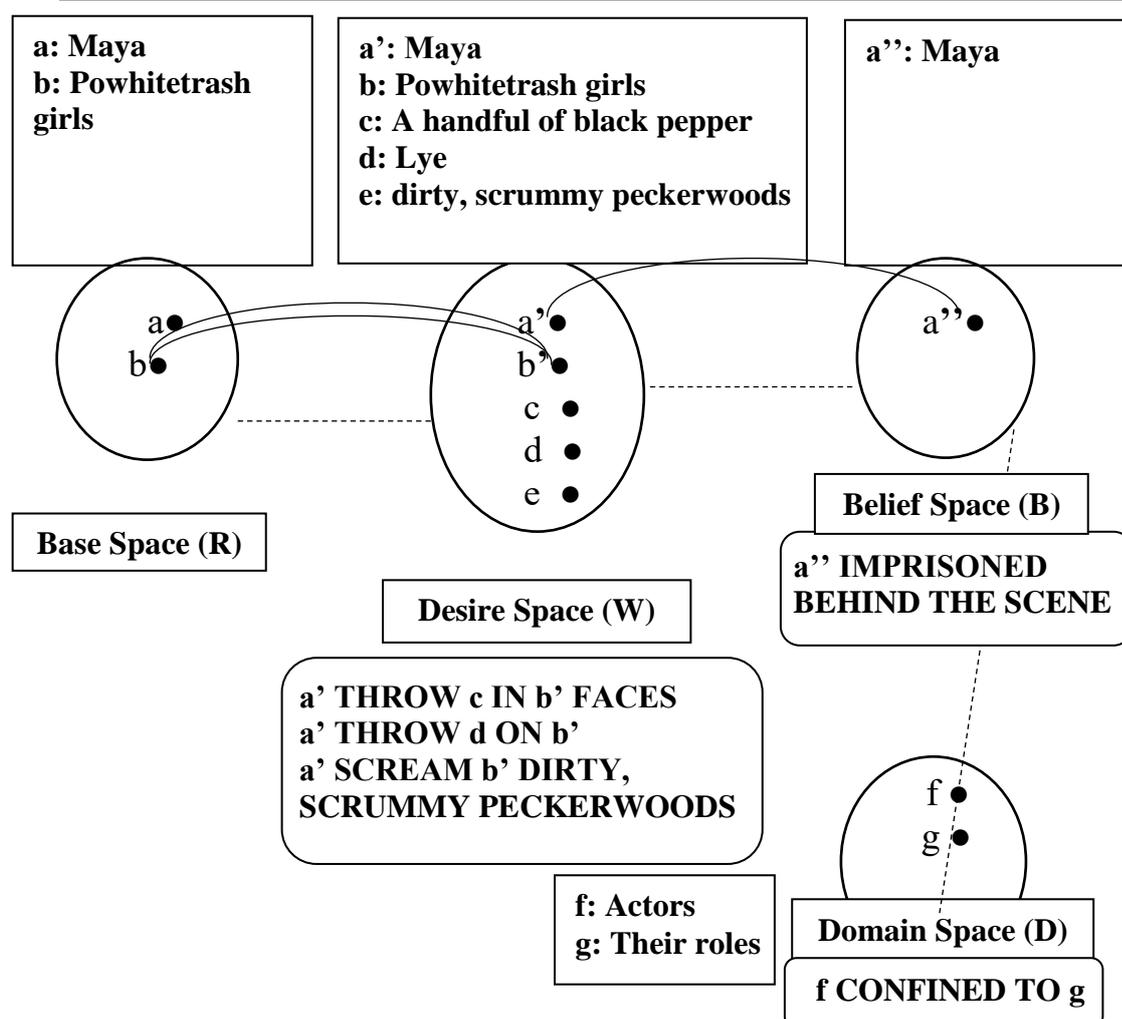
In space (A), Angelou serializes the qualifications of each group against its equivalent in the other group one by one to clarify the wide gap between them. The elements in space (A) portray black people as less powerful and inferior than their counterparts in space (B) justifying their dread. The elements in all spaces are not repeated and hence not joined together reflecting segregation. The connectors between spaces are all based on ideas of fear and animosity. In addition, Angelou's use of passive structure “to be dreaded” shows the pervasiveness of the black people's perception of the whites besides it fits the marginalized and inferior status the statement suggests. Angelou extends the idea of dreading the whites in the base space by building a space space through

**Mental Spaces of Marginalization and Resistance in
Maya Angelou's I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings
A Discourse–Historical Approach**

the spatial locative “in that dread”, thereby making dread an independent space within which another space resides. The subsequent space of hostility is constructed by the verb “included”.



2. “I wanted to throw a handful of black pepper in their faces, to throw lye on them, to scream that they were dirty, scummy peckerwoods, but I knew I was as clearly imprisoned behind the scene as the actors outside were confined to their roles.” (p.31)



This example describes Maya's feelings as a little girl watching the powhitetrash girls taunt her grandmother and how that made anger build up inside her. The predicational strategies represented in the use of “throw lye”, “scream”, and “dirty scrummy peckerwoods” reveal Angelou’s feelings of hatred towards the whites. In this way, she negatively represents the powhitetrash girls. The desire space is built by the verb “wanted” which reveals her stifled desires. What stops Angelou from actually doing anything to the girls is her knowledge. The belief space, constructed by the verb “know”, reveals the knowledge that hinders Angelou’s acting out. Both of the base space and desire space in which Maya is suppressed include her and the girls. However, she is alone in the belief space mirroring her mental isolation since she could not communicate her thoughts or wishes to anyone at that moment. The use of the contrast discourse marker “but” is reflective of this transition from wanting to act out in the presence of the girls to knowing that cannot by herself. Her loneliness in the belief space is also represented in the way she describes herself as “imprisoned” and distanced “behind the scene”. This simile also conveys her sense of helplessness as she resembles the

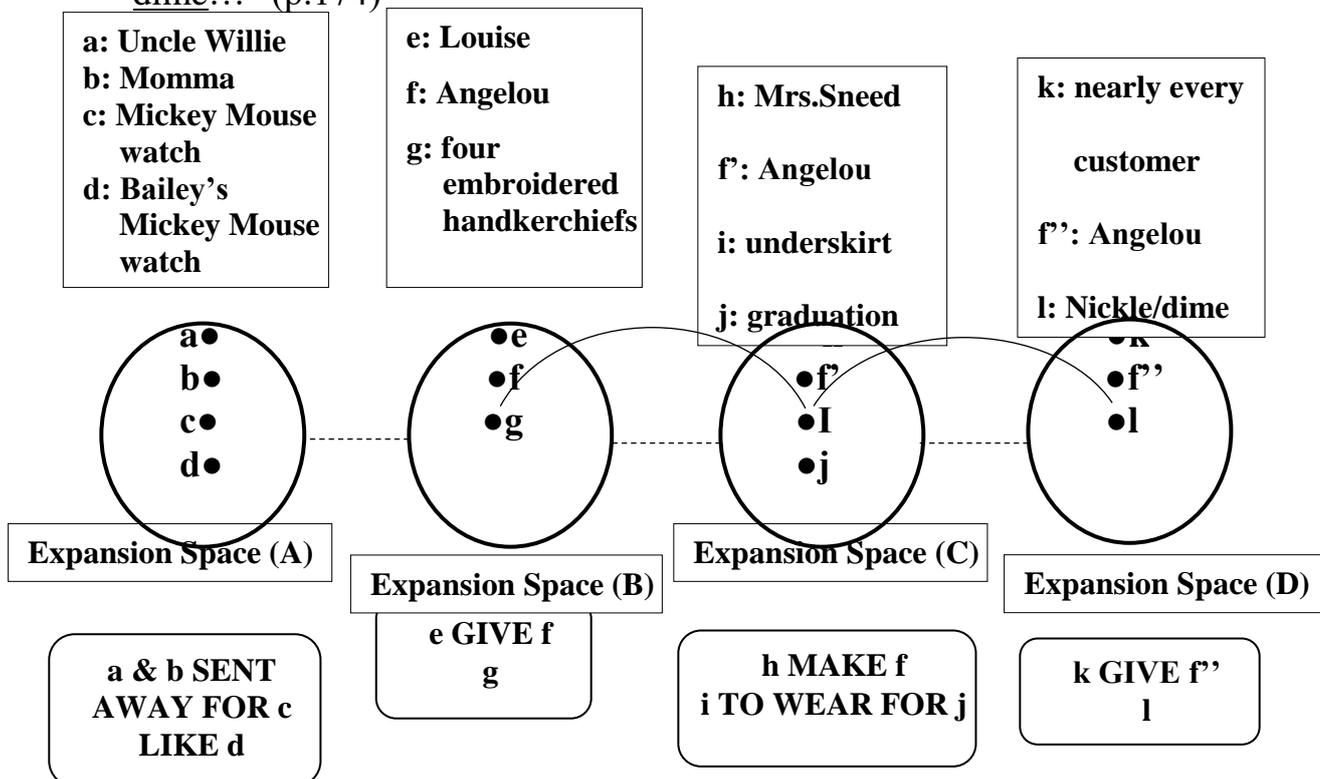
strength of her confinement by referring to the domain of acting in which actors are confined by their roles. In this way, she implies that her role or more generally the blacks' role in society was to stay passive and silent.

5.2 The Discursive Construction of Power

(c) 5.2.1 Discourse of Empowerment

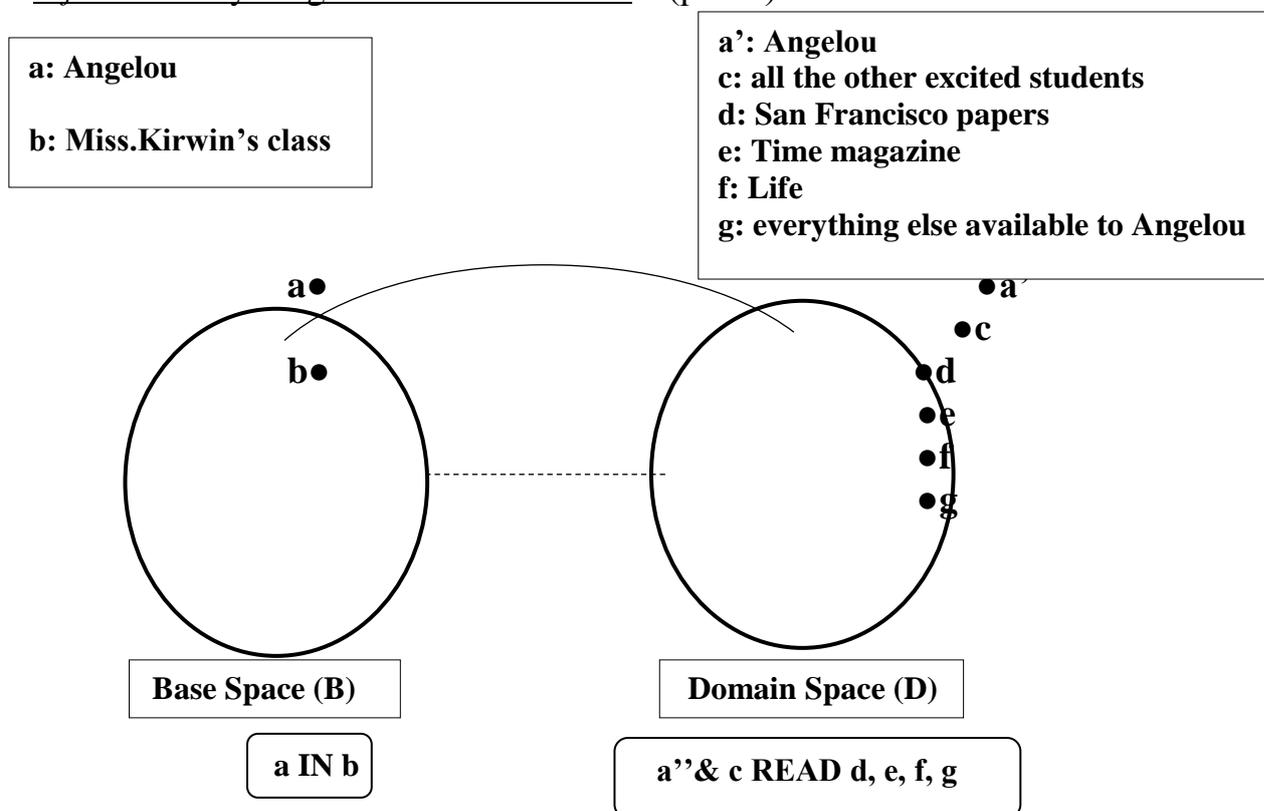
This section discusses Angelou's empowerment through education and literature as well as her family, particularly her mother. Through literature, Angelou felt powerful and recognized and overcame her mutism after being raped. Besides, Angelou's family have positively influenced her at certain moments in her life. She admires the powerful character of her grandmother and loves having Bailey, her big brother, whom she can share everything with. Her mother's beauty and self-sufficient character empowered Maya who eventually is inspired her to follow in the footsteps of her mum. The following examples demonstrate the way Angelou's sense of empowerment is expressed in discourse.

1. **“Uncle Willie and Momma had sent away for a Mickey Mouse watch like Bailey's. Louise gave me four embroidered handkerchiefs.... Mrs. Sneed, the minister's wife, made me an underskirt to wear for graduation, and nearly every customer gave me a nickle or maybe even a dime...”** (p.174)



In the above example, Angelou positively represents her family and the black community in terms of their support and encouragement. Four expansion spaces are illustrated to demonstrate these positive feelings she felt from her uncle, grandmother, best friend, Mrs. Sneed and nearly all of the Store’s customers when she passed her exams and is about to graduate junior high school. Predicational strategies can be seen in the use of the verbs “*sent away, gave, and made*” which Angelou is their indirect object or receiver of various gifts from members of her family and community. The use of the simile “like Bailey’s” shows the family’s concern for equality between Bailey and Maya. In addition, the use of “even” is an intensification strategy that highlights every customer’s keenness to give Maya something to support her through her journey of education. The support Angelou receives positively affects her identity by instilling a zest for knowledge and education. The elements in the multiple expansion spaces provide details of the various gifts Angelou got for her graduation. This shows the value of education for Black people who empowered their children to move to a higher ground by giving them gifts when they move from one grade to another and when they graduate.

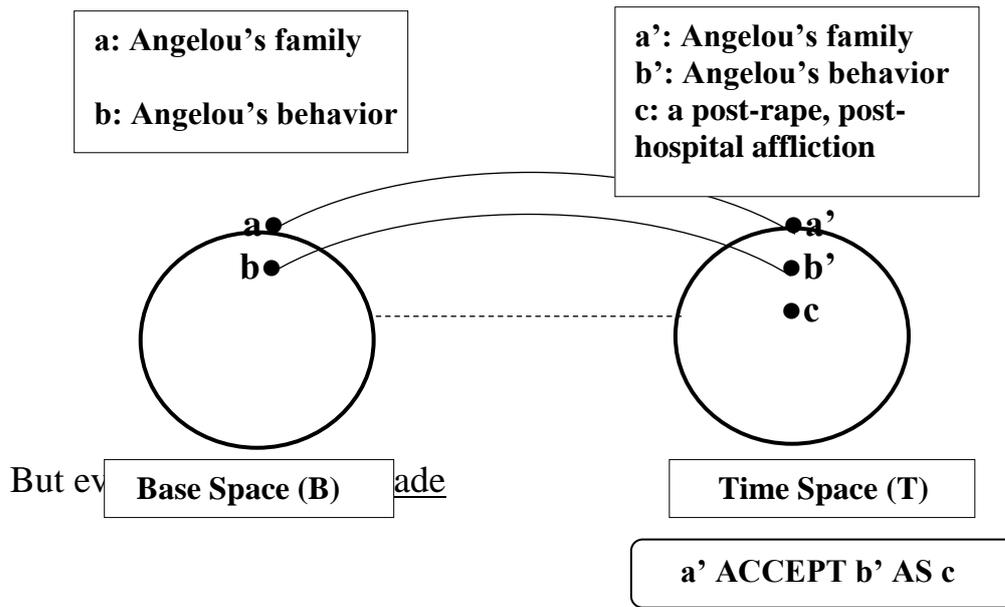
2. “After the first two weeks in her [Miss Kirwin] class, **I, along with all the other excited students**, read the San Francisco papers, *Time* magazine, *Life* and everything else available to me.” (p.112)



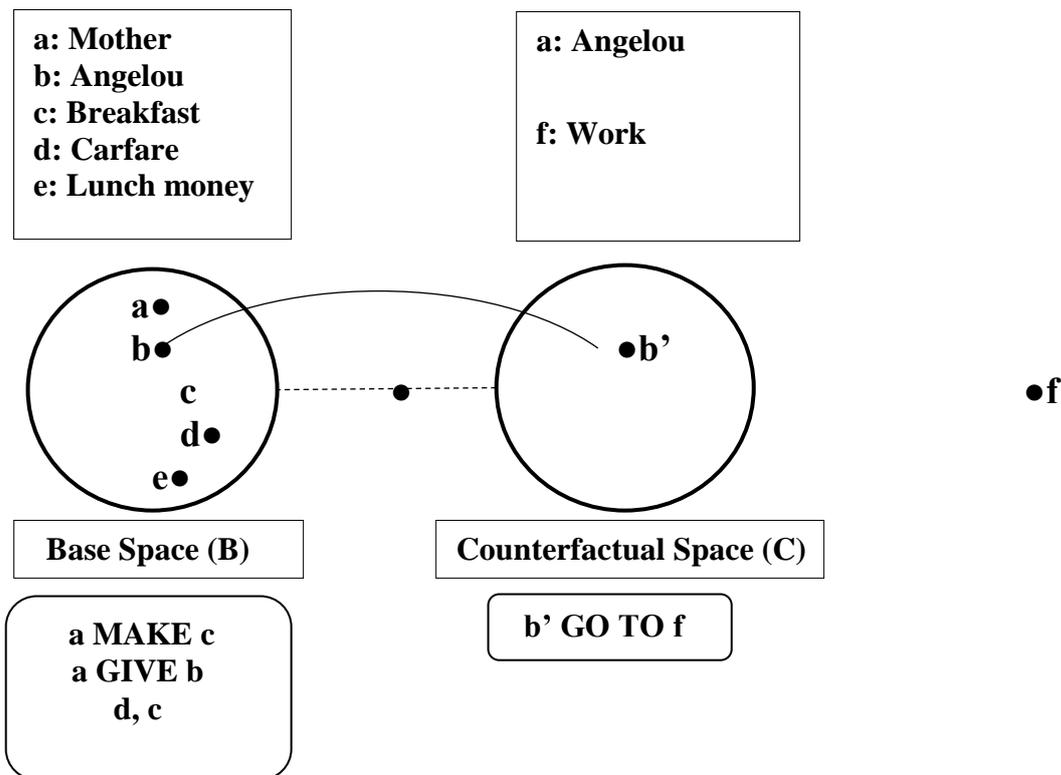
Miss Kirwin, Maya's teacher at the George Washington High School, is a white teacher who treats Angelou and the other two black students fairly showing no favoritism towards their white peers. Perspectivation strategies can be noticed in Angelou's precise specification of the temporal and spatial deixis which gives a sense of vividness and immediacy to her school memories. The base space in the above example comprises both a time space and a domain space. The time space is constructed by the time locatives "after the first two weeks", whereas the domain space is built by "in her class". The time locative is reflective of the teacher's magical effect on her students who started reading avidly just after two weeks in her class. As for the domain space, it is primarily concerned with education and knowledge. The elements in this space have the roles of readers and reading materials, respectively. The number of the elements representing the readings reveal the various sources to which Miss Kirwin's students are introduced. This amount of knowledge available outside school text books is mind broadening and scope widening for Angelou and her colleagues. It is also worth noting that the far-reaching effect of Miss Kirwin is expressed in Angelou's use of "all" and "everything else" intensifying her and all of the other students' interest in knowledge and reading. The effect of Miss Kirwin has also affected Angelou's identity as she became passionate about knowledge, which she knew is not restricted to the school's textbook.

3. In the first weeks **my family** accepted my behavior as a post-rape, post-hospital affliction. (p.88)

This example positively represents Angelou's family reaction to her selective mutism after rape. The deictic locative "in the first few weeks" which constructs a time space within the base space presupposes a different reality later on. It limits their acceptance to the first weeks following her rape. During this time, however, Angelou's maternal family understood and accepted her condition as a post-traumatic effect of rape. During this time of acceptance, Angelou felt accepted and understood by her family.



4. breakfast, gave me carfare and lunch (p.269) money, as if I were going to work. (pp.269-270)



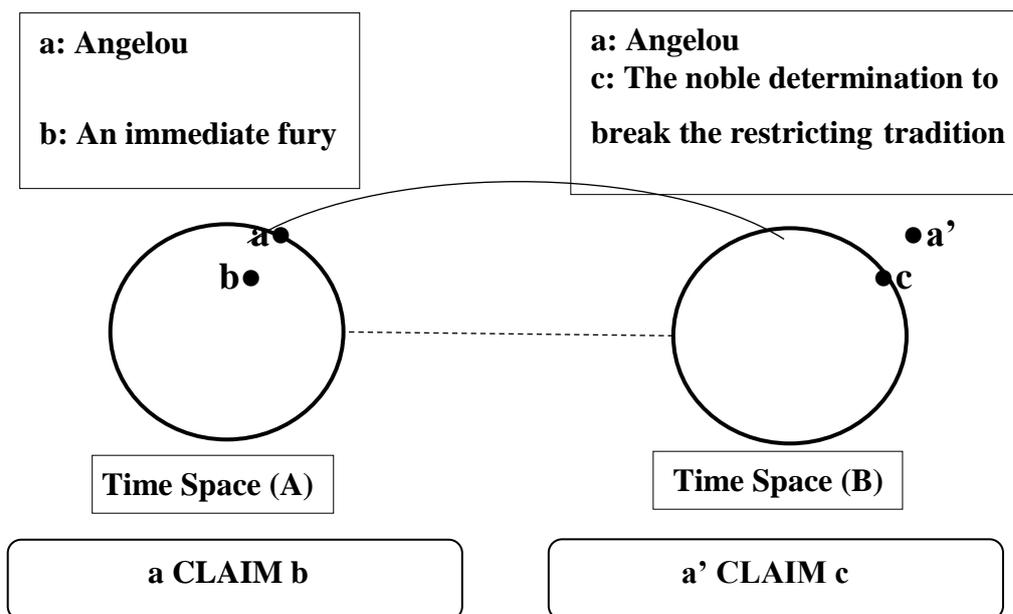
When Angelou decided to get a job as a streetcar conductorette, she was met with subtle racism since it was not clearly stated that black people cannot apply. Instead, she was avoided and met with reluctance when she asked to meet the personnel manager. Despite the repetitive disappointments at the railway office, her mother behavior in the base

space is very much similar to how she would behave if Angelou actually goes to work. She positively represents her mother through the use of the intensifying adjective “every” within the temporal deictic expression “every morning” to stress her mother’s devotion and attentiveness to her needs. The simile expressed by “as if” creates the counterfactual space in which Maya has a job that she goes to. Her mother’s behavior in the base space is incongruent with reality and is more like the counterfactual space. Therefore, acting like Maya has actually got the job empowers her and encourages her not to give up on her dream. The two spaces are in the same past tense; hence not epistemically shifted to signal the possibility of achieving what the counterfactual space contains.

6.2.2 Discourse of Resistance

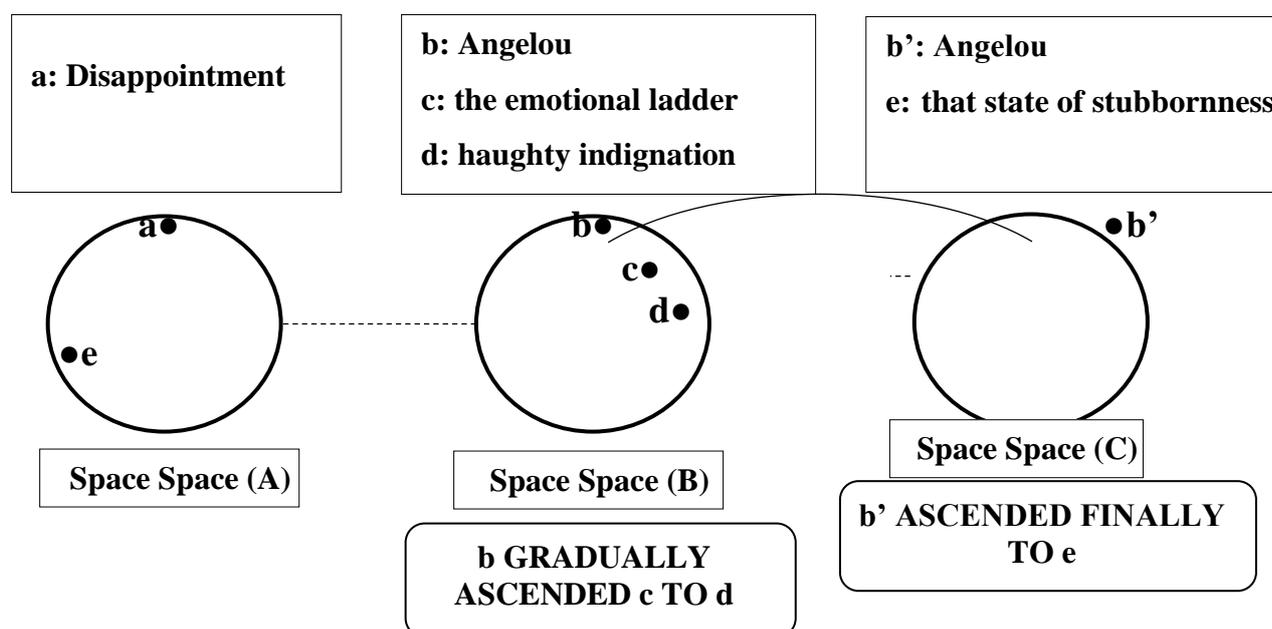
The theme of resistance is intrinsic in Angelou’s autobiography as it takes many forms. Black people met white prejudice sometimes with subversive resistance and others with blatant or overt resistance. The following examples demonstrate the ways through which Angelou resisted the oppression practiced her when applying for the job of a streetcar conductorette.

1. “I would like to claim an immediate fury which was followed by the noble determination to break the restricting tradition.” (p.266)



When Angelou told her mother about the job she wants to get, the latter told her that they do not hire colored people. In this example, she demonstrates how her feelings changed upon hearing this from rage to resistance, Angelou uses predicational strategies to describe her feelings of resistance towards the “restricting tradition” by claiming “immediate fury” and “noble determination to break”. The time spaces represent this emotional shift and are constructed by the verb “followed” which shows the chronological order of Angelou’s feelings. Time space (A) is identified by Angelou as one in which she felt rage. However, as time passes, this rage is subsequently followed by her sense of resistance to break the tradition of not hiring colored people. The time spaces demonstrate the different reactions to feeling rejected because of one’s color, besides showing how resistance is preceded and initiated by feeling outraged.

2. “From disappointment, I gradually ascended the emotional ladder to haughty indignation, and finally to that state of stubbornness...” (p.266)



This example is an extension of the previous one as it also demonstrates the emotional changes Angelou felt when she knew that the Railway company does not hire colored people. She uses prepositions such as “from” and “to” spatially to describe her emotional transition from the state of “disappointment” to that of “haughty indignation” and finally to “stubbornness”. In other words, spatial deixis is used in this form to express her exact feelings from her point of view, creating a sense of involvement (i.e., perspectivation strategies). In addition, predicational

strategies are manifest in Angelou's use of the adverb "gradually" and the verb "ascended" to create a sense of inner emotional escalation which eventually ends in resistance.

Besides, the example constructs three space spaces since Angelou describes the shifting in her emotions by mapping them to spatial constructs. The first space is constructed by the preposition "from" which signals the beginning of the transformative process and includes one element "disappointment". Space (A) does not even include Angelou and this can be interpreted in terms of empowerment as she does not share the same space with disappointment. It can also be reflective of the very limited time she spent in disappointment that it is almost nonexistent. The second time space is constructed by the adverb "gradually". In this space, she describes her movement using the action verb "ascended" and her next emotional destination as "haughty indignation". Her movement to fury is positively represented as "ascending" or rising rather than falling. Hence, she aims to convey that this kind of rage is positive as it pushes her up towards persistence. This sense of determination is represented in the third and final space space (C) as "that state of stubbornness".

7. Conclusion

The current paper has employed DHA's discursive strategies, particularly referential and predicational strategies, alongside mental spaces to examine the discourses of marginalization and power in Maya Angelou's autobiography *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*. Marginalization is described in terms of discourses of intimidation and racism. While DHA's strategies have highlighted verbs, nouns, adjectives, similes, deictics, prepositional phrases and intensifiers that signal Angelou and her family's fear and powerlessness as opposed to the whites. Such elements have also been utilized in Angelou's discursive construction of power which is illustrated in terms of the discourses of empowerment and resistance.

The discursive strategies together with mental spaces have helped to better illustrate meaning discursively and cognitively. The analyses have shown that referential and predicational strategies are employed to negatively represent the whites and her family in the discourse of marginalization, and positively represent her family, the black community and the rare educator "Miss Kirwin" in that of power. However, there are

instances of negative-self presentation through which Angelou conveys the humiliating status of her black community as in her positive representation of the whites as opposed to the blacks using eponyms and professionyms.

Illustrating mental spaces have also revealed the underlying cognitive structure of the discourses in question. Time and hypothetical spaces are constructed to express Angelou's feeling of fear and terror. The topos of history has been found to be related to time spaces which are built to validate Angelou's fears of her family's reactions to her saying the truth behind her rape at court. She feared saying that her stepfather had previously molested her due to her fear of her uncles' violence, her maternal grandmother's silent treatment, and changing her mother's perception of her being a good girl. This situation is reflective of the pervasiveness of her fear on her identity as it expanded to include both the whites and members of her family.

Moreover, the construction of time spaces splits the seemingly shared reality into two versions: the black's and the white's, as their time is lived and felt differently. Belief and desire spaces reveal Angelou's suppressed thoughts about herself and her position as well as her suppressed feeling to wreck vengeance on the whites. On the contrary, time and space spaces are also used in the discursive construction of power to show her family's support post-rape, her mother's endorsement when she was trying to get a job, and the emotional escalation which is expressed in spatial terms revealing the smooth transition from disappointment to resistance and challenging the stereotypical norms. The familial support has also impacted Angelou's identity in a positive manner. Her mother's support inspired her to be persistent and resist the status quo.

The temporal and deictic elements represent a common factor of perspectivation and time mental spaces. Similarly, time spaces have paired well with topos of history since the element of time is an inextricable part of history. Along the same line, expansion spaces are constructed by the multiple social actors denoted by referential strategies. Such spaces helped enumerate the different forms of material support and encouragement Angelou received when she passed her exams. Hence, it can be clear that the use of the DHA together with the mental space theory has enriched the analyses by revealing the cognitive illustration underlying the discursive event. Accordingly, employing the DHA and MST can be helpful in analyzing different genres, such as political and media discourse, to reveal the underlying conceptual structure of political figures and/or presenters' utterances.

References

Primary Source:

Angelou, M. (1969). *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*. Bantam Books.

Secondary Sources:

- Brandt, L. (2013). *The Communicative Mind: A Linguistic Exploration of Conceptual Integration and Meaning Construction*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Coulson, S., & Matlock, T. (2009). Cognitive science. In S. Dominiek, J.O. Östman and J. Verschueren (Eds.), *Cognition and Pragmatics* (pp. 86–109). John Benjamins.
- Dancygier, B., Sanders, J., & Vandelanotte, L. (2012). Textual choices in discourse: Emerging views from cognitive linguistics. In B. Dancygier, J. Sanders, & L. Velanotte (Eds.), *Textual choices in discourse: A view from cognitive linguistics* (Vol. 40, pp. 185-191). John Benjamins.
- Fauconnier, G. (1985/1994). *Mental Spaces: Aspects of Meaning Construction in Natural Language*. Cambridge University Press.
- Fauconnier, G. (1997). *Mappings in Thought and Language*. Cambridge University Press.
- Fauconnier, G., & Turner, M. (1998). Conceptual integration networks. *Cognitive Science*, 22(2), 133–187. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0364-0213\(99\)80038-X](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0364-0213(99)80038-X)
- Fauconnier, G., & Turner, M. (2002). *The way we think: Conceptual blending and the mind's hidden complexities*. New York: Basic Books.
- Reisigl, M. (2018). The Discourse-Historical Approach. In J. Flowerdew & J. E. Richardson (Eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of Critical Discourse Studies* (pp.44-59). Routledge.
- Reisigl, M. & Wodak, R. (2001). *Discourse and Discrimination: Rhetorics of Racism and Anti-Semitism*. Routledge.
- Reisigl, M., & Wodak, R. (2009). The discourse-historical approach (DHA). In R. Wodak, & M. Meyer (Eds.), *Methods for Critical Discourse Analysis* (2nd ed., pp. 87-121). Sage.
- Sauer, C. (2002). Ceremonial text and talk: a functional-pragmatic approach. In P. Chilton & C. Schäffner (Eds.), *Fragmented Identities: Redefining and Recontextualizing National Identity* (pp.111-142). John Benjamins.
- Stockwell, P. (2002). *Cognitive Poetics: An introduction*. Routledge.
- Sweetser, E. & Fauconnier, G. (1996). Cognitive links and domains: basic aspects of mental space theory. In G. Fauconnier & E. Sweetser (Eds.), *Spaces, Worlds and Grammar* (pp. 1-28). The University of Chicago Press.
- Wodak, R. (2002). Fragmented identities: Redefining and recontextualizing national identity. In P. Chilton & C. Schäffner (Eds.), *Politics as Text and Talk: Analytic Approaches to Political Discourse* (pp.143-169). John Benjamins.

- Wodak, R. (2009). The Semiotics of Racism: A critical discourse analysis. In J. Renkema (Ed.), *Discourse Of Course* (pp.311-326). John Benjamins.
- Wodak, R. (2011). *The Discourse of Politics in Action: Politics as Usual* (2nd ed.). Palgrave.
- Wodak, R. & Reisigl, M. (2001). Discourse and racism. In D. Schiffrin, D. Tannen & H. Hamilton (Eds.), *The Handbook of Discourse Analysis* (pp.372-397). Blackwell Publishers.

**Mental Spaces of Marginalization and Resistance in
Maya Angelou's I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings
A Discourse–Historical Approach**