



## **Structuring Racist Ideologies in Stephen Crane’s “A Dark Brown Dog”: A Critical Discourse Analysis**

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### **Abstract**

This paper deals with the study of how racist ideologies are constructed in Crane’s “A Dark Brown Dog” using the CDA framework. Benefitting from the approaching between literature and linguistics (Maingueneau, 2010), it focuses on the linguistic examination of the (re)construction of whiteness and blackness based on the assumption that racism is: a social, a discursive, and an ideological construct. This tri-dimensional construct is treated within a theoretical triangulation ranging from cognition, society, and discourse (Van Dijk, 1992, 1995, and 2006). Based on the view of discourse as a process of coding and decoding of meaning, the text of this story is explored at various levels of language use. These levels are covered under three sections: a) contextual analysis focuses on the study of how the depiction of the setting and the characters serves to draw the scene of racial inequality; b) textual analysis deals with the way narration contributes to the (re)production of racism (Van Dijk, 1993b); and c) identity analysis is devoted to the study of how racial identity evolves across generations. The results showed that: first, the representation of the characters highlights the binary structure of the Southern American society marked by the inferiority of the blacks and the superiority of the whites. These societal features are detected through the study of the context. Second, the way actions and events are narrated reflects the unequal distribution of power between blacks and whites. The existing asymmetry of power is traced in the duality of punishment and obedience. This social status quo is maintained by a binary system of ideologies (white superiority vs. black inferiority). Third, it is proved that racist ideologies and race relations evolve across generations depending on: the amalgamations happening at the family level, the evolution of society, and the evolution of its legislations.

**Keywords:** Introversion, Extroversion, Tolerance of Ambiguity, Willingness to Communicate, and Personality Traits.

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## **Introduction**

The study of how racist ideologies are structured in text and talk and how relations of power and domination are established and maintained among racial groups are at the crossroads of many research projects and papers. Indeed, researchers interested in this field dealt with racism in different types of discourse like media discourse (Hartman and Husband, 1974 and Van Dijk, 1989a), everyday conversations (Van Dijk, 1984 and Essed, 1991), textbooks (Van Dijk, 1987), political discourse (Van Dijk, 1993a and Van Dijk and Wodak, 2000), and storytelling (Van Dijk, 1993b). While reading Van Dijk's work on how stories and storytelling contribute to the (re)production of racism, I found that literary discourse is another kind of discourse that has its power to reflect social realities of racism, power, and domination. However, the study of how racist ideologies are structured in literature entails working out a well-framed theoretical approach that takes into consideration the following three dimensions of analysis: first, the nature of literary language; second, the triangular relation between literature, society, and cognition (mental models); and third, the connection between the text and its context. These three factors are important in that they serve for the comprehension of how literary texts are produced to visualize such a social reality at a given historical period.

Indeed, the general concept of "discourse analysis" has become an umbrella term that covers other disciplines of discourse and language studies like critical discourse analysis (Fairclough 1989 and 1995, Fowler, 1991, Van Dijk, 1991 and 1993c, and Wodak, 1996 and 2007), political discourse analysis (Thompson, 1987 and Chilton, 1985 and 2010), positive discourse analysis (Martin, 2004 and 2008), and literary discourse analysis. In reality, the concept of "literary discourse" denotes a shift from the traditional ways of dealing with the analysis of literary texts into the linguistic investigation of literary discourse. Since the 1960's, the relation between literature and linguistics witnessed a remarkable evolution; researchers interested in the study of literature showed a movement from the pragmatic view of literary language towards the linguistic view of literature (Maingueneau, 2010). The approaching between literature and linguistics made it easy to use the multiplicity of theoretical approaches that linguistics offered to the study of discourse and language in use in the study of literary discourse which is also another means of shaping and re-shaping human social realities. Benefitting from the tremendous theoretical conceptions that linguistics offers to the study of human discursive practices, the present paper focuses on the determination of how racist ideologies are constructed in literary discourse. This examination is carried via the critical study of Stephen Crane's short story, "A Dark Brown Dog".

Literature represents the interface between social reality, linguistics, and human cognition. For instance, a work of literature is a piece of language in which a writer tries to visualize a given social reality, at a given period of time, and in a given place of the world. In reality, what happened in society is structured into a piece of art that communicates the receivers' minds through the mental schema of the writers' minds. This means that the critical analysis of literary discourse seeks to determine the way reality is constructed at various levels of the text under focus. For instance, trying to understand how literature visualizes reality is meant to show how

language enables its users to transform what is going on at the social level into an artistic critique of the unfair treatment of the dominated groups by the dominant ones. Here, the critical examination of the text's context, the way actors are described, the way the text is structured (actions, events, and plot), and how meaning is constructed (semantics) and being inferred (pragmatics) will be of crucial significance. Moreover, a deep understanding of the different networks of power relations in a given society requires using a multi-disciplinary framework of analysis that is adequate to work out how ideologies are structured to maintain the status quo of power and domination in that society. In the case of my study, for example, a multi-dimensional theoretical approach will be necessary to understand how racist ideologies (white vs. black) are structured at the various levels of the text of Crane's "A Dark Brown Dog". Briefly, the critical analysis of this short story will be devoted to highlight how social reality is structured through the writer's linguistic choices to understand how the binary racial system operates in the US during the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The study of how racist ideologies work in discourse and language in use is central for many CDA researchers and practitioners. To highlight the way ideologies of races are structured in text and talk, they resorted to the analysis of some discursive strategies; like representation (polarization of us vs. them) (Van Dijk, 1993b and 2009, Fairclough, 2003, and Chilton, 2004), lexicalization (Van Dijk, 2000), topics (Van Dijk, 2004), etc. While dealing with the critical study of racism in short stories, Van Dijk (1993b) dealt with the analysis of narration focusing mainly on how the narrator's report of events and actions contributes to the reproduction of racist ideologies of domination, power, and power abuse. Guess (2006) uses a sociological approach to the study of how race relations are constructed in the American context. To understand how the white/black binary system of power relations works to maintain racial inequality in the American society, he employed Giddens's structuration theory (Giddens, 1984). Thus, racism as a socially constructed notion (Guess, 2006) is proved to be a complex and a multi-dimensional phenomenon that requires paying attention to all aspects of human communications, events, actions, and other sorts of activities to decode the way it works to legitimize social inequality.

Indeed, the present paper seeks to determine how racist ideologies (white vs. black) are structured at various levels of the text of this short story like: a) description: the focus on how semantic choices serve for the drawing of the picture of both black and white; b) Narration: the study of how events and actions determine the representation of the characters (white supremacy vs. black inferiority); c) implication: the focus on how the analysis of the text's surface linguistic structure and its deep structure serves in the construction of meaning (revealing symbolism); and d) rhetoric: the study of how the writer's use of rhetoric – such as metaphor, irony, exaggeration, imagery, etc. – serves for the visualization of the socio-cultural traditions of the Southern American society. In reality, this paper uses a multi-disciplinary framework for the critical study of how the mental models of a given society are reflected through the stories written in its literature. Moreover, the notion of context (space, time, and participants) is of crucial importance for the critical

study of how inter-cultural and inter-racial relations are being constructed in literary discourse. Also, the notion of generation is worth exploring in that it helps us determine how racist ideologies and practices are transmitted from one generation to another and how people of different ages deal with the same thing they inherited from their parents and ancestors.

Using a multidisciplinary framework within the CDA approach to the study of discourse and language in use, the present paper seeks to answer three main research questions. These are the following:

1. How are racist ideologies structured at the contextual level?
2. How are racist ideologies structured at the discursive level?
3. To what extent does the notion of generation serve for the construction and the evolution of racial identity and racial stereotypes?

The answers to these problematics represent the summary of the study of how racist ideologies (white vs. black) are being structured at the three levels of analysis: context, text, and history (across generation).

### **Literature review**

This section seeks to review some key concepts, ideas, and theoretical conceptions required for the critical study of the topic under focus. These are related to the way racist ideologies (white vs. black) are dealt with in the previous literature as well as the way power relations among racial groups are structured to maintain social inequality, injustice, and domination.

### **Racism as a social construct**

Racism is not something innate, yet it is acquired. In reality, we are not born with such racist beliefs and practices as human beings; however, we learn them in our societies. For instance, we are born with different skin colors such as white and black, different eye colors and shapes, etc., but these biological differences do not have impacts on the way we treat each other. Also, these differences do not determine the nature of our relations, our social systems, the way we think about ourselves and the others, the way we address each other, and the way we behave with each other. Thus, it is man who transformed what he was born with as physiological and biological differences into a social system of behaviors and thoughts to treat him alike differently because of its gender, race, etc. Being responsible for the creation of social systems of thoughts and behaviors, man divided his society into power groups according to their races such as black vs. white and other features like gender and so on. The division of the human society into racial groups served for the emergence of power imbalance resulting in the unfair and unjust treatment of some groups by others.

The way racial identity is constructed in the US, as the case of my study in the present paper, is central for many research projects and papers. For instances, (Guess, 2006) dealt with the study of the construction of race relations (white vs.

black) in the US using a sociological perspective to focus mainly on how whiteness is structured as a social norm to maintain inequality among racial groups (white supremacy vs. black inferiority). Some researches Guess referred to in his study of the construction of race relations focused on the impact of the social (Frankenberg, 1993), the economic (Roediger, 1991), and the political (Bhabha, 1998) factors on the construction of whiteness and how this norm serves to sustain the domination of the whites over the blacks. In other words, the racist thoughts and practices that individuals learned from their social entourage such as family members, peers, school textbooks, etc. become institutionalized at various levels like: a) the political level where the whites have the political power to rule over blacks and produce the laws that legitimize the white superiority and protect whiteness; b) the social level where whites exercise their power to keep social imbalance of power to serve their interests and luxury at the expense of the blacks' rights for social equality and justice; and c) the economic level where we find whites with high salaries working in profit-making sectors whereas blacks are obliged to work as farmers in the whites' farms with low salaries and much more pain. Thus, the way racial relations are socially constructed, legitimized, and defended by the different institutions of a given society made it clear that racism is both an individual and an institutional phenomenon (Van Dijk, 1992 and Nelson, 2013). To understand this complex phenomenon, we need to have a detailed idea about how race relations operate socially and politically.

Indeed, blacks are obliged to obey what the whites produce as legislations and laws to organize race relations; nevertheless, they will be brought to justice to receive the required punishments. For instance, the case of the black woman "Rosa Parks", who was arrested by the police officers after refusing to give her seat to a white man, is a good illustration for the unfair and the segregationist policies of the white masters against the black slaves. This kind of political policy reflects the way social relations of power are legitimized and sustained by the white American political institutions. This binary form of race relations (master vs. slaves) and the political legislations defending it are man-made to protect the interests of the powerful groups at the expense of the less powerful ones. Here, both the notions of legislation and punishment are required for the critical understanding of how racism, as a social construct, serves to maintain power, domination, injustice, and social inequality. Indeed, the critical study of the text of the short story "A Dark Brown Dog" needs this kind of connection between these two notions (legislation and punishment) to understand the actions of the dog manifested mainly in his repetitive prayers as well as to guess the significance of the different sorts of punishment he received from his master, the child. Another famous institutionalized system of racial segregation and discrimination is that of apartheid which is established by the white ruling minority in South Africa to separate blacks from the other races to evolve into a political system of legislations and a social system of land apportionment. In reality, the two examples I referred to in this paragraph are good proofs for the social manufacturing of such racist ideologies and practices to become later institutionalized by laws. Thus, moving from a mere practice of some individuals or a group of individuals, racism becomes more and more complex once

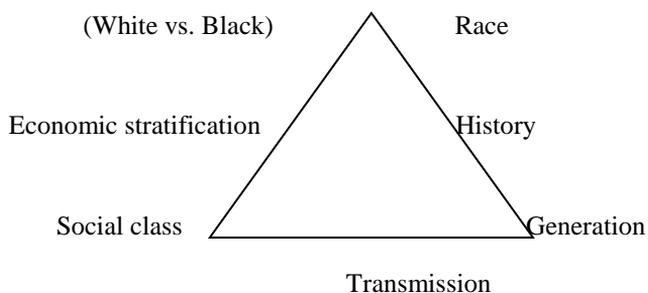
it is socially and politically institutionalized to make of white supremacy and black inferiority such legitimate social practices.

Social classification and social classes are of crucial significance while dealing with the critical study of race relations. For instance, the critical study of how racist ideologies are structured in “A Dark Brown Dog” needs an in-depth understanding of how class relations operate in the American society as well as a detailed review of the way the whites’ racist thinking and practices are affected by their belonging to different social classes; working class, middle-class, and upper class. This means that it is crucial to visualize the way people’s economic stratification affect their acceptance and their toleration of the other (out-group). According to Wright (2003) classes are “social categories sharing subjectively-salient attributes used by people to rank those categories within a system of economic stratification” (p. 2). Here, we will not be interested in the subjectivity or the objectivity of these social classification; however, our interest will be devoted to the investigation of the crucial relation between racism and social classes to reach a deep understanding of how white Americans of different social classes behave with the African American blacks. In another definition of the term class Wright argued that class is “a foundation of economic oppression and exploitation” (ibid, p. 3). Based on these two definitions by Wright, the division of the American society into three classes; upper, middle, and lower class according to their economic strata makes power asymmetry exist even among the individuals of the in-group (the whites). In reality, the economic differences between people of the white race affect the way people from the three different classes think and behave with individuals from the black race. In other words, white people from the lower and the middle class are less racist and more tolerant with the blacks because they share approximately the same economic conditions. However, white people from the upper class will be more racist and less tolerant with people from the black race. These assumptions will be illustrated with the analysis of an example of class differences from the text of the short story under investigation.

Moreover, racial identity and race relations of power and inequality are unstable, yet they vary in accordance with the evolution of the human society under focus. The instability of the notions of both racial identity and race relations made of the notion of “generation” at the crossroads of my discussion of how racist ideologies and practices are socially structured in the context of Crane’s short story, “A Dark Brown Dog,” through my analysis of the differences between the child’s and his parents’ treatment of the young dog, as the incarnation of a black slave. For instance, a critical reading in the history of racism in the US from the 17<sup>th</sup> century to the 21<sup>st</sup> century shows that race relations witnessed a radical change. Indeed, the African blacks, who were brought from Africa as slaves to work in the whites’ farms during the 17<sup>th</sup> century, were freed by the 13<sup>th</sup> amendment of the US constitution in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (1865) that prohibited the existence of slavery in the US. After being liberated, blacks witnessed evolution at the social ladder to occupy the highest positions in the US manifested in Obama’s election as the first US president descending from African American origins in the 20<sup>th</sup> of January 2009. The evolution of the history of racism does not mean the end of the existence of racist

thoughts and practices in the American society; however, it highlights the evolution of the black identity and the evolution of the social relations of power between whites and blacks. Thus, the critical investigation of the notion of generation, as “the average time in which children grow up, become adults and have children in their own” (Oxford, 2007), in this paper, becomes of significant importance to guess how the construction of race relations varies from one generation to another.

In brief, racism as a socially constructed phenomenon should be treated within the triangular theoretical approach that puts together the concepts of race, social class, and generation. First, the critical investigation of the concept of race is meant to understand how whiteness and blackness are socially constructed and sustained to keep a given social order. Second, the exploration of the concept of social class seeks to determine how white people from different social classes think about and treat the black slaves. Third, the introduction of the concept of generation to the critical analysis of Crane’s “A Dark Brown Dog” aims at determining how the whites’ thinking about and their behaviors towards the blacks vary across generation. Thus, the study of the way racist ideologies (black vs. white) and race relations of power, domination, injustice, and inequality are structured along the text of Crane’s short story finds its strength in the triangular connection I made between race, social class, and generation. This theoretical triangulation is visualized by the following diagram (fig. 1).



**Fig. 1.** The theoretical triangulation of race, social class, and generation for the critical study of racism in Crane’s short story “A Dark Brown Dog”

These socially constructed ideologies and relations of power are conveyed to the outer world at various levels of the characters’ language. In other words, the language that the writer uses to speak the characters – he selected and named to draw a scene from the history of a given society – should be targeted in my study of the structuring of racist ideologies. Thus, to understand how racists ideologies of whiteness vs. blackness and how social relations of power are discursively constructed, we need to review the literature revolving around the notion of racism as a discursive construction. This literature will be re-visited because it helps us build a theoretical frame that is adequate to decode how the discursive strategies that the characters used reflect the structure of the society they live in.

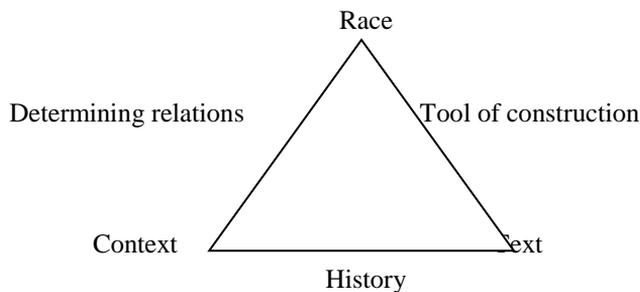
## **Racism as a discursive construct**

In the previous part of this literature review section, we focused on the determination of the theoretical basis of the critical study of racism as a socially constructed phenomenon. Having the belief that humans' thoughts, identities, and deeds are expressed through their discursive practices, we will focus in this section on the establishment of the theoretical basis of the critical investigation of racism as a discursively constructed concept. In reality, however, speaking or writing people tend to express their thoughts, beliefs, and attitudes towards a particular person or group, a given thing, or a given issue either explicitly or implicitly. They may also tend to draw their personal identities, the identity of the other as well as the identity of the in-group and the out-group members. Moreover, they may represent their experiences or the others' experiences manifested in their description of happenings such as actions and events. On the basis of these theoretical views of racism, as a discursive construct, the critical study of how racist ideologies are structured in Crane's "A Dark Brown Dog," requires providing a well-established theoretical framework. The approach to be founded should be adequate to provide a detailed critique of the way the description of the context, the description of the characters, and the narration of both events and actions contribute to the construction of the racist ideology of white superiority and black inferiority.

Being black or white is something that is constructed through different types of discourse such as political discourse, media discourse, literary discourse, and so on. To decode the way this racist ideology works in text and talk, it is of crucial significance to investigate the linguistic composition of the text under focus at various levels; like semantics, pragmatics, syntax, rhetoric, etc. Critical discourse analysis scholars, for instance, focused on the analysis of the discursive construction of racist ideologies at various levels of the structure of both text and talk like: a) semantics: while dealing with how meaning and meaning-making serve in the production and re-production of racism, researchers resorted to the study of the different lexical choice (lexicalization) language users make to create meaning; b) Syntax: the critical analysis of discourse syntactic construction is also central for the revelation of how racist ideologies are structured in a given text or talk. Among the well-known strategies in the study of how racism works at the level of the syntactic construct of discourse are passivization and nominalization, as two agent-less constructions; c) pragmatics: the critical analysis of the way both implicitness and explicitness serve in the construction of racial identity (whiteness vs. blackness) and race relations of power and dominations among different racial groups such as blacks and whites; and d) rhetoric: the study of how devices like metaphor, irony, metonymy, euphemism, hyperbole, repetition, exaggeration, etc. serve for the construction and the maintaining of inequality and injustice among people of different races. Indeed, Van Dijk (1997) argued that discourse plays an important role in the production and re-production of prejudices and racism. Wodak and Reisigl (1999) argued that racism as a social phenomenon manifests itself discursively. Thus, the critical analysis of how racism works in a given society to sustain domination and power abuse entails a reciprocal process that starts from discourse, as a social practice, to decode how social relations are monitored.

Based on these theoretical conceptions of racism as a discursive construct, our critical study of the construction of racist ideologies and how race relations of power are structured in a given text and talk needs taking into consideration the nature of the discourse under focus. For instance, the study of racism in literary discourse is quite different from the study of racism in political discourse, media discourse, and everyday conversation due to the specific nature of literary language. Indeed, my study of the way racist ideologies (white vs. black) and race relations of power, power abuse, and domination are structured in Crane's "A Dark Brown Dog" needs establishing a theoretical approach that takes into consideration the nature of literary discourse because the existing approaches like that of Van Dijk, Wodak, and others were designed for the study of other types of discourse such as political discourse, parliamentary debates, media discourse, and everyday conversations. As far as the nature of literary language is concerned, it is of crucial significance to draw attention to the different features that distinguish literary discourse from other sorts of discourse and language use. Here, the determination of what characterizes literary discourse from other sorts of discourse; like plot, characters, narration, description, imagery, etc. is required to adopt the existing discursive approaches to the study of racism with the properties of literary discourse. These features will be dealt with in the following section that will be concerned with the depiction of literary discourse.

Moreover, a work of literature is the product of a human mind that tries to give the portrait of such a social reality in a given place of the world and at a given time of history. The critical study of the construction of racial identity of whiteness and blackness in text and talk needs the emphasis of another dimension which is that of context. In other words, the study of the way context (time, place, and characters) is described becomes crucial to understand how race relations are structured in the 20<sup>th</sup> century America. Thus, the study of the way racist ideologies and power relations are structured in the text of Crane's "A Dark Brown Dog" should be dealt with in the framework of a theoretical triangulation gathering race, text, and context. First, the term "race" denotes the Americans' understanding of biological differences manifested mainly in the skin color. For instance, people's understanding of racial differences could determine their ways of treating each other. Second, context is required to determine how the description of the settings and the characters serve for the visualization people's thinking about their race and the others' race. Third, the text represents the means through which the story is transmitted from the writer's mind to the reader's. This theoretical triangulation is represented in the following diagram (fig. 2).



**Fig. 2.** Representative schema of the critical study of racism within the triangulation of race, text, and context

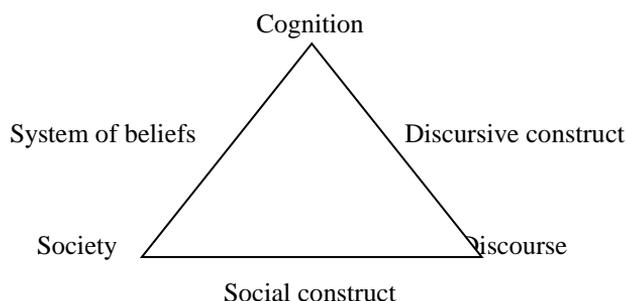
## **Racism as a system of thoughts**

Racism is not only the mere idea of dividing a given society into different groups based on their colors, ethnicities and viz., yet it is a whole system of thinking about the self and the other. For instance, racism is a system of ideas and thoughts that are the basis of the unfair and the unjust treatment of minority groups such as ethnic and racial groups by the majority groups. It is the system of beliefs and attitudes that aims at producing and justifying the asymmetrical distribution of power among the different racial and ethnic groups of a given society. Indeed, it's a way of thinking on the part of the dominant groups to maintain social inequality that serves their social, political, and economic welfare. This system of inequality is monitored by various sets of ideas like the superiority of the dominant social groups and the inferiority of the dominated groups. So, while dealing with racism, as the systematic division of a given society into white and black communities on the basis of their skin colors, it is of crucial significance to focus on the determination of how racist thoughts work to construct both whiteness and blackness. Here, racism operates through a system of ideas and practices that shape and monitor the relations of power between both whites and blacks. These thoughts manifest themselves in the white superiority and the black inferiority and these are translated into concrete actions and behaviors like the illegal treatment of blacks as slaves and the obedience of the blacks to the white masters' orders and laws. Thus, racism becomes a well-organized system of individual, social, institutional, and cultural thoughts that determine people's way of thinking and behaving towards each other.

Wilson (1999) argues that racism is "an ideology of racial domination." Van Dijk (2006) says that ideologies are a kind of ideas and belief systems that require a cognitive component that is able to account for this belief system. With reference to our critique of racism as a social construct and racism as discursive construct in the above two sections, we can say that this ideology of domination manifests itself at various levels of discourse (Wodak and Reisigl, 1999). This means that people's social and discursive practices of domination, inequality, discrimination, etc. are monitored by their mental models of thinking about the self and the other. In reality, the connection between these three dimensions – the social, the cognitive, and the discursive (see Van Dijk, 1992, 1995, and 2006) – becomes very important for the critical study of the way racist ideologies of white supremacy and black inferiority are constructed in the text of Carne's "A Dark Brown Dog". Thus, the critical study of the different practices of the characters involved in this short story will be required to reflect the way racism as a social construct functions in the American society, and how whites' racist thoughts are structured to dominate the blacks and treat them in such unfair and unjust ways.

Briefly, a theoretical triangulation of cognition, society, and discourse will be used in this research paper to focus on how racist ideologies and race relations of power are structured in this short story. This triangulation will be used for the critique of literary discourse that is quite different from other sorts of discourse due to the specificity of literary language. So, the properties of literary discourse will be taken into consideration after being reviewed in the following section of this

literature review part of the paper. This triangulation is visualized by the following diagram (fig. 3).



**Fig. 3.** The triangular construction of racism

### Literary discourse

The notion of discourse is not stable; however, it is a variable concept the definition of which depends on its context of use as well as the researchers' purposes. In fact, researchers try to give the concept a specific definition that serves the main objectives of their research projects. According to Titscher et al. (2000), the notion of discourse denotes a whole palette of meaning ranging from linguistics, sociology, philosophy, etc. Fairclough (1989) argues that the term discourse refers to the whole process of interaction. Van Dijk (1989b) defined discourse as a particular form of language use. Hutcheon (1991) notes that discourse is not only a mere tool of domination but also a means of power. In his discussion of how Foucault defines the notion of discourse (Whisnant, 2012) explains the four ways in which discourse operates: a) discourse creates the world: this means that discourse shapes our perception of the world, produces a meaningful understanding of the world, organizes the way we behave towards objects and people, and plays a key role in the social construction of reality; b) discourse generates knowledge and truth: discourse contributes to the construction of knowledge and truth about the world we live in and other forms of knowledge and truth; c) discourse says something about the people who speak it: discourse gives knowledge about the speakers' gender, sexuality, ethnicity, class position and even their implied relations with other people around them; and d) discourse and power: discourse operates through being involved with socially embedded forms of power. Here, discourse becomes a multi-dimensional concept the users of which can achieve different functions while they are addressing their public. In other words, discourse can be considered as a process of both "coding" and "decoding" meaning between two parts the "sender" and the "receiver". This process of coding and decoding happens at the level of both the sender's and the receiver's minds respectively as the following diagram (fig. 4) shows.



**Fig. 4.** Discourse as a process of coding and decoding of meaning

Indeed, this multi-dimensional conceptualization of the term “discourse” will be of crucial significance for the study of the construction of racist ideologies and power relation in Crane’s “A Dark Brown Dog” for several reasons. First, the study of how ideologies and power relations are reflected through the text of this short story needs decoding the way social reality is shaped. Second, it needs the determination of the way the characters’ identities are shaped at various levels of discourse structure to reveal the way whiteness and blackness work to sustain the social status quo in the 20<sup>th</sup> century America. Third, it requires a detailed explanation of the way actions and events are described through discourse to reflect power and domination among the involved characters. Fourth, the present paper focuses on the examination of how the text of this short story serves in the construction of our historical knowledge of the reality of racism in the US during the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Finally, the critical study of the reality of racism in Crane’s short story is a multi-dimensional topic that finds its ground in the conceptualization of discourse as a process of “coding” and “decoding” to make of our understanding of it holistic. This holistic phenomenon of understanding works within the triangulation of discourse as a social construct, discourse as a discursive construct, and discourse as a system of thoughts.

As far as the adjective “literary” is concerned, the term discourse acquires another dimension that distinguishes it from other types of discourse. In the case of my study, for instance, a sub-type of literary discourse, which is the short story, will be under focus. Indeed, a short story is a work of fiction with characters (usually one major character), setting, plot, story, and a story teller. When it comes to race and ethnic issues, short stories can be considered as an artistic description of social reality. In other words, short stories play a significant role in shaping social reality of racism, power, and domination where actions and events evolve in such a simple plot. Indeed, “a plot is the series of events which form the story of a novel” (Oxford, 2007). This series of events is described and conducted through the means of narration that is defined as “the act or the process of telling a story” (ibid). To understand how stories contribute to the reproduction of racism Van Dijk (1993b) summarized the theory of narration in six properties: a) stories are primarily about the past; b) stories are usually about events and actions; c) stories are usually told to entertain the audience and they have broader social, political, or cultural function; d) stories are abstractly organized by textual structure; e) stories may be told from different perspectives; and f) stories are organized by general properties of conversational interaction such as turn-taking (pp. 123-124). Moreover, description, which is a writing process about what somebody/something is like, plays an important role in shaping the image of both whites and blacks as well as the description of their actions. Thus, in the present paper, stories are viewed as a whole body of relations among different parts such as narration, description, actions, events, plot, characters, tellers (narrators), setting, and social and political functions of critique to grasp how Crane’s “A Dark Brown Dog” contributes to the critique of racism in the American society. In other words, the study of racism here becomes a multi-disciplinary issue where the construction of both whiteness and blackness as a binary social ideology is at the crossroads.

In brief, the critical study of the construction of white superiority and black inferiority in the American history will be carried out through the examination of all levels of this short story's textual structure. The interplay of all parts of analysis constitutes the holistic critique of the way ideologies are constructed, maintained, and legalized to sustain social inequality among racial groups. The analysis of how these social ideologies are constructed in this story will be undertaken into three analytical sections as the following methodology section indicates.

### **Methodology**

The corpus under focus is a story written by the American author Stephen Crane entitled "A Dark Brown Dog". The story was selected for analysis in order to study how racist ideologies and relations of power are structured in literary discourse. It is meant also to delve into the close connection between both literature and social reality aiming to understand how racial identities of whites and blacks are constructed, transformed into a well-structured system of social thoughts and practices, and how these are mentally designed to be later on expressed through the writers' language as an artistic critique of social reality.

The analysis of the story finds its ground in (Van Dijk, 1993b) critical analysis of the way racism is constructed through narration. This multidisciplinary study of the way racist ideologies of white superiority and black inferiority uses Van Dijk's theoretical triangulation of discourse and ideology analysis ranging from the discursive through the cognitive to the social (see Van Dijk, 1992, 1995, and 2006).

The critical study of this short story using the above mentioned theoretical frameworks consists of three analytical sections. The first section is entitled contextual analysis. It seeks to determine how the description of the setting (place and time) and characters contributes to the construction of the racial identity of both whites and blacks, the relations of domination, and the way people from different classes and generations treat each other. The second section is entitled textual analysis. It deals with the study of how racist ideologies are structured at the discursive level focusing mainly on the study of semantic choices, syntactic choices, rhetoric, etc. The third section will be devoted to the study of the evolution of the concept of racism across generations. Finally, the obtained results will be discussed to formulate the syntheses of the study.

### **Analysis and discussion**

In this section, I am going to focus on the analysis of the collected data and the discussion of the obtained results to understand how racist ideologies are constructed in the text under focus. Then, conclusions will be drawn to produce a summary on how racist ideologies work to construct both the white and the black identity and how they serve to maintain social inequality in the 20<sup>th</sup> century America, and how these relations evolve across generation.

### **Contextual analysis**

The data forming the context of this short story are gathered, described, and analyzed under the following three sub-titles.

**a. The characters:** These are of two types; major characters and minor characters. Indeed, the “dog” represents the major character of the story. However, the child, his parents (father and mother), a man, and two women represent the minor characters.

On the one hand, the dog is described using several discursive strategies. These are explained through the analysis of some examples.

A) Lexicalization: first, the term “dog” is pre-determined by three successive adjectives “... a little dark-brown dog ...” that determine the dog’s identity. While the adjective “little” denotes the dog’s belongingness to the new generation of blacks, the compounded adjectives of color “dark-brown” signal a change in the color of the new generation from a “black” color to a lighter color which is that of “dark-brown”. This change of color might be the result of a gene mutation in the sequence of the DNA due to the blacks’ stay for a long time in the US which has a different climate from Africa. The climatic changes causing this genetic phenomenon have tightened the borders of difference between blacks and whites. In reality, this change of color denotes a change in the identity of blacks as well as their relations with the whites. Second, adjectives like “small” and “soft” highlight the physical weakness of the dog. This, in fact, might imply the imbalance of power between both blacks and whites. Also, other adjective such as “panic-stricken”, “despair”, and “grim-unknown” denote the gloomy present and the hopeless future of the dog as the embodiment of the black character. Indeed, slaves live in such critical situations characterized by the unknown and the dark history of the black race in the US. Third, present participles like “willing” signal the blacks’ willingness to obey the white masters by following their orders and laws determined by the “ing” participle “following” and nouns like “pursuit”. Fourth, verbs like “pray” and “sank down” reflect the dog’s worship towards his white master. These two verbs determine the humiliated situation in which the dog, as the symbol of the black community, lives in. The humiliation of the dog manifest in his feelings of humility described by the following quotation “... he received the bowls with deep humility ...” in which the noun “humility” itself highlights the psychological situation of the dog in his new slavery. Finally, the humiliated image of the dog Crane drew in this story gets its peak in the depiction of his cries. These are highlighted by the “ing” participle “yelling” and the noun “astonishment” as well as the lack of intimacy and confidence justified by the following two quotes “... any notable degree of intimacy ...” and “... no confidence in them”. Thus, due to the lack of confidence and intimacy the dog becomes obliged to forgive and forget.

B) Representation: the dog who is the protagonist of this story is presented via describing him from different angles. First, he is described in terms of his importance as “an unimportant dog” traced in the following quote “... he held him in contempt as an important dog ...”. Here, the dog’s existence becomes meaningless, senseless, absurd, and worthless, since he has no importance in his social entourage. Second, he is depicted in terms of his value as a non-’valuable dog” manifested in this quote “... with no value save for a moment ...”. Lacking value as a member of the new family signals that the dog has no respect in his new social context. In other words, he is strange and he has no role to play within this family, which is a good indicator for his marginalization and his segregation from

the effective members of the new social circumstances, since he has nothing to change. Third, he is portrayed based on his feelings as a “guilty dog” “... his manner grow very guilty”, a “criminal dog” “... he had committed some grave crime”, a “murdering dog”... he slunk like an assassin”, and “agitated with shame” “he became agitated with shame when he again confronted the child”. Though the dog has committed no mistake, he felt sorrow and grief for being this kind of animal and he asked to apologize. This highlights his low position and his inferiority in his new domicile and it might imply his regret to follow his new owner – the child – for punishing him repetitively without committing what requires punishment “unjust beats” except following his young friend. Fourth, he is depicted in terms of his reputation as a “disreputable dog” manifested in the kid’s hesitation to introduce him into his family as a worthless and a non-valuable animal “... that the infernal kid wanted to introduce a disreputable dog into the family”. Here, the dog’s character is tarnished. The way the dog’s character is represented reflects the family members’ beliefs and segregationist ideologies against the dog they examined, commented on, and called names during their first meeting with him. Finally, the way the dog is portrayed reflects the gloomy picture of the blacks in the white American society. However, this gloomy picture becomes somehow bright when the dog performed some gambols to please his new friend, the child; “he performed a few gambols with such abandon that the child saw him to be a valuable thing”. This, in fact, might imply that the dog’s existence becomes meaningless away from obeying, serving, and pleasing his owners. So, slaves are brought from Africa to live in America in order to serve their white masters and not to enjoy full citizenship with equal rights.

C) Repetition: here, the repetition of some words and expressions served in the emphasis of several characteristics that constitute the dog’s character. On the one hand, the repetition of the verb “pray” and its derivatives like noun “prayer”, and its plural form “prayers”, the past continuous form “was praying”, and the past simple form “prayed” play a significant role in stressing the dog’s full obedience to his new master, the child. In reality, a prayer is a form of worship during which people use special words to address God seeking to give thanks or to ask for help. In other words, the relation between the dog and his master exceeds the boundaries of the normal relation between a master and his slave to that of supporter and savior where the dog is the seeker of help, safety, security, and peace as well as the thanks giver who rewards his master by offering him prayers. The dog’s thanks got their peak with the move of the term “prayer” from its singular form “... a small prayer ...” to its plural form “... more prayers ...” as well as with the shift of the verb tense between the simple past “prayed” and the past continuous “was praying” where the continuous signals the continuity of the process of praying. This sort of continuity is a good indication for the relation of dependency between the dog’s existence and his obedience to his master. This means that the dog is protected and accepted to live with the child as long as he is showing obedience and respect. On the other hand, the dog’s repetitive apologies highlighted by these two quotes “... in an apologetic manner” and “...the dog apologized and eloquently expressed regret ...” reflect the dog’s inability to face the harshness of his new friend and emphasize that the dog has nothing to do to absorb his master’s irritability except to apologize and regret for being this kind of animal. Here, the notion of apology makes clear the unequal

distribution of power between both the child and the dog via the analysis of this binary opposition (harsh boy vs. peaceful dog). Then, the repetitive hesitation of the dog represented first by his hesitation to meet the child "...The dog hesitated for a moment ..." and second his hesitation to get into the child's home "... the dog was industriously ambling a few yards in the rear ... agitated with shame" denotes his inability to face the white masters as well as his lack of confidence in them. For instance, this reminds me of the fear of the African blacks from the coming white colonizer. This fear to confront the white might also express blacks' savage and wild nature, which is a sign of being uncivilized and barbaric. Finally, the repetitive interviews highlight that the dog is not very appreciated, yet he should sit for many interviews according to which the masters can decide whether or not to welcome him at home. These welcoming-tests, indeed, reflect the degree of the dog's acceptability within his new social entourage. Briefly, the study of repetition emphasized the dog's inability to face his white masters and his sufferance from their segregationist practices.

D) Comparison: the use of comparison played a significant role in drawing the dog's picture at various moments of the story. First, it is used to shape the dog's state of feeling while being punished repetitively on their way to home. Receiving many beats from his new friend – the child – the dog felt guilty, apologized and expressed regret. However, his feelings of being humiliated and for being that kind of animal who receives beats without committing what requires punishment make of his manner grow guilty to view himself in the image of an assassin. The evolution of the dog's state of feelings is illustrated in the following example (1) I quoted from the text of the story.

*(1) On the way to his home the child turned many times and beat the dog, proclaiming with childish gestures that he held him in contempt as an unimportant dog, with no value save for a moment. For being this quality of animal the dog apologized and eloquently expressed regret, but he continued stealthily to follow the child. His manner grew so very guilty that he slunk like an assassin.*

Second, comparison is used to visualize the dog's state of feeling the moment he met the child's family. While being under the eyes of all family members, the dog felt embarrassed. Indeed, their gazes reflected their humiliation, disrespect, and "scorn" towards this little dog what makes of him feel weak and tired; the state that is reflected through his bending downwards. The dog's bending downwards might be also a strategy to resist the harsh critiques of the family members and to absorb their scorn so that he can be admitted as a new member in their home. Here, the evolution of the dog's emotional state during his first meeting with the family culminated in his comparison to "a scorched plant". This state of feelings and its evolution are visualized by the following example (2).

*(2) When the child's family appeared, they made a great row. The dog was examined and commented upon and called names. Scorn was leveled at him from all eyes, so that he became much embarrassed and drooped like a scorched plant.*

Third, comparison is used to reflect the dog's state of being accustomed to his friend's steps that is manifested in his ability to distinguish them among the various noises that are raised by their neighbors. Having the ability to recognize the noise of his friend among others is closely connected to the different situations he lived in: on the one hand, the good moments are while the child is at home. These are represented by dog's "wagging" with the child's approach. On the other hand, the sad moments are while the child is outside home. These are characterized by the dog's "despair" with the child's departure. The differentiation between these two situations highlights the dog's fear and lack of confidence on the other members of the family because of their misconduct with him. The grim reality in which this dark brown dog lived finds its culmination in his full-preoccupation with the child to the extent that he became accustomed to his steps. This state of being in great love with the child "devotion" and his admiration of him "sublime" as his savior from the harshness of the family is reflected through the analysis of example (3).

*(3) His devotion to the child grew until it was a sublime thing. He wagged at his approach; he sank down in despair at his departure. He could detect the sound of the child's step among all the noises of the neighborhood. It was like a calling voice to him.*

Briefly, the analysis of these three examples of comparison reflected the grim reality in which the dog lived, his fear from meeting others, and his relation towards the members of his friend's family. This is determined through the analysis of the description of the dog's feeling at various moments of the progress of the story.

E) Symbolism: the rope on the dog's neck "... a short rope was dragging from his neck ..." is a sign for his belongingness to a former master who freed him without removing that stigma of slavery. This sign of being a former slave caused the dog's shame while meeting the child who becomes later on his new friend and master "He became so agitated with shame when he again confronted the child that he forgot the dragging rope". Indeed, the dog's rope caused him a great discomfort with his new friend what pushed him to seize it "... he made a swift, avaricious charge and seized the rope". Here, the rope determined the dog's identity as a former slave and its remaining on his neck was a good indication for the dog's identification as a slave for life. This means that though he is freed from one master, he will be enslaved by another master. In brief, the analysis of this example of symbolism reflected the dog's identity as a slave as well as it served to imply that there is no room for slaves to live free without masters.

F) Exaggeration: the critical analysis of this short story revealed that some statements are used to: a) highlight the dog's politeness: here, the exaggerated forms of apology served to emphasize the dog's eagerness to ask for forgiveness and his polite behavior to express his regret and sorrow to his headsman though he has not committed such acts that deserve the harsh beats he received. These exaggerated forms of apologize are illustrated by the following quotes: (1) ... *In an apologetic manner the dog came close, and the two had an interchange of friendly pittings and waggles.* (2) ... *For being this quality of animal the dog apologized and eloquently expressed regret, but he continued stealthily to follow the child;* b) emphasize the

dog's full-obedience: prayers are physical and spiritual practices that reflect people's worship to their creator, god. Indeed, the dog's repetitive prayers are good signs for his respect, acceptance, and obedience to his new master's decisions, behaviors, and orders. These exaggerated forms of obedience are traced through the examination of these two examples: (1) *at the same time with his eyes and his ears he offered up a small prayer.* (2) *He pleaded with the child and petitioned him, and offered more prayers;* c) stress the dog's sorrow to be enslaved again: the dog's feelings to be criminal and guilty reflect his depression for being in this humiliated situation of slavery after being freed from his former master. These over-statements of the dog's unhappiness with his new condition of slavery are detected via the analysis of the following two examples: (1) *But the little dark-brown dog took this chastisement in the most serious way, and no doubt considered that he had committed some grave crime.* (2) *The dog always accepted these thrashings with an air of admitted guilt;* d) amplify the gloomy picture of the dog's future: the dog's feelings of despair reflect his full engagement with the unknown sort of future he will be facing in his new social entourage. This, in fact, is determined through the analysis of exaggeration in these two examples: (1) *in his mind he was being dragged toward a grim unknown.* (2) *His eyes grew wild with the terror of it;* and e) stress the dog's suffering: the dog's nightmares give a good glance about the harshness, the savagery, and the brutality of the context he was living during the day. This state of re-living is highlighted via the analysis of these two statements: (1) *Sometimes, indeed, in his sleep, he would utter little yells, as from pain, but that occurred, no doubt, when in his dreams he encountered huge flaming dogs who threatened him direfully.* (2) *At night, when he was asleep, his dark-brown friend would raise from some black corner a wild, willful cry, a song of infinite lowliness and despair.* To sum up, exaggeration played a crucial role in shaping the social reality in which the dog lived.

Now, let us say that the investigation of the above discursive strategies highlighted the critical situation in which this dark brown dog lived. It also highlighted his peaceful character and his full obedience to his mater despite the unjust punishment he received every now and then. By means of analogy the dog's grim reality is a mirror to reflect the dark image of the history of the black community in the US.

On the other hand, several discursive strategies are used to draw the child's character. These are explored via the analysis of the following examples. The child, as the new owner of this dark brown dog, is portrayed in such different but complementary images that I summarized, after the critical scrutiny of the text of this story, in the following three images.

First, he is depicted as the master: he became the guide of the new follower and slave he met somewhere in the avenue "during one of these pauses he discovered the little dark brown dog who was following him with the air of a footpad". Being a master, he is used to give orders "The child put out his hand and called him". With this hand gesture the dog came close to be enslaved again under the child's non-mature decisions and practices. The child, in fact, decided upon punishments "The child beat his pursuer with a small stick he had found" despite the existence of any just and fair cause considering his new friend as a disreputable and non-valuable

dog. However, he felt that the dog has some value the moment he entertained him with his gambols. The way the child thinks about his dark brown dog reflects a whole system of social and cultural prejudices he acquired in his society to believe on the inferiority, the bad reputation, the humiliation, and the valuelessness of the dark skin creatures. Also, his repetitive and unjust beats reflect a whole system of social practices based on the unequal and unjust treatment of the dark colored nations. Thus, the child's character, as a master, can be a good illustration of the way white masters think about and treat their slaves in the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century America.

Second, he is described as the savior of this dark brown dog: "the child became a guardian and a friend". Though he punishes his friend repeatedly and treats him in such a disrespectful way, the child becomes the supervisor and the protector of the new member to the home the moment his family members punished him harshly "If the large folk kicked the dog and threw things at him, the child made loud and violent objections". Indeed, the child's image as the defender of the dog at home finds its peak in his association with his dark brown friend all the time "he and the child were associated together at all times ...". However, the moment the head of the family got heavily drunk and the child's objections to rescue his dark brown friend were not considered and overwhelmed by the father's desire for fun, the result was the death of the dog. Thus, the child's role, as the savior, highlights the notion of belongingness where the masters' power can be measured by their abilities to save their slaves as well as to maintain control over them.

Finally, he is portrayed as the triumphant: "the child was victorious". Here, the notion of triumph finds its explanation in three different logical reasons I traced through the analysis of the passages concerned with the description of the child. On the one hand, the dog is physically small and soft so that he is not able to defend himself in his battle against his new master "... the dog was very small". This physical imbalance of power works within a whole social system of asymmetrical distribution of power between whites and blacks. On the other hand, the dog surrendered and showed no kind of self-defense: "The child beat his pursuer with a small stick he had found. The dog lay down and prayed until the child had finished, and resumed his journey". As a slave, the dog does not have the right to rebel or to strike against his master's orders and punishments even if he is trying to rescue his life. Indeed, the child's victory reflects a sort of binary social system of power relations in which the white masters have the absolute power over their slaves. In the opposite, the black slaves do not have the power to oppose their masters even if they have the power to do so because slavery codes criminalize the slaves' rebellion against their masters. Then, the child was very interested in victory: "The child was victorious because he was completely absorbed in his purpose". In fact, the child's full admiration of victory reflects a socio-cultural reality that is based on the belief that the white race should be always the triumphant and the black race should be defeated. Thus, physical power will not have its effect on the master-slave relations because it is culturally determined by an existing social system of slavery in which power is distributed on the way that serves the interests and the superiority of the dominant white race. However, the imbalance of physical power is a natural reality

that is used in an artistic manner for the rhetorical critique of the unfair and the unjust distribution of power between blacks and whites.

To sum up, the way the child's character is represented as the master, the triumphant, and the savior reflects the image of the white masters, the way they think about their slaves, and the way they treat them. It highlights also the way networks of power relations are structured, manifested mainly in the harshness of the masters and the humiliation of the slaves as well as the whole systems of racist ideologies monitoring them. These racist ideologies culminate in the self-supremacy of the white owners and their struggle to defeat their slaves and make of them obey their orders and decisions under the threat of corporal punishment.

Finally, the family members are described following a gradual strategy, from the group to the individual. On the one hand, it is depicted as a whole unit: "when the child's family appeared, they made a great row". This statement reflects the family's primary reaction while seeing a new guest to their home. Their actions of examination and humiliation were attributed to the unknown through the use of the passive constructions "...was examined ... commented upon ... called names" and "Scorn was leveled at him from all eyes ...". These collective reactions highlight the family's feelings of rejection, marginalization, and hatred towards the new dark brown member that the child brought to their home. On the other hand, it is depicted through the focus on the description of the parents, the father and the mother: "The parent demanded to know what the blazes they were making the kid howl for". The parents' quest to know about the reasons behind the child's howl resulted in the organization of a family council the moment they knew that the child want to introduce them this black member "A family council was held". The opposition of opinions among family members highlights their degrees of accepting the other – the blacks – that is illustrated through the depiction of separated individuals. Then, the depiction of individuals manifested in the description of the father and the mother. Indeed, the father appeared to be a savage and cruel person who decided upon the remaining of the dog as well as his funeral. However, the mother appeared either in a fierce quarrel with her husband about the remaining of the dog or in the depiction of the carnival of her husband the moment he got home heavily drunk. In brief, the depiction of the family as a whole unit reflects the way a poor and lower class family deals with the issue of racism manifested mainly in both: their acceptance of the dog as a new member of their home as well as in their unfair treatments and their humiliations of the new dark brown member. However, the individual depiction of both wife and husband reflects a conflict of culture, norms, and laws between two opposite poles of the US; the South (husband) and the north (wife). These issues of class and value conflict will be revisited in the third section of the analysis.

**b. The setting:** my investigation of the setting of the story under focus proved that both time and space played an important role in decoding the way racist ideologies of white supremacy and black inferiority are discursively shaped to maintain a binary system of social relations.

On the one hand, the way space is depicted can be summarized and analyzed under four main titles: in the avenue, on the way to home, at home, and in the

alleyway. First, the avenue represents the place of the dog's meeting with his new friend and master by coincidence. In reality, this coincidental meeting highlights the slave's inability to select his master. Also, it stresses the slave's duty to obey the laws and orders of the white master he is attributed to. The oppression that starts from the moment whites deny blacks' right for choosing culminates in the moment the child and his slave took the way home. Second, the way to home does not represent only the spacial destination but also the destination of the child's relation with his new slave, the dog. Along their ways to home the child turned and beat the dog several times. Here, the repetitive beats are meant to domesticate the new slave to make of him obey to his master's orders as well as to train him to accept the punishment of his master, pray for his forgiveness and reject any way of plotting revenge. In reality, the child's victory in the stairs of his home signals the success of the domestication process. The child's victory made of him the master and the guardian of his newly brought slave. Third, the family's home, as the space in which major events in the story took place, represents the dog's true jail where he is going to face the harshest days of his life as a new member to this family. The dog's panic started the moment he entered that "dark tenement" to continue gloomier inside home. At home, we can distinguish three locations: a) in the small room where the dog finds the furniture useful to escape the harsh beatings of the family members; b) the black corner where he sleeps highlights the darkness of the dog's social reality as well as the disaster in which he lives day and night; and c) under the table where the child and his dog are used to hide when misfortune came upon them. Though the dog finds no empathy in the different members' hearts the moment misfortune came upon his master, the under table area represents a safe place to over-come the cruelty of the white family. The three locations depicted inside the home highlight the grim reality of this slave and the harshness of the white owners. Moreover, the harshest and most criminal acts of torture started at home and ended outside in the avenue. Fourth, the alleyway where the dog falls dead from the height of the building is the place in which the child holds his slave and friend for the last time in life. Briefly, the investigation of the space in which the actions and events of the story took place highlight that the dog was found in the avenue as a stranger and left dying in the avenue as a stranger. In other words, black slaves live in their masters' homelands strangers like any sorts of belongings and they die strangers without having any humanitarian aspects that their master can feel their disappearance.

On the other hand, the way the time of the story is depicted can be summarized and analyzed under four main titles: the morning, during the day, the evening, and during the night. First, the morning as the opening of the day represents the time of the first meeting of the child with his new slave. "It was a summer morning with the sunshine and a lazy wind raising yellow dust". This summer morning highlights the beginning of a new slavery contract between the child and the dog that was freed from a former one. The dryness of this summer morning is a good indication for the rigidity of the newly established slavery that is built in such a dry season when there is no farming activity. This means that there will be no need for slaves. Second, during the day the dog received the necessary trainings that allow him to be an obedient slave that is able to overcome the harshness of his master through prying for their help and forgiveness. It represents also the span of time during which the

small dog faces the harshness of the family members such as being beaten, humiliated, and underfed. Thus, the conditions in which the dog lived along his day represent the slaves' social reality in the South of the US. Third, the evening is the time of decisions. For instance, both the decision of the admission of the dog as a member of the household and the decision for his funeral took place in the evening. In reality, the evening, which is the time of the parents' return to home, represents the moment in which the child's laws and orders are overwhelmed by the father of the family. This might imply the domination of Southern slavery norms which is justified through the increase of the rate of violence the moment the father gets back home from work. Fourth, during the night the dog revisits the sufferings, the pains, and the injuries he lived during the day in the form of night-mares that are expressed out through his cries and yells. These sounds of despair highlight the grim reality in which he lived where mistreatment, segregation, and humiliation are practiced as forms of racism against this dark brown slave. Finally, the critical investigation of the four moments in which all actions and events in the story took place recapitulate the dog's life in his new social entourage and offer a detailed idea about the harshness of the conditions he witnessed.

To sum up, the critical investigation of the context of the story, as participants and setting, offered a detailed portrait of both the white masters and the black slave. While the black slave was always humiliated, treated as inferior, and considered as a means of comfort and making fun, the white master represented the source of power; he was always respected, prayed for, and given the supremacy. Here, the representation of both races black and white give us an overview about the race relations of power as well as about a whole social system of ideologies manifested on the way whites think about blacks and how blacks think about their white masters. These two binary systems of power relations (powerful white groups vs. powerless black groups) and ideologies (superior whites vs. inferior blacks) describe the social reality in the South of the US during the Jim Crow era. Through the presentation of both the father and the mother, the differences between both the Northerners (the mother) and the Southerners (the father) were highlighted: harsh systems of racism in the South and a less harsh system in the north. Punishment and obedience, as two cornerstones of the slavery process, are emphasized to highlight that blacks has no right to oppose their master or to plot revenge against their harshness. Thus, blacks are meant to be full obedient of the teachings of their masters which means that they are guided by white laws to live as servers.

### **Textual Analysis**

Our analysis of the text of the story under focus will be interested in the critical investigation of the evolution of the narration of the story manifested mainly in its plot. This study of the progress of the narrative seeks to determine how the evolution of the story serves in shaping the racist ideology of white supremacy and black inferiority detected through the analysis of the context of the story. This critique is based on the examination of some examples that are taken from the different moments forming the plot of the narrative.

The first example is taken from the first meeting of the child and his dark brown dog. At this moment the first interview between the child, as the master, and the dog, as the embodiment of a black slave, took place.

*(1) He stopped opposite the child, and the two regarded each other. The dog hesitated for a moment, but presently he made some little advances with his tail. The child put out his hand and called him. In an apologetic manner the dog came close, and the two had an interchange of friendly pattings and waggles. The dog became more enthusiastic with each moment of the interview, until with his gleeful caperings he threatened to overturn the child. Whereupon the child lifted his hand and struck the dog a blow upon the head.*

Note that the opposition of territorial locations highlights from the early beginning of the story the opposition of races (white vs. black). For instance, while the child was standing on a street-corner, the dark brown dog came trotting down the sidewalk in the other part of the avenue. The first regards they exchanged represent the early contact between both participants and I think that they can help each of them determine the impressions of the other to decide what they should do next. However, the narration of the coming actions will be useful to understand how race relations work. Indeed, the dog's hesitation and the little advances he made with his tail highlight his appreciation of the child as a new friend and owner. But, the child's gestures and actions represent him as the master who is in a position of power that allows him to give orders. The qualification of the child and the dog, as master and slave respectively, is based on their actions and behaviors culminating in the apologetic movements of the dog. Also, the increase of the dog's enthusiasm during the interview reflects his eagerness to meet a new owner after being freed from a former one whereas the child's struck to the dog signals the beginning of the master's teachings to his new slave. Thus, the analysis of the narration of what happened during the first meeting (interview) proved that both the dog's and the child's actions and behaviors played crucial roles in determining their power status as master and slave. In the same way the evolution of the story from the beginning of the interview to its end signaled a progress in the relation between the master and his slave from exchanging looks through giving orders to the start of the slavery teachings.

The second example is taken from the narration of the actions happening while the child and his dog are in their way to home. At this period of the narrative the investigation of both the child's actions (repetitive beats) and the dog's actions (repetitive prayers) help us determine the significance of the notions of punishment and obedience in the construction of both white-ness and blackness.

*(2) The child beat his pursuer with a small stick he had found. The dog lay down and prayed until the child had finished, and resumed his journey. Then he scrambled erect and took up the pursuit again.*

Here, the investigation of the actions of both the child "beat" and the dog "laying down and prayed" emphasized an asymmetrical distribution of power relation between whites and blacks. These actions signaled also the real establishment of the slave norms between the child and his new slave. In reality, the

dog that seemed to be astonished with the first beats he got during the first interview becomes more aware about the rules of the game by accepting the beats and showing obedience to his master's teaching. The pursuit is also another action that reflects the dog's surrender to his white master. Briefly, both punishment and obedience are good indicators for the consolidation of the relation between the slave and his master. These are the cornerstones of slavery as a form of social inequality and slavery as a social ideology.

The third example is taken from the child's second interview with his new slave, the dog. The analysis of this example seeks to determine how this interview contributed to the evolution of the narrative as well as to show how the actions of both the dog and the child shape race relation at this moment of the story.

*(3) The child sat down on the step and the two had another interview. During it the dog greatly exerted himself to please the child. He performed a few gambols with such abandon that the child suddenly saw him to be a valuable thing. He made a swift, avaricious charge and seized the rope.*

The analysis of the dog's actions manifested in the verbs "to please" and "performed" showed that he moved from the state of obeying his master towards that of entertaining him. This interview, indeed, signals a new agreement between the child and his slave the basis of which are obedience and entertainment on the part of the dog and punishment, order, and protection on the part of the child. Briefly, this example signals that valuable slaves are the ones who do their best to please their masters.

The fourth example represents the moment of the family's return to home. The analysis of the family members' actions aims at showing how this crucial moment, in the dog's life, served for the re-distribution of power and how the conflict of northern and Southern values affects the dog's social reality as a slave.

*(4) A family council was held. [...] . The affair was quickly ended. The father of the family, it appears, was in a particularly savage temper that evening, and when he perceived that it would amaze and anger everybody if such a dog were allowed to remain, he decided that it should be so.*

The holding of a family council can be interpreted into two different ways. First, it highlights the different viewpoints family members have concerning the remaining of the dog as a member of their home. Also, it might reflect the different opinions they have about slavery. Second, it might emphasize the degree of democracy among the family members which is not the case since the father took a personal decision to accept the dog as a member to the family's home. The triumph of the father's choices highlights the triumph of the Southern values, norms, and laws over the northern ones represented by the mother. Finally, the family's composition – northern mother and Southern father – is a good illustration for the existing differences at the level of slavery norms, traditions, and laws between both the north and the South. The harshness of the Southern segregationist laws finds its peak in the father's treatment of the new slave once he got back home drunk.

The fifth example represents the climax of the story. It depicts what happened the moment the father of the family got back home heavily drunk.

*(5) One day, however, the father of the family got quite exceptionally drunk. He came home and held carnival with the cooking utensils, the furniture and his wife. [...] He gave a huge howl of joy, and knocked the dog down with a heavy coffee-pot.[...] The man kicked out with a ponderous foot. [...] it occurred to him that it would be a fine thing to throw the dog out of the window. [...] He swung him two or three times hilariously about his head, and then flung him with great accuracy through the window.*

Here, we notice that this Southern father's degree of violence and extremism against the dark brown dog got its peak the moment he returned to home over-drunk. The harshness of his actions towards this small dog manifested in such verbs like "knocked, kicked, swung, flung" reflect that the moment the father's mind was heavily drugged his ideologies of hate and racism and his phobia against blacks are translated into actions. The father's state of fun made of him sees the torture of the dog as a source of joy. In other words, being under the influence of his emotions the father decided to throw the dark brown slave through the window. Indeed, the evolution of the narrative at this moment of the story made clear the image of the "harsh" master and the image of the "soft" slave. Thus, the father's objectification of the dog reflects the real image of blacks in the South of the US during the Jim Crow era. This grim reality ends with the death of the dog in the alleyway as a strange; he came as a strange and died as a strange, as we have said in the spacial analysis at the level of the contextual analysis section.

Briefly, the analysis of the above five examples showed that the narrative of the story can be summarized in five main stages. In the first stage, the author highlighted the existence of racial opposition (white vs. blacks) which is the starting point of the narrative. He also tried to emphasize both the bipolarity of the social system of power and to stress the binary nature of the existing social ideologies. In the second stage, Crane signaled the start of the teachings of the slavery codes. In reality, these teachings are the means through which the norms of slavery (punishment vs. obedience) are established. At this level, the slave is taught how to receive punishments and humiliations from his master while praying for forgiveness and asking for apologies to show him that revenge is forbidden. In the third stage, Crane shed light on the shift from obedience to entertainment. Here, the slave is taught how to please his master in order to make of him knows that the good slave is the one who serves his master well. In the fourth stage, Crane depicted the decision-making process through which the dog, as a slave, became as a member of the family's house. In the fifth stage, Crane drew the peak of his narrative. This peak, which is represented by the execution of the slave, highlights the top of white violence against black slaves and signals the denouement of the story. Thus, these five stages determine the evolution of both the plot of the story as well as the progress of the master-slave relations. Moreover, the progress of these relations is crucial for the construction of the schema of racist ideologies as well as for the

understanding of how these ideologies monitor the unfair and unjust distribution of power among racial groups.

### **The evolution of racial identity**

The study of the evolution of racial identity at the level of this short story finds its ground in the examination of the evolution of both factors; race relations and people's thinking about racial differences across generations. As we have said in the above section concerned with the investigation of the way participants are presented, the dark brown dog represents the new black generation and the child represents the new white generation. In reality, the differences in the way white people from different generations treated black slaves is traced through the comparison of the way the parents treated the new slave and the way their child treated him. Though the child was used to punish his new slave repeatedly, he became the dog's friend and savior "in a short time they were firm and abiding comrades". The fact of being abiding comrades is associated with such affections "He beamed with affection upon his new friend". These affections were translated into concrete states of being manifested in the association of the child with his dog "he and the child were associated together at all times". However, the dog did not achieve the intimacy he had with the child with the parents and the other members of the family: "he did not achieve any notable degree of intimacy with the other members of the family ... he had no confidence in them ...". Here, a remarkable difference on how white people from different generations treat black slaves is detected and reflected at the level of people's actions towards and their relations with this dark brown dog.

Moreover, the amelioration of race relations from the generation of the parents to that of their child could be traced also in other textual indices. First, the child's cries to save his friend from the harshness of the family members, especially the parents, "the child had run, protesting loudly, with tears raining down his face and his arms outstretched, to protect his friend", highlight the child's approaching from his slave and the parents' full rejection of him. Second, the child's presence and absence affect the way his parents treat his dog. While during his absence they treat the dog in such a harsh way causing him "serious injuries", in his presence these scenes of harshness and bad treatment could not take place "... but when the child was present, these scenes did not occur". Third, the contrast between the father's violent and savage way of acting culminating in his throw of the dog through the window "he swung him two or three times ... then flung him with great accuracy through the window" and the child's image sitting next to the body of his dead friend "seated by the body of his dark brown friend" highlights a big difference between the way the father and his child treat the other, the black. Thus, the comparison between the way the parents and their child treat the dark brown dog made clear the evolution of power relations between blacks and whites as well as the way they think about each other across generations.

Indeed, the child's intimacy with his dark brown dog can be also explained by his belongingness to a lower class family. However, this explanation might lead to the raise of a logical question why the parents did not treat the dog in the way their child did? Here, the answer to the question is obvious while referring to the

Southern origins of the father and the northern origins of the mother. For instance, in the South during the Jim Crow era segregationist laws were passed to enforce the separation between blacks and whites. The coming of the Jim Crow laws of segregation in the South in the aftermath of the abolition of slavery in 1865 made of racist policies in the South institutionalized which is not the case of the North. Moreover, the savagery and the harshness of the father (South) and the less harsh nature of the mother (North) highlights the difference between Northern federal government laws and Southern laws as well as the difference between the way whites treat blacks in both regions. Also, the defeat of the wife before the strange decisions of her husband is a good indication for the defeat of the northern values and the triumph of the Southern traditions of slavery. Based on the notion of generation, the child carries both the values and ideologies of the South and the north which is obvious through the way he thinks about and treats his dog. Thus, the child who belongs to the new generation represents a hybrid lower class white master who gathers the cultural traditions and institutional laws of both the Southern and northern regions.

To sum up, the evolution of power relations between racial groups (blacks vs. whites) and the way people from different races think about each other across generations finds its logical explanation in the following three factors. First, it depends on the amalgamations that happen at the level of the family. Second, it depends on the evolution of the legislative institutions in the US as well as the evolution of their legislations across time. Third, it is closely connected to the progress of society manifested mainly in the maturity of the black race to demand their basic rights to be equal with the white race. Thus, the evolution of racial identity at the level of various forms of discursive practices like literary discourse, media discourse, political discourse, etc. remains closely dependent on the social and the political evolution of the concept.

## **Conclusion**

The critical analysis of this short story showed that literary discourse is another discourse genre where racial identity is constructed and racism is exposed at various levels of language use. The examination of the way the people of this white family think about the dark brown dog and the way they treat him reflects that racism, as a social practice, is based on the unequal distribution of power among racial groups during the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century America. This asymmetrical distribution of power is monitored by a whole social system of ideologies and beliefs based on the thinking that blacks (slaves) are inferior to whites (masters) and protected by different political legislations. Here, the results of this CDA analysis of the story could be summarized in three main conclusions that we recapitulated in the following three paragraphs.

On the one hand, the investigation of the context of the story – participants, time, and space – highlighted that the way participants are presented and the way time and space are depicted served to expose the reality of racism in the US South. First, the portrait of the child and his family members made clear the way a lower class family deals with racial differences and how they think about the other

(blacks). Indeed, the depiction of the child shaped the image of the new generation masters. He is represented as the master and the savior of his new slave, the dog. The description of the family, especially the mother and the father, emphasized the way the former generation think about black slaves and the way they treat them. For instance, the father is represented as a savage and a cruel guy reflecting the image of Southern master; however, the mother is described on the basis of her relation to her husband as a defeated guy. She represents the image of the northern master. Moreover, the dog as the new guest to the family's house reflects the image of a humiliated slave who has no room or freedom in the Southern US society. Second, the depiction of the spaces in which the actions and the events of the story took place – from the avenue through the way to home and from home back the avenue again – stress that slaves come as strangers and leave strangers as they come. In other words, the description of space made clear that slaves are moving in an empty circle symbolizing the absurdity of their lives as valueless humans. Third, the depiction of time – the morning, during the day, the evening, and the night – reflects the grim reality in which the dog lived. Each of these four times has its significance in the dog's life. While the morning represents the time he met his new friend and master, the evening is the time which is associated with change (accepting the dog as a member of the family's home and deciding upon his murder). However, the night represents the time in which the dog re-lives the pains of what he received as punishments and humiliation during his day in the form of nightmares. Briefly, contextual analysis played a crucial role in drawing the image of both slave and master as well as in depicting the way they live in the US South as two different races.

On the other hand, the study of the progress of the narrative is proved to be very important in determining the way race relations of power are monitored between slaves and their masters. Also, it is crucial to work out the way racist ideologies work to maintain this social status quo, where power is asymmetrically distributed between whites and blacks. For instance, the examination of the first example presents the opposition of races (whites vs. blacks) to highlight the binary racial structure of the Southern American society. The actions of both the dog and the child determine the social position and the power status of each of them as well as the schematic evolution of their relation from the sharing of regards through the giving of orders to the start of the teachings. In addition, the investigation of the second example signals the establishment of the slavery norms that are detected at the level of both the punishment of the child and the obedience of the dog. Here, punishment and obedience are the key features of the binary relation between slave and master. These are the cornerstones of the newly established slavery. Then, the analysis of the third example signals the movement of the dog's relation with his friend from the stage of obedience to that of entertainment. In other words, a slave's importance is measured by his endeavor to best serve his master and please him. With the arrival of the family, the analysis of the fourth example revealed the difference of opinions among the family members, especially the child and his parents, about the other, the black. This example highlights also the differences between Northern and Southern values where the triumph of the father reflects the victory of Southern traditions of slavery. These traditions are zoomed in at the level of the examination of the fifth example where the father's state of being heavily

drunk made obvious his extremism against blacks as well as his hatred of them. At this moment of the narrative, the father's objectification of the dog highlights the harshness of the Southern masters and the softness of their slaves. Thus, though the dog was soft and obedient the father's racist ideologies are turned into actions the moment his mind was drugged. To sum up, the analysis of these five examples showed that the evolution of the narrative served for the construction of both whiteness and blackness.

Finally, the scrutiny of the text of the story under focus revealed that racial identity, race relations, and racist ideologies are not stable. However, they evolve across generations based on the evolution of several factors. First, they can change based on the different sorts of amalgamation happening at the level of the family. Indeed, this is traced at the level of the hybrid race of the child who carries both Northern and Southern values, traditions, culture. Second, they evolve also in a close dependency with the evolution of institutional and political legislations that are represented by the Jim Crow laws. For, instance these laws evolve to keep up-to-date with the evolution happening at the social level so that they can be adequate to maintain social order. Third, they develop based on the development happening at the level of the American society based on the evolution of the blacks' awareness about the need to have equal rights with the whites. In reality, these changes are traced at the level of the way parents think about and treat the slave and the way the child treats him. Also, they can be detected at the level of the intimacy created between the child and his dog and the lack of intimacy between parents and the dog. In addition, they can be captured at the level of the image of the old slave owners who are depicted as harsh and brutal masters and the new slave owners who are portrayed as masters and friends. In brief, all of these changes and the factors they depend on can be summarized in the image of the child as a 20<sup>th</sup> century lower class master.

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