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**Forwarding Literary Dialect to Voice
the Oppressed in Kathryn Stocett's
"The Help"**

**Dissertation submitted as a Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Master in Literature and Civilization**

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Academic Year: 2014/2015

Dedications

I would like to dedicate this modest work to:

The first person who taught me the alphabets, my FATHER

The light of my eyes, my MOTHER

My beloved BROTHERS and SISTER

All students of English department especially of my promotion 2014-2015

Acknowledgements

My faithful praise and gratitude to Allah for blessing, helping me achieving this research and for lightening my path.

I would like to express my great appreciations, my sincere thanks to my supervisor, Prof. Ilhem SERIR who has cheerfully encouraged and guided me to achieve this work.

I am deeply grateful to my co-supervisor, Miss. Fatiha BELMERABET for her invaluable guidance, encouragement and patience that led to the realization of this work.

All the gratitude and thanks to my teacher and guide Prof. Smail BENMOUSSAT.

Special thanks to Mr. Youcef TOUNKOUB for all what he has done to me.

Great thanks are addressed to all my teachers of the department of English Language from fist year till now.

Abstract

The focus of this research is in the area of literary studies and linguistic analysis. Such a study is important in order to demonstrate the peculiar use of language in literary representation. And the way dialect interferes in literature. The research approach adopted in this dissertation includes a literary analysis and an examination of characters' speeches in the American writer Kathryn Stokett's "The Help". The findings from this research provide evidence that Stokett's use of language springs from her familiarity with the American south and peoples' linguistic specificity. The main conclusions drawn from this study are: the use of dialect gives more room for authentic portrayal of the Black women in their real social setting. And it grants them more voice and visibility in the realm of literature.

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General Introduction

General Introduction

Literature and language have long intersected since they are both means of representation. For Edward Sapire's idea(1921), language is a medium of literature but, it is differently used by authors. The ancient literary tradition calls for the utilization of standard varieties of languages in literary performance. And the use of non-standard varieties tends to appear in literature for different representations and for new readership audience. for instance, dickens employs the british dialect in his novels such as Hard Times, Silas Marner, Oliver twist and others to represent different regions and classes ways of utterance. In the same way, Catherine Scott, the feminist American writer uses the non-standard or particularly black American English in her novel "The Help" and this specific usage of language is portrayed through her characters speeches.

In American literature this new literary tradition appears when authors employ American dialect such as western dialect and Black African American dialect. This study induces to analysis the use of Black American dialect to display an authentic representation of Black American society from a literary perspective. This study is enhanced by two research statements:

- 1- To what extent does language use in literature contribute to understand it?
- 2- How does Stockett employ dialect in her novel "The Help" to represent the Black women?

The inclination of this subject was motivated by the fact that the writer has a struggle to be heard and read by people and even to publish her novel caused her an issue.

Besides, her work was adopted in Cinema in 2011 by Walt Disney Studios and directed by Taylor Tate and was widely watched, appreciated and recognized. This fact fosters our interest since the novel represents a fresh material for a peculiar use of language.

This work is divided in to two chapters the first one deals with the theoretical and the contextual debate in which the novel occurred and the different aspects of language and literature. The second analyses the different linguistic aspects of the novel used by the author. This is done through an implementation of examples from the novel “The Help.

1.1. Introduction

Literature is most commonly used by literate and intellectual people, because it is not only used for literary works but also used for medical sciences, computer science and many other disciplines. These achievements are done through complementation of language and its relationship with literature. Yet, very few people know the real meaning of language and literature in their wider sense. This chapter is a review of the literature closely relating to both language and literature. It discusses their actual meaning, and also shows the capacity of literature to incorporate within itself the entire universe of discourses. In other words, it defines literature from different perspectives and its language use. In addition to specificity of language in literary purposes.

1.2. Literature and Language Defined**1.2.1. Meaning of Literature**

Understanding exactly what literature is has always been a challenge; arguably, pinning down a definition has proven to be quite difficult. In ordinary sense, it can be said that whatever is written is literature, but it cannot be a clear and precise definition of literature because its scope is so vast that it covers almost all spheres of life. Scholars of different trends have defined literature differently, but those definitions cannot be taken as final, because everyone has his own definition of literature based on his understanding of it. But it is a universally accepted fact that literature is the mirror of anyone life in which one sees the reflections of one's life. (Rene 16-23).

Etymologically speaking, the word literature has been derived from the Latin word, 'litterae' which means letter. Thus, literature means "things made from letters."

Literature, in its most comprehensive meaning, includes all the creations of human talents in general, or within particular sphere, period, country, or a language. ⁽¹⁾

Collins English Dictionary defines literature as written materials such as poetry, novels, and essays, especially works of imagination characterized by excellence of style and expression and by themes of general or enduring interest. (English Dictionary 4228)

Besides, Esther Lamba has defined literature as a term used to describe written or spoken material. Broadly speaking, literature is used to describe anything from creative writing to more technical or scientific works, but the term is mostly used for the creative imagination, including works of poetry, drama, fiction, and non-fiction. ⁽²⁾

What is more, William J. Long posits

“Literature is the expression of life in words of truth and beauty; it is the written record of man's spirit, of his thoughts, emotions, aspirations; it is the history, and the only history, of the human soul. It is characterized by its artistic, its suggestive, and its permanent qualities. Its object, aside from the delight it gives, is to know man, that is, the soul of man rather than his actions; and since it preserves to the race the ideals upon which all our civilization is founded, it is one of the most important and delightful subjects that can occupy the human mind”. (William J. Long 213)

In view of the fact that literature is the expression of human thoughts, its content is immeasurable because the thoughts and desires of human beings to communicate with one another is also unbounded. Being an art, literature expresses life in forms of truth and beauty. Hence, it reflects truth and beauty which are present in the world but remain hidden from ordinary people. Therefore, literature is like a historical file of

-1- Nabila Tanvir(2009), Literature and its Scope, in www.classic.enotes.com

-2- Lambardi Esther, Classic Literature Guide, in www.classiclit.about.com

people of a particular age because it records not only their activities, customs and habits but also their dreams, their thoughts and their unreachable aspirations.

1.2.3. Definition of Language

From an etymological standpoint, the word language has been originally derived from Latin word, 'lingua' which means 'tongue'. Muharrem Ergin defines

“Language is a natural means to enable communication among people, a living entity that it has its own peculiar laws, by means of which alone can it develop, a system of contracts whose foundation was laid in times unknown, and a social institution interwoven with sounds”. (Muharrem 37)

When language is used in general, it refers to the cognitive faculty which enables people to learn and use systems of complex communication. Language was originated when the early men, having different cultures, started co-operating with one another. At this time, they needed a common language to convey their thoughts and ideas to others. Thus they invented a sign language which soon became very common.

However, they were not satisfied with the sign language; they wanted to convert their thoughts into words and to hear them. Therefore they started finding words which may produce sound. Eventually, they succeeded and the language with sound came into existence. Since the people had different cultures and regions, different languages therefore emerged. After the invention of language they learnt the art of writing and, as a result, started expressing and recoding themselves in writing. Whatever they wrote was preserved and thus in this way literature rose. Moreover, literature is the product of language and so it depends on language. If a language died automatically, its literature also died. Since there are many languages so many different literature came into existence. This symbiotic relationship is an illustrative example of the nature of ties linking language and literature.

1.3. Literary Language

Literary language is that type of language which is used in literary criticism and general discussion on some literary works. Before the 18th century language of literature was totally different from language that was used by the ordinary people in spoken or written forms. For this reason literature was not easy to be understood for ordinary people, only highly ranked and educated people could enjoy and appreciate the reading of literature. It was far away from the reach of the common people. More precisely Shakespeare's language was not easy to be understood by common Elizabethans that is why he was enjoyed the Royal family and the court people, then, Samuel Johnson's ⁽¹⁾ prose also was not easy for common people, because it was full of rhetoric with antecedent models in Greek and Latin. It was only Daniel Defoe who wrote works of literature in the ordinary English language beginning of his novel *Robinson Crusoe* (1719). Since then the language of literature has changed dramatically. (Reve & Austin 98)

In modern times, we can find literature written in the languages which are used by common people in their daily life. This is the reason why literature has become more popular. Now any literate person can enjoy and appreciate the reading the different genres of literature of his or her choice, because it is written in the language which he or she uses in daily life. Nowadays literature has become close to the people and thus, its readership has increased.

-1- **Samuel Johnson** (September 1709 December 1784), often referred to as **Dr Johnson**, was an English writer who made lasting contributions to English literature as a poet, essayist, moralist, literary critic, biographer, editor and lexicographer, he has been described as "arguably the most distinguished man of letters in English history"(DeMaria 252).

On the part of writers it has now become a style to write in ordinary and common language. (Reve & Austin 100)

The literary language contains symbols, metaphor, and hyperbole to express the writer's views effectively. But at present the situation has changed; it is considered to be a writer's quality to use the language of the ordinary people in his or her literary works.

1.4. Specific Language Use of Literature

Is the language used in literary works is different and is characterized by specificities. In other words, what is special about the language of literature and does literature has a language in its own? Chapman views the literature as; 'the highest linguistic usage' and the excellent product of human mind since language in literature is always fostered and carefully revised (Chapman 13).

In the same line of thought, it is argued that literary texts contain authentic inputs that engage students to read, both for information and pleasure. The way they are designed is interesting since it stimulates, students' attention and curiosity and, enhances their scientific research . (Khatib 201)

Language is considered as the raw material of literature and the possibilities of individual expression are infinite. It is primarily an instrument for carrying out different meanings and messages and to convey or mask attitudes. The study of language use in literature is not easy to be characterized and qualified.

The relationship between the writer's attitude and the variety chosen are very important in the study of written language. The writer has to conform to specialized

features of discourse; therefore the reader can correctly interpret. (Williams 219). The fact that language is a medium of understanding, literature can only be appreciated if it is fully understood.

I.5 Linguistic Competence in Understanding Literature

It is agreed among faculties of language that linguistics and literary studies are distinctive domains representing two different disciplines. Where linguists deal with the language as an abstract system, literary critics tend to study the literary text as a concrete artifact. We should answer an inquiry about the application of a linguistic-oriented study to a literary text to obtain a better understanding of a given place of literature. During the process of reading, the learner is constrained to expose a high level of language usage which requires a linguistic competence and wide knowledge about the language to be analyzed.

The Russian formalist ideas of art as just the “laying bare” of one’s technique, of literature as just a special use of language for its own sake, as the sole distinctive feature of literary or poetic language in contrast to practical language, and of foregrounding the utterance as the sufficient aim and quality of literariness⁽¹⁾. Thus, literary or poetic language is an artful performance of language for artistic purposes, not just a special use of language for its own sake. (Tung 71). Tung translates the speech of Confucius who is a Chinese man on one occasion, he notes that,

“Language is for fully expressing ideas. Literature is for fully applying language. Whose ideas can be understood without words?”

-1-Literariness: Knowledgeable about literature.

One cannot go far if one's language is without literariness." (Cited in Tung 153)

Similarly on another occasion Confucius posits that, "One cannot speak well without learning poetics," and that "one cannot live well without learning ritualistic." (ibid 174)

For him, literary competence makes literariness in literature. When he said "one cannot go far if one's language is without literariness," he might be stressing the idea that to go far (that is, to make a far-reaching effect in one's business), one has to make one's language literary: that is fully applied as to possess correctness, effectiveness, beautifulness, appropriateness and many other aesthetic-related aspects.

According to him poetics was also the art of applying language fully. When he said "one cannot speak well without learning poetics," he might be suggesting that to speak effectively and beautifully one has to learn the art of making poetic language. But Confucius thought it is not enough to speak well; he thought one had to live well. When he said "one cannot live well without learning ritualistic," he might be suggesting that to live successfully one has to learn the social, ritualistic conventions.

1.6. Standard and Non-Standard Language

1.6.1. Standard Language

A standard language is that variety of a language considered by its speakers to be most appropriate in formal settings and educational contexts. Consider the case of English. English is spoken as a mother tongue by millions people, as an everyday second language by tens of millions more, and as a fluent foreign language by further millions. Many of these people also write in English. The English used by all these people is far from uniform: there are both regional differences and differences among

social groups within a single community but, a variety has a very special status is called **Standard English**.

Standard English is the form of English acquired through education; indeed, acquisition of Standard English is a large part of what we understand as education in the English-speaking world. Most broadcasting, and almost all publication, is couched in Standard English. Standard English may be spoken in any of a large range of regional accents; no particular accent is associated with Standard English, though in particular countries there are some accents often regarded as more appropriate to Standard English than others. Admittedly, Standard English itself is not quite uniform: for example, there are detectable differences in vocabulary and grammar between standard American and standard British English, though these are not large. Further, of course, Standard English is not immutable: it changes from generation to generation, and the Standard English of the eighteenth century already sounds quaint and distant to us. Finally, standard spoken English is not always identical to standard written English: we write *many students are ill*, but we don't say this; instead, we say *Lots of students are ill*. (Crystal 110)

1.6.2 Non-standard Language

Non-standard language have a distinct grammar, lexis and pronunciation and vary greatly throughout the United Kingdom; for instance, a non-standard English speaker might use the forms 'I ain't done it', 'them sandshoes over there' or 'she sings nice'. The dialects of rural areas often contain more distinctive lexis and grammar than those of urban areas, because speakers of these varieties are not often exposed to being in contact with speakers of other dialects. (ibid 111)

As Crystal points out in his encyclopedia of the English language, linguists had strived for many years to find a definition of Standard English (Crystal 110). At present, Standard English is seen as a variety or a dialect; it includes grammar, vocabulary and orthography, and excludes phonetic features, because its speakers may use various accents. It is not a local variety, because one cannot tell from where the addresser comes (ibid 111). Since most people speak admixtures of local regional dialects and Standard English, it is considered a minority variety, although it carries the most prestige and is widely understood (ibid 112).

Even though the United States of America has no official language set by law, since the very beginning of its independence in the second half of the 18th century, Americans have felt the need to differentiate their language from British English. According to Crystal, as a sovereign nation with an independent government, they wanted their own, independent language (ibid 80). The first attempt to codify American English was carried out by Noah Webster, who proposed different orthography (he introduced a new spelling of words such as defense, labor or theater). Moreover, between 1783 and 1785, Webster published a speller, a grammar and a reader of American English. In 1828, he added a dictionary not only to complete the above-mentioned works, but also because there was a need for codification of new vocabulary which was necessary due to cultural and natural phenomena brought by newly discovered territories terms such as tobacco, plantation or congress among others. (ibid 81)

However, as it was mentioned earlier, very few speakers of any language use only its standard form; in the United States of America, the situation is not

different. The fact that the North American territories were settled by immigrants of diverse origins gave rise to many dialects, language varieties, many of which may be observed till today. As Wolfram and Schilling-Estes point out “regional varieties of English arouse relatively early [...],in many cases as a direct result of regional dialect differences brought over from the British Isles [...], and these differences have been maintained since their initial establishment” (Wolfram & Schilling-Estes 116).

1.6.2.1 African-American Vernacular English

African-American (Vernacular) English, sometimes referred to as Ebonics ⁽¹⁾ is “the paradigm case of ethnicity-based language diversity” (ibid 211), and also a controversial topic, because “race and ethnicity in American society remain highly contentious and politically sensitive” (ibid 212). Despite the fact that it is one of the most frequently discussed matters in linguistic-oriented academic papers (Mufwene 64). Up to now, scholars have not reached an agreement about the origin of this dialect. They agree that African-American English is “historically rooted in a Southern-based, rural working-class variety” (Wolfram & Schilling-Estes 217) however, four different hypotheses about its early development have been established: the Anglicist, the creolist, the neo-Anglicist, and the substrate hypotheses (ibid 219.)

The Anglicist hypothesis claims that African American English and the Southern American dialect share the same ancestry. According to supporters of this theory, slaves brought from Africa learned the regional and social varieties of White speakers with whom they were in contact, and only a few traces of African languages have been preserved in Ebonics till today (idem).

-1- Ebonics: nonstandard form of American English speaker by some black people in United States.

The creolist hypothesis, which was popular in the 1970s, maintains that African-American English developed from a creole. This argument is supported by the fact that Ebonics and other English-based creoles, for example, in Jamaica or Barbados, have several features in common. (Wolfram & Schilling-Estes 220). Advocates of this hypothesis claim that as a result of close contacts with other English varieties, a process of decreolization took place, and this Creole language became more similar to the aforementioned dialects. However, as new data emerged which indicated that “the distribution of slaves [...] was not particularly advantageous to the perpetuation of a widespread plantation creole”, the neo-Anglicist hypothesis was developed. It argues that earlier Ebonics was directly linked to the dialect brought to North America from the British Isles, and the differences between the African-American English and the Southern American dialect stem from Ebonics’ own, unique process of evolution (ibid 222).

The African-American community simply innovated specific features of their speech; as Labov puts it, “many important features of the modern dialect are creation of the twentieth century and not an inheritance of the nineteenth” (idem).

One certain fact about the origin of African-American English is that it arose in American South, and during several migration waves, it spread throughout the United States. Therefore, it is now perceived as a supra-regional ethnic dialect, since it is connected to the African-American community. As Wolfram and Schilling-Estes put it, “due to the legacy of slavery, Jim Crow laws and the consequent segregation, Ebonics has preserved several linguistic features” (ibid 225) which occur with most of its speakers till today: For example, the habitual (be), absence of copula, absence of

third-person (s)in the present tense, absence of possessive and general plural (s), usage of “ain’t” for negative forms of (do) or (be) in present and past tenses, or reduction of final consonant clusters in speech, the result of which may be phonetic writing (Wolfram & Schilling-Estes 214).

According to Ogbu’s research, even though more educated African- Americans speak proper English outside their community, they often refuse to use it within their ethnic group, because it “signifies adopting white attitudes of superiority” (Ogbu 170) and it is “puttin’ on”; means that such a person would be seen as “acting white”, since it is not the natural way of African Americans’ talking. (ibid 171)

1.6.2.2 American White Southern English

American White Southern English, sometimes also called Southern White Vernacular English or Southern American English, is a regional dialect spoken from Virginia to Texas; from Kentucky and Missouri to the Gulf of Mexico (with one exception being Florida). Given the historical development of the American South, this area was under strong linguistic influence of French (especially around New Orleans) and Spanish (mainly in Texas). Nevertheless, settlers from the British Isles finally prevailed: the South was settled above all by the English and Scots-Irish (Wolfram & Schilling Estes 123). Considering the fact that the Southern economy was based on tobacco and cotton plantations where slaves of African descent used to work together with European immigrants, African American and White Southern English’s were in a close contact. On that account, these dialects influenced one another to a great extent, and till today, they share certain features (Mufwene 65), for example, completive “done” or absence of copula (be) (Bernstein 117).

Some linguists argue that Southern English is quite unique because it offers several grammatical structures which may fill gaps Standard English (Bernstein 106). A few of these features have spread outside the South, and are adopted in other regions as well (ibid 107). For example, the addressing pronoun of second person plural “y’all” or “yall” has growing popularity. This mark of intimacy and informality functions well when one wants to distinguish whether they speak to an individual or to a group of people (ibid 108). Another feature typical of Southern dialect is a combination of multiple modal verbs; as an example, Bernstein uses “might could”. This phrase might have been brought to the USA by the Scots-Irish. It is used to express uncertainty and politeness at the same time; it means “maybe I could do it”. (ibid 109)

In contrast to “y’all”, this linguistic element is hardly used anywhere else; even more educated Southerners prefer the phrase “might be able to” (ibid 113). Among lexical items which are characteristic of the White Southern Dialect, “fixin’ to” (meaning “to prepare” and marking an imminent action), “yonder” (meaning “over there”), or “awfully” (as an intensifier meaning “very, really”) may be mentioned. (ibid 114).

However, a specific style is also a part of Southerners’ way of speaking (Johnstone 189). For instance, when asked a yes/no question, a user of this dialect usually includes the address “sir/ma’am” into their answer. As Johnston puts it, their aim is to express emphasis and/or deferential politeness (ibid 190-191). Use of conditional syntax is also rather frequent; speakers may employ it to express requests, as a mitigation device, or in order to make a threat (ibid 194). Such linguistic

structures create distance and “mirror the awareness of culturally appropriate social boundaries” (ibid 193).

The examples listed above should reflect several of the most frequently used features of American White Southern English. Nevertheless, since the American South covers rather a vast territory and a substantial percentage of population, there must be certain variation present; in different regional, ethnic or social groups, various dialectal phenomena occur in different combinations (Bernstein 118).

1.6.3 Dialect in the Prospect of Linguistics

A dialect is a variety of a language. The word dialect comes from the Ancient Greek *dialektos* “discourse, language, dialect,” which is derived from *dialegesthai* “to discourse, talk.” A dialect may be distinguished from other dialects of the same language by features of any part of the linguistic structure phonology, grammar and semantics. (Twain 53)

A dialect is a form of language. It is a style of speaking that comes from a language (such as English or French) but has its own special features and words. A dialect is an offshoot or a subspecies of a language. It usually sounds something like the language it comes from but contains its own distinctive elements too.

Dialects are typically used in dialogue or in instances of a very clear and important narrative voice. All too often, they are often used to personalize the speaker, to imply an origin, or to invoke stereotypes associated with the dialect. (ibid 48)

Dialect, as a major technique of characterization, is the use by characters in a narrative of distinct varieties of language to indicate a person’s social or geographical status. It is used by authors to give an illusion of reality to

fictional characters. It is sometimes used to differentiate between characters. Writers often use dialects to paint an authentic portrait of the location or time period about which they are writing.

1.6.4. Dialect in Literature

In the past there have been two different ways to study a dialect in literature. As John Kirk summarizes them; one is the dialectological, which uses literary texts as evidence of the spoken language and considers the significance provided by the use of the dialect and non-standard within the literary work as historical evidence. The second approach is stylistic, which considers how effective or realistic of actual speech the language of particular texts is and considers the role and effectiveness of the dialect and non-standard within the literary work as a whole. It seems however that since either approach is a bit unsatisfactory by itself, a synthesis is needed (John Kirk 45)

The dialect in literature is used to determine the status of the individuals. Dialect is a helpful tool that an author may use in order to make his/her characters well-rounded. By using a particular dialect for a character, the author is actually telling the reader more about the character's background without directly stating anything. The use of dialect makes the characters seem real, believable. It brings the story and characters to life. Dialects are typically used in dialogue or in instances of a very clear and important narrative voice. All too often, they are used to personalize the speaker, to imply an origin or to invoke stereotypes associated with the dialect. (Ives 158)

The existence of a common stock of forms does not mean that all authors employ exactly the same literary dialect, but that many writers borrow rather than invent the features they use. Indeed, the primary purpose of a literary dialect was not to create an accurate record of regional speech, but to define the social position or perhaps the social divergence, of fictional characters. Contrasts between dialect speakers and non-dialect speakers delineated broad cultural differences: rural (or frontier) versus urban, uneducated versus educated, even irrational versus rational.

(Ives 159)

1.7 Historical Background of the American South in 60's

The Civil Right Movement occurred in United States in sixties. It calls for a political, legal, and social rights requested by Black Americans to gain full citizenship and achieve racial equality. The Civil Right Movement is also called The Black Freedom Movement, the Negro Revolution, and the Second Reconstruction. The most important tents to the movement are the Post Civil War Period, the Educational Period, and the Social Movement.

Concerning, the Civil War, the 13th, 14th and 15th amendments were passed to United States Constitution. The 13th amendment made all black citizens of United States. The 14th amendment granted them equal protection under the law. The 15th amendment gave the Black citizens the right to vote.

After the abolition of slavery, a new form of segregation and subjugation evolved in the South called Sharecropping. This Debt Peonage tied the sharecropper to the land.

The Blacks were kept in debt through their purchases at a General Store owned by the landowner. This new form is portrayed in literature in several literary pieces such as Fanny Lou Hamer's story *To Praise Our Bridge* (1967), in which she describes the life of sharecroppers. It explains how the sharecroppers were kept in debt, and how they were sabotaged if they started to come out of debt. As far as social and political rights are concerned, literacy tests were required in many areas before one could vote. This requirement was the whites because prior to 1864 it was illegal to teach black slave to read and write. The novel *To Praise Our Bridge* (1967) reveals how effective the white power structure of the south was for depriving blacks of voting. It was until 1962 that the author even learned that she could vote. Most of these practices came to an end with the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. (Lawson 77)

The second phase the Civil Rights Movement came through Educational System. The public were funded by property taxes. Since few Blacks actually owned properties, and what was owned by Blacks, had of little value. Besides the schools in Blacks neighborhoods were always of lower quality than those in White neighborhoods. Then, the banking industry hindered advancement. Thereby, the industry engaged in what was called redlining. Where they would draw red lines on a map around Blacks neighborhoods and colluded not to give loans in those areas. (Ibid 90)

Kathryn Stiletto's novel happened in the era of racial segregation in Jackson Mississippi (S Socket's hometown) in the early stage of Civil Rights Movement, when the world of Black women was limited family and workplace. A woman was expected to follow one path. Marriage in early 20s, starts family quickly, and devotes her life for housekeeping, is her major task in life. This situation is described by

socket's Black characters who work as maids for white families in Jackson and who endured the impact of segregation and mistreatment.

1.8 Conclusion

This chapter explains that literature is produced by many writers with many languages. It has universal appeal because it appeals to all human emotions. It basically deals with human emotion, love, hate, joy, sorrow, fear, and faith. In addition to non standard language, if it is not to be dismissed as dead, must have a body of users. Even by a small but influential group it is part of the life of the language. All in all, this chapter has introduced the relationship between language and literature. The intimate relationship between language and literature will be thoroughly discussed and will form the core of the subsequent.

Chapter Two: Dialect Interference in Kathryn Socket's Novel "The Help"

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2.3 Structural Framework and the Plot Summary

2.4 Main Characters' Speech and Discourse

2.4 Aibileen Clark

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2.4.3 Eugenia "Skeeter" Phelan

2.4.4 White Middle Class Characters

2.5 Language and Literature Connectedness

2.6 Conclusion

2.1 Introduction

Nowadays, non-standard language varieties appear in literary writing. Such tradition is found especially, in the field of fiction, like in Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (1930), Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird* (1960) name a few examples. From a wide range of more recently published novels: *Trainspotting* by Irvine Welsh also, Peter Carey's *True History of the Kelly Gang*. Since the use of dialect in literature is very complex aspiring a better understanding of literature, is noticed it in the novel entitled *The Help* (2009) written by a feminist American writer Kathryn Stockett. This chapter analysis the dialect presenting in the novel *The Help*, it is initiated by an introduction of the author. Then, we present a brief summary of the plot in order to outline the story and its main characters. Afterward, analyzing their idiolects to approach the manner by means of which literature can be understood and the role of its language.

2.2 Biography of the Author

Kathryn Stockett was born in 1969, and raised in Jackson, Mississippi. She earned her degree in English and Creative Writing at the University of Alabama. Stockett started writing her first novel in 2001 while living in New York. It took her five years to write it, and five more to find a publisher. She was turned down nearly sixty times before *The Help* was published by Penguin Books in 2009 (Day 25).

Despite the fact that the book has become a best seller, and more than five million copies were sold in the United States, it aroused mixed reactions. A part of the African American community maintains that a middle-class white woman has no right to speak for black domestic workers. Ablene Cooper, a former employee of Stockett's

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family, filed an unsuccessful lawsuit against the author, because she thought Stockett used her name and image in one of the main characters. She was also upset about the author's depiction of black maids (Chaney 55).

An open statement on *The Help* was issued, which claims that the novel distorts, ignores, and trivializes the experience of African American housekeepers. It gives hardly any attention to civil rights activism or sexual harassment to which these women were often subject. According to them, the speech and culture of the black minority are misrepresented in a "child-like, over exaggerated dialect". Likewise, African American men are described only as drunkards, abusive or absent. Overall, the Association sees the novel as a coming of age story of a young white girl who only uses myths about the lives of black women to make sense of her own. (Association of Black Women Historians)⁽¹⁾.

Stockett responded to such criticism arguing that she wrote *The Help* as a tribute and memory to her grandparents' maid by whom she was raised (Day 88). She wanted to tackle the issues of race, privilege, and mutual relationships, which were "not ladylike subjects to discuss" when she was growing up in the South. (Calkin 67)

In one of her interviews, the author mentioned that she used the African American dialect which she remembers from her childhood; however, she did not know the indignation it would cause, she would have probably left it out (Day 72). Nevertheless, not all Americans of African origin rejected the book. Some of them have recommended it after getting positive feedback from their white friends who

-1- Association of Black Women Historians: Founded in 1979, it is a dynamic network of scholars representing every region of the country. The organization's goals are to support black women in the historical profession, disseminate information about Black Women and promote scholarship about Black women.

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“grew up isolated in their whiteness, ⁽¹⁾” and appreciated the novel as a view into a “world that is known to them but not felt” (Carmichael 70).

The novel was translated into over 42 different languages and adopted into a film by Walt Disney Studios in 2011.

2.3 Structural Framework and the Plot Summary

The novel is narrated through various voices of three first person narrators all of them are main characters: housekeepers Aibileen and Minny, and by Skeeter, a young white woman. They usually take turns. In addition to that, an impartial observer recounts a whole chapter in the third person. The novel displays a non-cohesive multi-linear type of narrative because the narrators take turns, and each one of them depicts the delivered expanse of time from their personal stance, blending the everyday events with their internal conceptions and memories. (Brackin, 25)

The story happened in Jackson, Mississippi, at the beginning of the roaring 1960's and contemporary to the Civil Rights Movement. The situation in the literally divided Deep South is having a quiet slow change, not to say, it is static with no hope. For the maids of middle-class whites' homes and friends of African American race, Aibileen Cooper and Minny Jackson, life seems to be normal. They fulfill their home shores; cleaning, cooking, taking care of the households, and suffering the difficulty of the despised people are their daily circumstances. Besides, they are obliged to take care of white children, but who are not allowed to eat in the employers' houses. Eugenia “Skeeter” Phelan is returning home after graduation from the University of Mississippi.

-1- Whiteness: the quality or state of the achromatic color of greatest lightness (bearing the least resemblance to black).

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Unlike her peers, courtship is not her passion no settling down nor starting a family. Becoming a writer is her major dreams. A housekeeping column was the first writing Skeeter did for the local newspaper. She found help in Aibileen, since the Phelans' maid who raised Skeeter is not present. Nevertheless, the column was the young white lady the explicit alibi; because her interest was in producing something deeper about the real situation of the African American in the southern area which was a place of high rate of segregation and racial mistreatment. Then the real feeling of African American employees and house maids is her farsighted objective.

Stockett was inspired by a New York publisher to follow the subject; however, black women fright to unveil to Skeeter about how her friends and acquaintances deal with their employees. Finally, the disturbing events in Jackson encourage a dozen of domestic workers to contribute to Skeeter's testimony on Southern society. The resulting book causes a great deal of tumult not only in Jackson. Even though its main characters do not participate in the actual civil rights movement, but some of them attempt to make a change in their own lives thanks to the strength, audacity and power the book provide them.

2.4 Main Characters' Speech and Discourse

According to the narrative structure of the novel and combinations large expanse of the main characters' internal speech and dialogues, a careful reader can discern that each character has a specific way of speaking. With each of them, Stockett employed some dialectal and stylistic aspects regularly. In other words, each of her characters uses a different idiolect. The latter may be defined as follows way: "it refers to the linguistic system of an individual one's personal dialect" (Crystal 302). It is

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related to individual's use of distinct registers, and choices of linguistic structures and elements. The following analysis of the some characters' speeches may clear this idea.

2.4.1 Aibileen Clark

Aibileen is an old woman of fifty-three years; she is also a daughter of a maid and granddaughter of a house slave. She has worked in white households since the age of fourteen, when she was dropped out of school and forced for financial reasons to help her family. During her career, she has raised seventeen white children. At present, she is working as a maid in the Leefolt family looking after their little girl (Stockett 258).

Aibileen was not a lucky woman; her ex-husband went away her when she put her son Treelore. She struggled to raise him well and to provide him with a good education. However, several years ago, her son was stricken by a white driver. Unfortunately, none of the witnesses of the accident helped him get to the hospital. Since she lost her unique son, Aibileen has generated a "seed of bitterness" (Ibid 29). Despite this bitterness, she did not give up people in her community as she is a very devoted person, and a fervent Christian and very religious and regular worshiper, whose prayers are seen as very powerful. Despite her past losses, she tries hard to find happiness in looking after the baby girl, though the Leefolts pay her very little and all too often mistreated her. Aibileen does not use ironical discourses ⁽¹⁾ or sarcasm ⁽²⁾ in her inner speeches. In fact, she displays only one register; African-American

-1-irony: is a form of expression in which an intended meaning is the opposite of the literal meaning of the words used.

-2-sarcasm: A form of wit that is marked by the use of sarcastic language and is intended to make its victim the butt of contempt or ridicule.

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Vernacular, because both her internal thoughts and interaction with people, whether black or white, put down in the aforementioned dialect. Presumably, the most distinguished syntactic aspect of her speech is the deletion of subject in many sentences, which helps to the illusion of oral narrative like in: "I think this chapter is right good. Read just as well as the slow-wrote ones" (Stockett 355); "a lot a colored womens got to give they children up, Miss Skeeter. Send they kids off cause they have to tend to a white family ..." (Ibid 358).

Phonologically speaking we found some phonological characteristics which in Aibileen's discourse, wrong spelling and omission of syllables like in "raise you chilluns"(Ibid 2) , "be deaf as a doe-nob"(Ibid 7), "bout Law"(Ibid 27) (meaning "about Lord"), "a young'un"(Ibid 109) (meaning "a young one"), "swaddle em up in towels" (Ibid 186) . these sentences and phrases denote Stockett's mastery of African American language.

Such misspelled words are often interlaced with dialectal morphological features, especially with forms of different tenses for instance: "she would a just shown up", "she gone short my pay" (Ibid 99). Aibileen also omits copulas (auxiliaries) very often as in "he dead" (Ibid 127), "I know you honest" (Ibid 21), and uses the plural (s) quite freely such as "mens" (Ibid 192), "womens"; "peoples" (Ibid 208). Double negatives, often with is often shown in Aibileen's speech "ain't" as the auxiliary verb: "I don't mean anything disrespectful" (Ibid 84), "Oh, I know you ain't sick." (Ibid 225) .In general, in a very liberate manner, Aibileen employs various verb forms. Sometimes she uses the third person singular (is) for various persons and multitudes "I's" "you is kind" (ibid 443), "ladies is here" (Ibid 5). In some occasions,

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she deletes the third person singular suffix (s) in present tense "she don't see me rolling my eyes," "she look at us both kind a funny" (stockett 10). furthermore, she uses habitual (be), and the past participle to produce various forms of past tense "I be hurting" (Ibid 92), "her face be the same shape"(2), "I done looked after"(Ibid 284), "I seen ladies rub it" (Ibid 43) . The adverbial suffix (ly) is also dropped as in: "ready to assure her of how careful we're being" (Ibid 255), "Miss Hilly's voice is loud" (Ibid 427).

Concerning vocabulary, Aibileen often utters the pronoun (them) as a deictic ⁽¹⁾ expression, for instance in "see all them letters" (Ibid 435) or "I see them numbers" (ibid 12). Her lexical choice contains rather colloquial and informal expressions "I reckon," (ibid 16) "she gobble it up" (ibid 8), "flock of maids" (ibid 103), "fish in my pocketbook" (ibid 22), "she done plopped herself down," "right to barge in on me" (ibid 102), "umpteen years" (ibid 119).

In a nut shell, Stockett uses a combination of dialect discourse and colloquialization ⁽²⁾. She also used several different types of identifying elements: lexical items expressions such as "tee-vee" (ibid 295), "hmphing," (ibid 95) or "reckon" (ibid 316), phonetic writing, omission of copula, of syllables or even whole words, omission of the verbal suffix in the third person in the present tense, double negatives, and non-standard forms of various tenses "she gone say" (Idem).

2.4.2 Minny Jackson

Minny, a black maid and Aibileen's best friend, has five children and is married to

-1- Deictic: A word specifying identity or spatial or temporal location from the perspective of a speaker or hearer in the context in which the communication occurs.

-2- Colloquialization: Characteristic of informal spoken language or conversation.

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Leroy. With a well educated mother who asked her children to speak properly, she lived in a quiet educated situation. Minny has a strong sense of irony; her pain against the severely separated and fully divided society push her imprudent mouth, although, she attempts to keep her unthoughtful and subjective observations about her bosses to herself. On many occasion sneak-out comments and cause her loss of works in houses of white people. Consequently, she find great difficulties to believe that Skeeter would like to hear maids' stories without revealing them to other white ladies.

This character's mind style is probably the most interesting one. Thanks to her educated mother, Minny's inner voice is much closer to Standard English than Aibileen's. However, her dialogues, both with members of her community and white bosses, are led in African American Vernacular as in:

I tell her about the bottles I found. I don't know why I hadn't told her a week and a half ago when I found them. Maybe I didn't want her to know something so awful about Miss Celia. [...] But now I'm so mad I let it all spill out. (Stockett 226)

Then in:

"And then she fired me."

"Oh, Law, Minny."

"Say she gona find another maid. But who gone work for that lady?"

I ain't apologizing to no drunk. I never apologized to my daddy and I sure ain't apologizing to her." (ibid 227)

Interchangeably, she moves between these two codes probably because she avoids acting white, or to give the impression of posing herself at a higher social rank and remains in her skin as being a Black. She avoid to be misunderstood or underestimated by her own community; for the second role, white people would ridicule her imitation of their language variety instead of staying a mere African American maid. Similarly

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to Aibileen, one significant no confinement to Standard English syntax in Minny's speech is the omission of subject: "Ordered a book in the mail to learn the game, *Bridge for the Beginner*. Out to call it *Bridge for the Brainless*" (Stockott 213) One of her peculiarities is also the fact that she sometimes talks about herself in the third person: "Oh now, Minny, don't go on that way" (ibid 132) "I'll make of a Minny's famous caramel cakes" (ibid 140). She differently uses various morphological features in her inner speech from her dialogues. In her thoughts, Minny uses contracted forms that pervade in usual informal discourse "she's calling up another name [...] it's the newsletter from the Ladies League" (ibid 214)

When speaking to other people, regardless their origin, Minny employs morphological aspects of African American Vernacular, basically, to the same degree as Aibileen. As far as her lexical choices are concerned, Minny employs many colloquial expressions, especially verb phrases; to name a few examples: "their doodied up home" (ibid 32); "her Yes-ma'aming, No-ma'aming" (ibid 39).

Minny's substitution of Standard and African-American English brings a meaning. It is part of her personality, of her vista and of her own culture, in which not being black and sticking to the origin is crucial to survive. Unlike the first character, the second instance contains one phonological feature and a high percentage of various morphological components from African-American English such as the omission of the copula; missing (s) in the third person singular of the present tense; auxiliary "ain't;" double negative; "gone" plus infinitive for future tense; and omission of subject.

2.4.3 Eugenia "Skeeter" Phelan

Eugenia Phelan is a young woman from a respected white family and a fresh graduate of the University of Mississippi (Stockett 54). Unlike most Southern women of her age, she does not search for happiness in a serious relationship. She refuses to give up her dreams and settle down to found a family (ibid 55). Moreover, she wants to become a respected author. Although Skeeter is trying to reunite with her friends, she finds it hard to fit in the so-called Junior League of young, white members of Jackson middle class. As a child, she had a strong relationship with her family's maid Constantine. However, after returning home, Skeeter finds out that Constantine had left the Phelans. (Ibid 68)

The atmosphere of civil rights movement, her own memories of the person she misses so much, and apparent inequity in the Jackson Society give her the idea to pursue the issue of relationships between African-American housekeepers and their white employers. This path is a quite hazardous one, and Skeeter has to pay a price she loses not only her longtime friends, but also the only man she has ever loved (ibid 276). However, as one door closes, another opens, and the success of Skeeter's book wins her a position in a respected publishing house. As a professional writer and talented novelist, Skeeter is very eloquent, and her vocabulary is rich. However, this born and raised young Southerner still preserves very few lexical features in American White Southern English an instance of this is the use of the pronoun "y'all" (ibid 7), summarizing "is all", "mother's just... protective is all" (ibid 243), or "Missus" for elderly respected ladies like "Missus Walters" (ibid 164) or "Missus Stein" (ibid 160).

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Yet, the only morphological non-standard feature this character uses is contracted forms.

The fact that Skeeter does not use many features of American White Southern English is related to her aim for proper speech. Moreover, she uses many less frequent words and rather fresh collocations; to name just a few, "wait for her to elucidate" (ibid 144); "I find dull and vapid and have never paid" (stockett 258).

2.4.4 White Middle Class Characters

Dialectal elements of American White Southern English are more prominent in speech of the more peripheral characters Skeeter's mother, friends and acquaintances. It is argued that the dialect of middle-class white Southerners manifests mainly at the lexical level. There are very few morphological features such as omission of copula; missing adverbial suffix (ly) the structure "is all" can be seen as a borderline case between syntactic and morphological elements. Stockett was criticized for the fact that her characters' of African American origin use more dialectal features in their speech, and also for depicting white people of higher social rank with lesser degree of nonstandard elements (Day 115)

However, she claims that she based this linguistic aspect of the novel on her memories, and that it is up to an author's sole discretion (Carmichael 44).

2.5 Language and Literature Connectedness

The fact that language is a medium of understanding, literature can only be appreciated if it is well understood. Language is the vehicle on which literature is carried and transmitted. David Lodge said "the novelist's medium is language: whatever he does, novelist, he does in and through language" (57)

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Presumably language as a medium is analogous to paint, bronze or celluloid for other arts. But the metaphor easily comes to mean 'only a medium': the real thing is the novel which is conveyed in and through the linguistic medium. Thus, the substance of literature is shifted into some obscure and defined, sphere of existence which is somehow beyond language. But, for linguistics, literature is language, to be assumed just like any other discourses. It makes no sense to deteriorate the language to a mere medium, since the meanings, themes and larger structures of a text, 'literary' or not, are only built by the text in its interrelation with social and other contexts. Therefore language is an intermediate through which literature is conveyed. Language is a set of words to express our ideas to others. This is a means through which we express our thoughts. Literature is the thought, meanings, conventions, emotions and experience which are expressed with the help of language. Thus, it is clear that without language there is no existence of literature because without language there is no room for expression. Language is the fundamental unit of literature. One can say that language makes literature. Certainly, Literature is produced by the creation of works in a particular language by writers in specific context (time, place and literary movement...) Language is a mode of expression of thoughts by means of articulate sounds. Thus, literature has several forms which are called literary forms like prose, poetry, drama, novel, epic, short stories. These forms are mainly produced through language.

All these literary forms are loaded with language in which they are written. In short, one can say that the entire literature is constructed by the language in which it is written. Hence, Language is the method of expression whereas literature is the

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collection of such expression in the aforementioned forms. Through literature we discover ourselves; we find ourselves and our life in a character, the characters of a novel or a drama reflects our life and may impact our behaviors and move our emotions then, it also fosters our imagination. It is through the study of literature that we see ourselves. The study of literature improves our thinking skills. This will be learnt through analyzing themes, characters and symbols in a work of literature. It enlightens our imaginative power of the mind.

2.6 Conclusion

Literary dialect is a seal of an author's peculiarity in literary portrayal. It manifests through spellings, elisions, apostrophes, syntactical shifts, and signals of a language variety. The use of literary dialects has become a characteristic of American literature as in Kathryn Stockett's novel "The Help" that is analyzed in this chapter in which dialect has been represented by Stockett's characters. It is noticed that each character has her way of speaking. For instance, all the maids use a version of Black dialect which the author endeavors to display although their southern white employers mainly use Standard English. The representation of Black dialect appears to illustrate best the conventional nature of literary dialect and its responsiveness to social change and upheavals that is clearly shown in "The Help". One reason for this is that the Blacks have appeared in American literature as an easily identified dialect of speaking group for a considerably a longer time than any other group in the American society. The American Ebonics is one of the most representative dialects in literature.

General Conclusion

Literature has always been one of the instruments for people to deliver their messages to the others. Many literate and intellectual people write literature to share their thoughts about their real life; experience and imagination. Hopes and aspirations are also conveyed via literary portrayals. They express their ideas which they think are appropriate to share with readers in many sort of literary works. The readers are interested in getting involved in the situation or setting and they are able to analyze the characters and the actions which are provided in the story because literature introduces us to a new world of experiences. As Kathryn Stockett does in her novel “The Help”, she recounted her experience as a child in the American South where Jackson’s population of White and Black are equally treated, since she never saw any Black receiving his/her education.

As she shared her childhood experiences of black domestic who worked in her family. She has the muse of writing down a story on the Black American dialect in order to display the image of the real situation to be clear and understandable.

Hence, Stockett succeeds when she used this type of dialect. She attracted the attention of the readership audience as it is noticed that each one of her character uses a distinctive dialect. For Aibileen, she has only one register that is the African American Vernacular English. But, Minny’s inner voice is much closer to Standard English than Aibileen’s. While, Skeeter is very eloquent, and her vocabulary is rich. For that reason, over ten million copies of the novel have been sold and translated in

over 42 different languages. Because of this success, in 2011, the novel was adapted into a film by Walt Disney Studios.

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Appendix A; Kathryn Stockett Biography



Kathryn Stockett is a writer and editor of American origin. Born in 1969 in Jackson, Mississippi, she is best known for her critically acclaimed novel *The Help*.

Stockett studied creative writing and English for her undergraduate course from University of Alabama. Then she moved to New York in order to pursue work in publishing business. For about nine years she offered her services in marketing and publishing of magazine there and later relocated in Atlanta, Georgia. She shifted her interest to literary writing as she moved back to South. After five years of hard work on her personal writing project she finally had *The Help* published in 2009. It was not easy for Stockett to find a willing literary agent to represent her work. After rejection from 60 literary agents consecutively, eventually agent Susan Ramer took upon the task. The novel became a milestone in Stockett's writing career earning a tremendous praise for writing on a unique subject matter. The inspiration for the novel is Stockett's own childhood.

The Help highlights the relationship dynamics between whites and their African-American domestic help in South. At first Stockett was reluctant to write about the dynamics of this relationship as she knew it would be heavily criticized, she recounted her experience as a child in South where Jackson had equal population of

white and black, though she never saw any black receiving education. Her childhood memories are only of blacks as domestic help for white people which she assumed customary affair. It was not until she moved to North she was able to see the bigger picture. She realized that she was living in an isolated place where blacks were not considered equal race.

In an interview with a writer for *Bookreporter* Web site, Stockett explained her attitude as a child: “Growing up in Mississippi, almost every family I knew had a black woman working in their house—cooking, cleaning, and taking care of the white children. That was life in Mississippi. I was young and assumed that’s how most of America lived.”

During the initial process of writing Stockett employed the first-person narrative of a black housekeeper, thinking her work would never have any readership. It was not until she let her friends read the book in order to get their valuable feedback, she felt concerned about her narrative technique and depiction of characters. Despite her apprehension, the novel won rave reviews from readers and critics alike. Over ten million copies of the book have been sold in over 42 different languages. In 2011, the novel was adapted into film by Walt Disney Studios and directed by Taylor Tate.

After publication of the novel, Kathryn Stockett professed that she felt mortified that it took her 20 years to see the unjust treatment of blacks. And the sole reason for her writing *The Help* was to understand why she couldn’t see through the duplicity of things in South. The memories of Demetrie still haunt her and make her wonder what her childhood companion would think of present America, electing a black president twice. Stockett told the interviewer for *Bookreporter* Web site: “I’ll never know what

it really felt like to be in the shoes of those black women who worked in the white homes of the South during the 1960s and I hope that no one thinks I presume to know that.”

Appendix B **The Summary of the Novel “The Help”**

Told through the point of view of three different women living in Jackson, Mississippi, *The Help* chronicles events from late summer of 1962 through 1964.

Twenty-two-year-old Skeeter has just returned home after graduating from Ole Miss. She may have a degree, but it is 1962, Mississippi, and her mother will not be happy till Skeeter has a ring on her finger. Skeeter would normally find solace with her beloved maid Constantine, the woman who raised her, but Constantine has disappeared and no one will tell Skeeter where she has gone.

Aibileen is a black maid, a wise, regal woman raising her seventeenth white child. Something has shifted inside her after the loss of her own son, who died while his bosses looked the other way. She is devoted to the little girl she looks after, though she knows both their hearts may be broken.

Minnie, Aibileen’s best friend, is short, fat, and perhaps the sassiest woman in Mississippi. She can cook like nobody’s business, but she can’t mind her tongue, so she’s lost yet another job. Minny finally finds a position working for someone too new to town to know her reputation. But her new boss has secrets of her own.

In pitch-perfect voices, Kathryn Stockett creates three extraordinary women whose determination to start a movement of their own forever changes a town, and the way women-mothers, daughters, caregivers, friends-view one another. A deeply moving novel filled with poignancy, humor, and hope, *The Help* is a timeless and universal story about the lines we abide by, and the ones we don’t.

Glossary

- **Accent** : mode of pronunciation characteristic of a group of people or region; emphasis placed on a certain syllable in a word; mark on a letter or word showing stress or pitch; emphasis; contrasting element.
- **Anglicist**: Anglist , expert in the field of English language or English literature.
- **Cognitive**: of or being or relating to or involving cognition.
- **Colloquialization**: characteristic of informal spoken language or conversation.
- **Communication**: exchange of information or ideas; transfer, passing along; letter, message.
- **Creolist**: creole, language that is a mixture of a few separate languages and was formed as a result of contact between cultures. Of or pertaining to a creole language; made with a tomato-based spicy sauce with peppers and onions.
- **Deictic**: A word specifying identity or spatial or temporal location from the perspective of a speaker or hearer in the context in which the communication occurs.
- **Dialect**: form of a language spoken in a certain area or district; subordinate variety of a language.
- **Dialect**: The language of a particular district, class, or group of persons.
Dialectal: belonging to or characteristic of a dialect.
- **Dialogue**: a literary composition in the form of a conversation between two people.
- **Discourse**: extended verbal expression in speech or writing.
- **Ebonics**: nonstandard form of American English spoken by some black people in United States.
- **Ethnicity**: ethnic character, quality of belonging to an ethnic group.
- **Idiolect**: personal language or speech of an individual person during a specific time in life.
- **Irony**: is a form of expression in which an intended meaning is the opposite of the literal meaning of the words used.

- **Language:** body of spoken or written words with which people communicate thoughts and feelings; specialized vocabulary; nonverbal means of communication (system of symbols.); manner in which a person writes or speaks; manner in which animals communicate.
- **Linguistic:** the scientific study of language.
- **Literariness:** Knowledgeable about literature.
- **Literary:** of or pertaining to books and writings, of literature; scholarly, educated, well-read; loving literature; pertaining to authorship.
- **Literature:** writings having lasting artistic value (i.e. Poems, novels, essays) body of writing from a particular (or time period); body of writing dealing with a certain subject; literary work; any printed material; profession of a writer.
- **Non-standard:** not normal, not typical, not as widely accepted ;(of a language, word or phrase) not thought of as being correct or in the from that is usually accepted as standard.
- **Register:** style of language used in a particular setting (Linguistics), in Sociolinguistics, variety of a language used for a specific objective or in a specific social setting.
- **Rhetoric:** study of the effective use of language; art of speaking and writing effectively; oratory, study of language as a means of persuasion; use of bombastic language, use of unnecessarily florid language.
- **Ritualistic:** of or characterized by or adhering ritualism.
- **Sarcasm:** A form of wit that is marked by the use of sarcastic language and is intended to make its victim the butt of contempt or ridicule.
- **Speech:** speaking ability; something that is communicated orally, something that is spoken; dialogue, conversation; manner in which one speaks; dialect; study of oral communication.
- **Standard:** conforming to the established language usage of educated native speakers.
- **Stylistic:** of or relating to style (especially in the use of language).

- **Vernacular:** local language of a particular place; regular spoken language (as opposed to literary language); speech that is characteristic to a certain field; ordinary terms for organisms that also have scientific names(Biology).
- **Whiteness:** the quality or state of the achromatic color of greatest lightness(bearing the least resemblance to black).