

**From Breakdown into  
Breakthrough: Evaluating the  
Language of Transformation  
in Viola Davis' Finding me**

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**Abstract**

Literary memoirs hold a significant place in the realm of literature, offering readers a unique and intimate glimpse into the lives and experiences of individuals. A major theme tackled in memoirs is shedding light on the identity of the writer, revealing his/her journey and any changes occurring to it. Thus, the present paper investigates Viola Davis' memoir *Finding Me* (2022) to trace the various phases of her self-healing journey, constructing her identity as reflected in her linguistic choices. An eclectic model which integrates Burke and Stets' (2009) and Stets and Burke (2014a; 2014b). Identity Theory, Martin and White's (2005) Appraisal Model, Conceptual Metaphor Theory (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003; Kövecses, 2022) and foregrounding (Leech 1969) is employed to detect Davis's shift from a non-verified identity to a verified one. In addition, her emotional transformation is revealed in the language of Attitude she tends to utilize as well as her thoughts. Furthermore, the analysis emphasizes the crucial significance of her use of metaphor and foregrounding devices to highlight her emotions or the development in her identity.

**Keywords:**

*Viola Davis, Finding Me, Appraisal Model, Identity theory, Conceptual Metaphor Theory, Foregrounding*

## **1. Introduction**

Literary memoirs allow us to witness the triumphs, struggles, and transformative moments of real people, creating a powerful connection between the author and the reader. These personal narratives, written by authors who often possess a remarkable ability to reflect and articulate their own stories, provide a profound and authentic portrayal of the human condition.

In this study, Viola Davis' memoir *Finding Me* is investigated to explore how language reflects her transformative self-healing journey. An eclectic approach is employed to identify the unique linguistic and stylistic features of the memoir. Three main models are utilized in the analysis: the Appraisal Model (Martin & White, 2005), Conceptual Metaphor Theory (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Kövecses, 2022), Appraisal Model and Identity Theory (Burke & Stets, 2009; Stets & Burke 2014a, 2014b) in addition to Leech's (1969) foregrounding. The combination of these three theories demonstrates how language can symbolize the shift from a traumatized to an empowered self. The vocabulary and stylistic strategies Davis uses to generate emotions, to lead the reader through her problems, victories, and transforming moments in her self-healing process, are part of this eclectic approach. By analyzing the social and cultural setting shown in the text, identity theory is used to capture how Davis represents her identity.

Such an eclectic approach is employed to answer the following questions:

1. How far does foregrounding reflect Viola's thoughts and emotions?
2. How far do the metaphors used demonstrate Viola's emotions?

3.How far does the Appraisal Model account for the transformation of her self-image in the light of the identity theory?

## **2.Review of the Literature**

### **2.1 Identity Theory**

According to Burke and Stets (2009), people can have several identities based on the several roles and the groups they are affiliated to in their society. Identity theory aims to illustrate the meanings people have for the identities they claim, how these identities are related, and how identities affect their behaviour, emotions and thoughts.

Burke and Stets (2023) elaborate their definition of identity as “the set of meanings that characterize people as belonging to a social category, such as their race or gender (categorical identity); as group members such as participants of their family or local clubs (group identity); in their roles, such as a student or worker (role identity); or as individual such as individual persons such as being dominant or moral (person identity)” (p.1)

Burke and Stets (2009) claim that when an identity becomes active in a situation, a feedback loop is created. This loop consists of four components: *identity standard*, *input*, *output* and *comparator*. Identity standard represents the meanings people think of themselves when they claim a certain identity. For instance, someone can apply the meanings of being “studious” when he thinks about himself in the student identity. Input refers to how they believe others see them in a situation (reflected appraisals). For example, if a student sees himself studious, people might notice that and tell him that he is a hard worker. Then he will compare these reflected appraisals with his identity standard via the comparator. Finally, the output calculates the difference between

the input and the identity standard. If there is a match between them, this is identity verification. However, identity non-verification occurs when there is a mismatch between the identity standard and the reflected appraisals, which leads to negative emotions.

Moreover, Stets and Burke (2014a) assert that identity verification is linked to the three aspects of self-esteem which are *self-worth*, *self-efficacy* and *self-authenticity*. Self-esteem is the image of a person towards themselves, whether positive or negative. Self-worth is the person's feeling of value and acceptance by others. Self-efficacy is the person's feeling of competence and effectiveness. Self-authenticity is the person's ability to live with their true self. Thus, it is obvious that self-worth, self-efficacy and self-authenticity are tied to the verification of social/group, role and person identities, respectively.

Stets and Burke (2014b) state that “[i]dentity change occurs when the meanings of one’s identity shift over time.” (p.75) Identity change can occur in three cases. The first happens when there is a mismatch between the identity standard meanings and behaviour meanings. In other words, when reflected appraisals exceed or fall behind the identity standard meanings. The second case occurs due to the conflict in a person’s multiple identities which are related to each other. Thus, the less salient identity might witness more change than the more salient one. The final form is related to the social structure which either limits the person’s possibility of enacting their own identity or allows more freedom of choice to verify their identity.

## **2.2 The Appraisal Model**

The Appraisal Model is developed by Martin & White (2005) within the framework of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) by Halliday (1994). Accordingly, they hold Halliday's view that meaning making is classified into three broad metafunctions: (1) Ideational metafunction showing how the world of experience is construed via language, (2) Interpersonal metafunction is concerned with the social relations between participants and the type of interactions between them, involving their feelings and attitudes and (3) Textual metafunction by which both the ideational and interpersonal meanings are coherently organized into texts. Moreover, the appraisal framework describes the evaluative meanings upon which the interpersonal metafunction is contingent. As White (2015) explains, this model provides for analyses of those meanings by which texts convey positive or negative assessments, by which the intensity or directness of such attitudinal utterances is strengthened or weakened and by which speakers/ writers engage dialogistically with prior or potential respondents to the current proposition. (p.1)

Martin & White (2005) account for three main systems of meaning construing interpersonal meaning: ATTITUDE, ENGAGEMENT and GRADUATION. Attitude deals with how speakers or writers adopt a positive or negative attitude towards people, places or objects. Concerning Engagement, Read and Carroll (2010) explicate the fact that it considers the opinion of oneself (monogloss) with respect to others' (heterogloss). However, graduation has to do with how language is used to either amplify or diminish the attitude and engagement towards phenomena. Hence, these three systems of meaning are discussed in detail.

### **2.3 Cognitive Linguistics**

Cognitive Linguistics is a branch of linguistics that investigates the relationship between language and cognition. It seeks to understand how language reflects and shapes our conceptual systems, and how our cognitive processes influence language production and comprehension. Cognitive Linguistics emerged in the 1970s as a reaction against generative grammar and the idea that language is an autonomous system separate from other cognitive processes. It drew inspiration from various fields, including philosophy, cognitive psychology, and anthropology. George Lakoff and Mark Johnson's book "Metaphors We Live By" (1980) became a foundational work in the field. Thus, one of the most crucial achievements is the conceptual metaphor theory proposed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980; 2003).

### **2.4 Foregrounding**

Foregrounding is one of the most significant stylistic tools employed by writers to highlight particular ideas or thoughts. Leech (1969) proposes that the writer has the right to break the linguistic rules based on what is called poetic license; this is undertaken to foreground a certain idea. According to Short (1996), foregrounding is "the psychological effect" created by bending the linguistic norms or repeating the same pattern. Foregrounding as a linguistic phenomenon can be fulfilled either through deviation or parallelism.

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1 Data

*Finding Me* (2022) is a touching and compelling memoir written by Viola Davis who is an American actress and producer. She is the only African American who have won the Triple Crown of Acting, and one of the few actors to have received an Emmy, a Grammy, an Oscar, and a Tonya. From a life of poverty and hardship during her childhood years in Rhode Island to fame in New York City, Viola Davis is not a quitter. Through close examination of the most painful memories, deep reflection, and therapy, Viola Davis finds a life worth living.

Her story has a very terrible and challenging beginning. She suffered a great deal as a result of her difficult living situation and poverty. Her parents did the best they could, given a situation which was not great. She exposed how she overcame adversity and difficult experiences to become the person she is today with great honesty.

It is fascinating how many people who excel in some way have a spark in their early years that ignites their passion for the future. For Viola, it was her older sister's question about what she wanted to be in the future. Viola's fortitude, perseverance and relentless honesty were her tools through the despair and trauma of her childhood.

#### 3.2 Procedures

Some extracts are examined to demonstrate how the Appraisal Model evaluates the language employed by Davis to reveal her emotions towards each and every incident or experience she has faced, and how she has managed to shape her own self in the light of the identity theory. The analysis considers all the lexical

choices employed by the writer showing her feelings or thoughts. In addition, metaphors are analysed conceptually in order to uncover how the writer's emotions are portrayed. Also, all the cases where the writer foregrounds her thoughts or emotions are traced in analysis.

### **3.3 Linguistic Tools**

#### **3.3.1 Appraisal Model**

##### **3.3.1.1 Attitude**

Martin and White (2005) believe that Attitude “is concerned with our feelings, including emotional reactions, judgements of behaviour and evaluations of things”. (p.35) Martin (2000) distinguishes between inscribed attitude which is realized through explicit words/ phrases and evoked or implicit attitude which is “projected by reference to events or states which are conventionally prized (*a kid who reads a lot*) or frowned on (*a kid who tears the wings off butterflies*)” (p. 142, *emphasis as in original*)

Attitude involves three aspects: emotions, ethics and aesthetics called affect, judgement and appreciation respectively. First, affect deals with describing these meaning resources that depict positive or negative feelings towards a behaviour, proposition or phenomenon. It can be realized through mental and behavioural processes, as well as adjectives, adverbs and nouns expressing emotions.

Furthermore, Martin (2005) distinguishes between realistic affect and unrealistic affect according to whether the emotion involves intention rather than reaction with respect to a stimulus or not. “Unrealistic affect always seems to implicate a TRIGGER” (p. 48) It is generally related to future unrealized states rather than the

present ones. It is subclassified into fear (e.g., *tremble, shudder, cower, etc.*) and desire (e.g., *suggest, request, demand, etc.*). Meanwhile, realis affect is subclassified into un/happiness, in/security and dis/satisfaction. The un/happiness variable deals with internal personal moods like happiness, sadness, anger and affection. In/security is concerned with these feelings such as anxiety, worry vs confidence, peace which represent one's social well-being. Dis/satisfaction includes feelings towards achieving goals (ennui vs interest).

Second, Judgement deals with the evaluation of human behaviour or personal traits in terms of ethics and social norms. It also has positive and negative sides relating to positive and negative judgements about people's behaviour. Judgement can also be realized via the use of verbs (condemn), nouns (deceit), adjectives (polite) and adverbs (honestly). It is based on two meaning resources: social esteem and social sanction. "Judgements of esteem have to do with 'normality' (how unusual someone is), 'capacity' (how capable they are) and 'tenacity' (how resolute they are); judgements of sanction have to do with 'veracity' (how truthful someone is) and 'propriety' (how ethical someone is)" (Martin & White, 2005, p.52)

Martin (2000) adds that social esteem can be found in chats, gossiping and narratives of different types. However, social sanction is commonly found in writing such as laws, rules, decrees and penalties. Social esteem involves admiration or criticism judging how *lucky, fortunate, peculiar or normal* someone is (normality/ fate); whether they are *powerful, weak, sane or insane* (capacity) and whether they are *brave, coward, reliable or unreliable* (tenacity). Both social esteem and social sanction involve admiration and condemnation, but with legal implications for social sanction. Social sanction is concerned with either

veracity (truth) judging whether the person is *truthful, dishonest, authentic or fake* and *propriety* (ethics) judging whether they are *moral, immoral, ethical or corrupt*.

As for appreciation, it is viewed as a means for institutionalizing feelings about products, performances and nature. It also has positive and negative aspects. Appreciation can be lexically presented through adjectives (*wonderful, boring*), nouns (*purity, harmony*), verbs (*fascinate*) and adverbs (*untimely, significantly*). It is divided into three variables: reaction, composition and valuation. Reaction deals with the emotional impact the entity evaluated has on the evaluator whether or not it captures the attention; it is subcategorized into impact (*arresting, captivating or boring*) and quality (*beautiful, splendid vs. ugly, nasty*). Composition has to do with proportionality with its two subcategories: balance (*balanced, harmonious vs unbalanced, discordant*) and complexity (*simple, elegant vs. extravagant, ornamental*). Finally, valuation has to do with the social significance and worth of the entity and phenomenon being evaluated (*deep vs. shallow*).

Thus, it is clearly obvious that affect is the most subjective subcategory as it relates directly to the personal emotions of the evaluator. However, judgement and appreciation are much related to the phenomenon or entity appraised.

### **3.3.1.2 Engagement**

According to Martin & White (2005), Engagement is the second system of the Appraisal theory. It includes all the means by which the authorial voice is construed. Presumably, all types of texts show opinions to some extent whether they are implicit or explicit responses to previous texts. Engagement resources can be

categorized based on the dialogic perspective adopted in the text: monoglossic or heteroglossic. In monoglossic texts, there is no reference to other voices; they are mainly bare categorical assertions. Nevertheless, in heteroglossic texts, two or more points of view are represented. They can be dialogically expansive or dialogically contractive in their “intersubjective functionality”. Dialogic expansion allows for adopting others’ stances and opens up for other viewpoints either through entertaining or attributing propositions. The term “entertain” covers all the locutions through which the speaker/ writer (authorial voice) expresses likelihood or what is known as epistemic modality. This is realized by the use of modal auxiliaries (*may, might, could, must*), modal adjuncts (*perhaps, probably, maybe*), modal attributes (*possible, probable, etc.*), circumstances (*in my opinion*) and through certain mental verbs (*believe, guess*). The second way of dialogic expansion is by attributing propositions to others and dissociating them from the author. This is realized through reporting verbs (e.g., *X said, Y believes, etc.*).

Moreover, a proposition is attributed either by acknowledging or distancing. An author can acknowledge a certain stance when they refer to some others’ opinion without indicating their own attitude by employing reporting verbs like say, state, report, etc.; on the contrary, they can distance themselves when they clearly attribute a certain stance in a form of an individualized subjectivity of some external source. This is realized through certain reporting verbs as “claim”, i.e., the authors detach themselves from others’ stances.

On the other hand, dialogic contraction has to do with construing others’ positions by limiting the range of alternative stances via expressions that either Disclaim or Proclaim. Disclaim encompasses all the forms that explicitly reject a particular view.

One subtype of disclamation is to Deny, when a speaker/ writer directly denies another's point of view through negation (*no, not, nothing, never*). Thus, the author acknowledges a certain point of view, then they clearly reject it. The second subtype of disclamation is countering, and it is realized by responding to a particular proposition by a contrary statement, employing some conjunctions and connectives like *although, however, yet and but* as well as adverbials which mark counter-expectations like "surprisingly".

Meanwhile, proclamation occurs when the range of the dialogistic alternatives are confined by the writer in an ongoing heteroglossic interaction. The first category of proclaim is to "concur" when the writer agrees with a particular proposition. This is realized by these lexical choices such as *of course, naturally, certainly and admittedly*. Hence, concurring a proposition can be conveyed through Affirm (e.g., *obviously*) or Concede (e.g. *admittedly*). The second subcategory of proclaim is to Endorse through the use of these constructions that show that the proposition is correct or valid. This is conveyed by the use of some factive verbs like *show, prove demonstrate, find and point out*. Finally, there is the subcategory of Pronounce, which emphasizes the author's position through certain expressions (e.g., *I contend, the facts of the matter..., we can conclude..., you must agree...*) and clausal intensifiers like *really* and *indeed*.

Therefore, it is apparent that engagement system can be easily traced in genres of news reports and opinion articles. It helps in tackling and analyzing the different viewpoints, as well as depicting subjectivity and bias.

### 3.1.1.3 Graduation

Martin and White (2005) view that Graduation is a general feature of both attitude and engagement. Graduation in attitude allows authors to refer to a lesser or greater degree of positivity or negativity, whereas in engagement, graduation scales authors' beliefs in their proposition. "Graduation operates across two axes of scalability – that of grading according to intensity or amount, and that of prototypicality and the preciseness by which category boundaries are drawn" (p.137). The former is called Force, and the latter is called Focus.

The sub-type of force is tackled through intensity or quantity. Intensity can be assessed through qualities (e.g., *slightly foolish, extremely foolish*), through processes (e.g., *this has slightly hindered us, greatly hindered us*) and through modality of probability, usuality, willingness and obligation (e.g., *just possible, very possible*). Furthermore, intensification can be conveyed through isolated items like slightly, somewhat, quiet, etc., as well as maximizers (e.g., *utterly, completely and totally*) through repetition (*laughed and laughed*) or through metaphors (*crystal clear*). Formulations of quantification include scaling amount and extent in terms of number (*a few, many*), mass (*small, large*) and extent in space and time with respect to either Proximity (*near, far, recent*) or Distribution (*sparse, wide-spread, short-term*).

Finally, Focus considers meaning categories that are not scalable (e.g., *they don't play real jazz, or they play jazz, sort of*). The normal realization of such a proposition would tell that someone either plays jazz or not, but in this example, the writer employs an evaluative device which either sharpens (amplify, e.g., *real*) or softens (diminish, e.g., *sort of*) the proposition. Sharpening expressions are called intensifiers, boosters and amplifiers, and softening ones are called hedges.

Finally,

### **3.3.2 Conceptual Metaphor Theory**

In their seminal work, Lakoff & Johnson (1980; 2003) advocate that conceptual metaphors form the core of human cognition, enabling individuals to comprehend abstract concepts by mapping them onto more concrete domains. They are pervasive linguistic and cognitive devices that facilitate the understanding of complex ideas by grounding them in familiar experiences. Conceptual metaphors are not confined to language but are deeply intertwined with human thought processes. Metaphorical language shapes our conceptualization of emotions and other abstract concepts (Kövecses, 2022).

Conceptual metaphors are not arbitrary linguistic constructs; rather, they emerge from embodied experiences and cultural patterns. This section explores the cognitive and cultural origins of conceptual metaphors, tracing their roots to sensory perception, bodily experiences, and shared cultural concepts. Lakoff & Johnson (2003, p. 4) state:

The concepts that govern our thought are not just matters of intellect. They also govern our everyday functioning, down to the most mundane details. Our concepts structure what we perceive, how we get around in the world, and how we relate to other people. Our conceptual system thus plays a central role in our everyday realities.

Lakoff & Johnson (1980; 2003) list several conceptual metaphors such as: LIFE IS A JOURNEY, ARGUMENT IS WAR, LOVE IS A JOURNEY, TIME IS MONEY, GOOD IS UP. These conceptual metaphors involve mapping abstract or complex ideas onto more concrete or familiar concepts. In this process, the source domain

represents the concrete concept that is used to understand or explain the abstract target domain. For instance, in LOVE IS A JOURNEY, journey is the source domain (concrete concept) and love is the target domain (abstract concept). Hence, we can draw upon our understanding of a journey, with its ups and downs, twists and turns, to make sense of the complexities and experiences of love. Similarly, in ARGUMENT IS WAR, war is the source domain, and argument is the target one. Thus, we can understand the act of refuting or defeating someone's argument in terms of combat.

Conceptual Metaphors affecting our thoughts and our linguistic expressions of certain concepts have been identified and classified by Lakoff & Johnson (1980; 2003) into three overlapping categories:

- An **Orientalional Metaphor** is a metaphor that involves spatial relationships, such as up/down, in/out, or front/back.
- An **Ontological Metaphor** is a metaphor in which something tangible is projected onto something abstract.
- A **Structural Metaphor** is a metaphorical system in which one complex concept (typically abstract) is presented in terms of some other (usually more concrete) concept.

Ontological metaphors and Structural metaphors are related concepts, but they have distinct characteristics and functions. Ontological metaphors deal with the basic understanding of the nature of reality and existence. They involve mapping abstract concepts onto more concrete and tangible domains. In ontological metaphors, abstract ideas are understood in terms of physical objects or entities. An example is: IDEAS ARE FOOD; this metaphor represents ideas as nourishment. We "digest" information, have "food for thought," or "consume" knowledge.

On the other hand, Structural metaphors focus on the organization and relationships between different concepts. They highlight the underlying patterns and structures that shape our understanding. Structural metaphors involve mapping the structure of one domain onto another to facilitate comprehension. For example, ARGUMENT IS WAR conceptualizes an argument as a battle or war. We use phrases like "attacking someone's position," "defending a viewpoint," or "shooting down an argument." Similarly, IDEAS ARE BUILDING BLOCKS metaphor views ideas as foundational elements that can be assembled to create complex structures. We "build an argument," "establish a framework," or "construct a theory." In these examples, the structure and dynamics of one conceptual domain are mapped onto another to facilitate understanding and reasoning about complex or abstract concepts.

Investigating poetic language, Lakoff & Turner (1989) demonstrate that literary language employs the same everyday conceptual metaphors. Among conceptual metaphors are expressions referring to emotional states. For example, as Soriano (2015, p. 206) points out:

...English speakers conventionally refer to their feelings for a partner as being "in love", but love is hardly a physical thing one can be "in". The existence of this and many other similar expressions indicate that we represent states (including emotional states) as "locations" or "containers" that we can occupy, go to, abandon, and even fall into or out of...

Similarly, Kövecses (2022) summarizes his extensive work on conceptual metaphors and emotions by stating that "emotion

concepts are largely metaphorically and metonymically constituted and defined...” (p. 39). Among the most frequent conceptual metaphors representing emotions are:

EMOTION IS A FLUID IN A CONTAINER (*filled* with emotion)

EMOTION IS HEAT/FIRE (*burn* with emotion)

EMOTION IS A NATURAL FORCE (*be overwhelmed* by emotion)

EMOTION IS A PHYSICAL FORCE (*be struck* by emotion)

EMOTION IS A SOCIAL SUPERIOR (*be governed/ruled* by an emotion)

EMOTION IS AN OPPONENT (*be overcome* by an emotion)

EMOTION IS A CAPTIVE ANIMAL (*let go of* an emotion)

EMOTION IS A FORCE DISLOCATING THE SELF (*be beside oneself* with an emotion)

EMOTION IS BURDEN (*be weighed down* by an emotion)  
(Kövecses, 2022, p. 39)

The body of work on conceptual metaphor theory has been enriched by incorporating experimental psychological studies. Gibbs’ studies (1994; 2006) provide a large amount of empirical evidence that conceptual metaphors are grounded in embodied experiences and psychological reality. Similarly, several studies provide evidence of metaphorical expressions of emotion as grounded in physical embodied experiences (Lakoff & Kövecses, 1987; Kövecses, 2003; Gibbs, 2008). Kövecses (2022, p. 40) comments on this phenomenon by saying that “...it can explain why many emotion metaphors are shared by various languages and cultures.” He (Kövecses, 2022, p. 40) lists

the following examples of emotion concepts among others:

BODY HEAT AND ANGER

LACK OF BODY HEAT AND FEAR

PHYSICAL CLOSENESS AND LOVE

UPWARD MOTION AND HAPPINESS

Understanding the intricate realm of conceptual metaphors not only enhances our comprehension of human cognition but also has a deep effect in representing intense emotions in literature.

### **3.3.3 Foregrounding**

Foregrounding is usually employed by writers to make part of the text stand out, to emphasize a particular idea or to create an artistic effect as in poetry. It can be employed by either parallelism or deviation. Parallelism occurs when the writer chooses a certain pattern and repeats it like a syntactic parallelism.

Leech (1969) discusses five main types of linguistic deviation. First, lexical deviation has to do with neologism or inventing new words via compounding, affixation or functional conversion. Second, syntactic deviation occurs when the writer ignores the grammatical rules by using fragments or changing word order. Moreover, semantic deviation is concerned with the illogical or contradictory meaning relations as in the use of metaphor or paradox. Finally, the phonological and the graphological deviations are related as the graphological level reflects the phonological level. Graphological deviation encompasses any idiosyncrasy in the typography, punctuation and spelling; whereas phonological deviation includes cases of mispronunciation of words, change of word stress or deletion of sounds.

The second category of foregrounding is parallelism which is extra regularity, which is basically dependent on repeating the

same words or the same syntactic structure to highlight a particular idea. Parallelism often involves an element of similarity and an element of contrast. Similarity is revealed in the surface structure; however, contrast is shown in the deep structure. As highlighted by Leech (1969) in his example “Where wealth accumulates and men decay, it embeds the same surface grammatical structure but opposite meaning.

#### **4. Analysis and Discussion**

Some extracts are selected to trace the development in Viola’s character throughout her life phases. The excerpts are ordered according to the gradual development and transformation in her life. The analysis uncovers the different linguistic tools that she employs in her memoir to express her thoughts and feelings. Moreover, it examines the figurative images she tends to use to depict her emotions. In addition, it tackles how Viola shapes her own identity despite all the impediments she has encountered. Her attitudes and emotions are investigated via the Appraisal Model. Other linguistic tools like metaphor and foregrounding are demonstrated through the analysis.

In the excerpt below, Viola tends to employ both syntactic deviation and syntactic parallelism to foreground her state of mind and emotion:

1. *When the teacher heard the commotion and saw my bare feet, I had to stand in the corner. **In shame**. As if I had done something **wrong**. Why all the vitriol? I was being **bullied constantly**. This one piece of trauma I was*

*experiencing – my clothes, my hair, my hunger, too – and my home life, the big daddy of them all. The attitude, anger, and competitiveness were my only weapons. My arsenal. And when I tell you I need every tool of that arsenal every day I am not exaggerating. (p.2)<sup>1</sup>*

First, she demonstrates her broken self via the use of fragments “In shame” and “My arsenal” stressing her being ashamed (of something she is not responsible for i.e., her poverty) as well as living in a psychological war. Second, she conveys the systematic pattern of her traumatic experiences using syntactic parallelism “my clothes, my hair, my hunger”, and how she fights against it using another pattern “attitude, anger and competitiveness”. Moreover, she manifests the struggle she has suffered from via the metaphor in “my only weapons, which conveys the conceptual metaphor EMOTIONS ARE BATTLEFIELD. Then the phrase “My arsenal” extends the metaphor comparing her coping mechanisms to weapons to show the psychological war she endured during her childhood.

As for the appraisal devices, she uses negative Attitude, Affect indicating Dissatisfaction represented in the noun “shame”. She also utilizes the Judgement, Social Sanction signaled by the adjective “wrong” (Truth) and the material process “bullied” (Propriety). She is highlighting the injustice imposed upon her due to her ethnic affiliation and poverty. One more time, the idea of pattern is maintained in the adverb “constantly”. Furthermore, she describes her home life as “the big daddy” which is an invoked

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<sup>1</sup>Emphasis is the researchers’.

Attitude, Appreciation (reaction) to point out the damaging effect of her life at home, where she suffered from her father's violence against her mother, their frequent fights, shortage of hot water or water in general, lack of hygiene, bed wetting, hunger and cold. Finally, it is noticeable that her social identity is not verified for being affiliated to a group which is marginalized in her society. That is the reason for her feeling of distress. Thus, her low self-worth is revealed as a consequence for the unacceptance she felt at school due to her affiliation to a poor family, i.e., her group identity is not verified.

Bullying and alienation were regular occurrences in Viola's childhood. In this context, she portrays one of the bullying incidents she faced:

*2 "She's ugly! **Black fucking nigger**," he said. My heart was beating so fast. I kept **silently** praying for someone to come and save me. And the other voices sounded around me, "What should we do with her?" "Yeah!" "You're, you're, you're **fucking ugly!**" "You're **ugly!**" "You're **ugly!**" "I don't know why you're saying that to me," I pleaded to the ringleader, the Portuguese boy. "**You're Black, too!**" And when I said that, everyone **froze** and fell **deathly silent...** the now **silent** white boys looked at the Portuguese boy, eager to respond to anything he said. "**You're Black, too.**" I yelled it this time, calling him by name. The gang remained **silent**. So **quiet**. He **looked** and **looked** and **looked** from one white boy to another, **frightened** and **struggling** to find a way to **hide the truth** of what I had just said. The kind of truth that's rooted in a **self-hate** that we would rather take to our graves.*

*Finally, he screamed in intense anger, “Don’t you ever call me fucking Black! I’m not Black! I’m Portuguese!!!” And he punched me in the arm, really hard. He looked down, ashamed at being called out. As if I exposed the ugliest, most painful truth. “Get outta my face!” Then they threw me in the snow and kicked snow on me. My arm stiffened. It was in pain. I walked home, completely humiliated. (p.4)*

This extract is a mixture of both heteroglossic and monoglossic Engagement blended with the three categories of the Attitude system. Engagement involves the direct speech between Viola and the bullying boys. Through their words their reflected appraisals are uncovered through depicting her as being “ugly” and “black” more than once. Also, there seems to be a conflict of social identities between Viola and the Portuguese boy. First, the adjective “ugly” is repeated four times describing her. This verbal repetition made by the boy can be deemed to stress her unverified feminine identity. From the Appraisal perspective, it is Attitude, Appreciation, Reaction (Quality) since the boy is attributing her natural appearance as well as using the offensive phrase “fucking nigger” which is Appreciation, Valuation. Also, her social identity is unverified as being Black which affected her self-esteem in general, and self-authenticity in particular.

However, in this situation, Viola is capable of resisting this severe bullying, and she emphasizes the boy’s Black identity through repeating the utterance “You’re black, too”, this identity which is being denied by the boy. This verbal clash induced a feeling of shock which is metaphorically expressed through “everyone froze” and “fell deathly silent”. This shows how powerfully her reply affected the gang; the state of silence is compared to both ice and death; nothing is moving. This conceptual

metaphor SILENCE/SHOCK IS DEATH/PARALYSIS maintains the severity of Viola's words upon them. This feeling is also stressed through adjectives like "silent" and "quiet". Repeating the verb "looked" foregrounds the state of verbal paralysis that overwhelms the boy. The boy's state of mind is also shown through the adjectives "frightened" and "struggling" which are Attitude, Irrealis Affect, Disinclination and Realis Affect, Dissatisfaction respectively. Obviously, fear is the result of his inability to encounter his peers with his denied identity, highlighted through the negative Judgement, Truth (veracity) "hide the truth".

Furthermore, the noun "self-hate" is negative Attitude, Affect, Dissatisfaction which signifies their low self-esteem. Then the boys' emotions shifted also to the negative Affect Dissatisfaction "intense anger" and "ashamed". This emphasizes that his identity standards are being threatened by her raising his rage and resuming his direct speech which is full of repetition denying an identity and stressing another. They consider her inferior to them; they deny her social identity as well as her self-efficacy. Viola's viewpoint or uncovered truth is attributed by "the ugliest most painful truth" which is considered to be negative Attitude, Appreciation, Reaction (Quality and Impact respectively). It seems that "the ugliest" describes the mindset of her society, and "painful" depicts her social life that is full of pain due to her unverified social/categorical identity as being Black, and consequently her self-worth is denied. Finally, the verbal conflict turns to the boys' violence against Viola which results in her pain and humiliation. In addition, the words "pain" and "humiliated" might be considered to be both negative Attitude Affect, Unhappiness. They portray her physical and psychological pain. Furthermore, it is intensified by the adverb "completely" which is the total state of humiliation she felt after this horrifying incident.

In another instance, Viola refers to a memory she retrieved while being in an interview with Will Smith asking her who she was:

*3. This is the memory that **defined** me. More than the bed-wetting, poverty, hunger, sexual abuse and domestic violence. It is a **powerful** memory because it was the first time my spirit and heart were broken. I **defined** myself by the **fear** and **rage** of those boys. I felt **ugly**. I felt **unwanted**, even by God. I wanted so badly to fit into this world, but instead I was being **spit out like vomit**. Who I was offended them. **The memory burrowed itself inside me and metastasized.** (p.7)*

Here, the memory that emerged in her mind is her younger self who used to run after school because of being bullied by a group of boys telling her she is not pretty, and she is black. In this excerpt, Viola mentions nearly all the traumas she faced in her childhood. Depicting this memory as being “powerful” is categorized as explicit negative Attitude, Appreciation (Impact) indicating the forceful influence of this memory upon her as being the first trigger of heartbreak. Moreover, the mental process “defined” (Attitude, Appreciation, Reaction) is used twice to show the effect of this humiliating experience to shape her broken self. Also, the nouns “fear” and “rage” represent the negative feelings those boys attribute to her explicitly; “fear” is an Explicit, Irrealis Affect of Insecurity and “rage” is an explicit, Realis Affect of Unhappiness. These words demonstrate how those boys used to raise the feelings of insecurity and anger within her.

Moreover, she describes herself as being “ugly” (explicit negative Affect of Dissatisfaction) and “unwanted” (explicit negative Affect of Insecurity). She attributes these two negative qualities of abandonment to herself due to the bullying trauma she has faced. Her feeling of rejection is vividly portrayed through the use of simile “spit out like a vomit”. As Viola narrates in her memoir, she greatly suffered from rejection in her childhood because of her being black and poor. Her poverty deprived her of being able to be neat and clean. In addition, she was exposed to discrimination at school from both her teachers and her peers, as well as at the beginning of her career as an actor. Another metaphor is employed in “The memory... metastasized” which is an invoked Appreciation, Reaction, involving the conceptual metaphor BAD MEMORY IS A DISEASE, which compares the damaging influence of the memory which is painful like spreading cancer. This also implies the difficulty of controlling her memory. Thus, as observed in the excerpt, the nonverification of Viola’s social and person identities through the denial of her self-worth and self-authenticity is very clear through the prevalent negative attitude against herself.

Her childhood trauma caused her insecurity for a long time:

*4. I was looking for something or someone to **define** me. To **infuse** in me **self-love, acceptance**. To show me how to live. To **show** me I was all right. (p.91)*

These words are written by Viola after she referred to an incident where she was asking her teacher about the fact of the Black people’s illiteracy that is usually repeated at school in front of her. In this excerpt, there is only one complete sentence, and the

rest are fragments having the same parallel structure signifying her broken self and the balance she looks up to. It can be conveyed that Viola is looking for her identity marked by the mental process “define”. The phrase “something or somebody to define me” implicates that she sees herself inadequate; she needs some support to feel enough. Thus, she lacks self-authenticity, so her person identity is not verified. Her search for emotions is also revealed in her positive Affect “self-love” (Happiness) and “acceptance” (Security) employed with the metaphor “infuse” comparing the emotions she needs to an injection. She also lacks validation for which she is looking as shown in the mental process “show”. This means that she is overwhelmed by the feelings of rejection and negligence.

In this excerpt, the first seed was planted in Viola’s inner transformation after her sister told her that she should have a clear idea of how she was going to make it out if she did not want to be poor for the rest of her life:

*5. But something I didn’t have the words for, yet could feel, shifted inside me. “What do I want to be?” The **first seed** had been planted. Was there a way out? **Achieving, becoming** “somebody,” became my idea of being **alive**. I felt that **achievement** could **detox** the **bad shit**. It would **detox** the poverty. It would **detox** the fact that I felt **less-than**, being the **only Black family** in Central Falls. I could be **reborn** a **successful** person. I wanted to **achieve** more than my mother had. (pp.38-39)*

She (her sister) asked Viola that she had to decide what she wanted to be and to work hard. Therefore, Viola had a shift in her

focus as expressed in the mental process “shifted”. She emphasizes this by using the metaphor “The first seed had been planted” which implicates that her sister’s words raised her awareness towards her life objectives comparing her sister's words to a seed planted in her soul; this can lie under the conceptual metaphor *CREATION IS CULTIVATION*. She starts to have a clear-cut purpose of living as expressed by the parallel structure “achieving, becoming”. There are also different derivations for the word “achieve” which might show the sense of fulfillment she begins to build inside. In her opinion, fulfillment is defined as “being alive” which positive Affect, Satisfaction. Repeating the material process “detox” twice highlights the conceptual metaphor *BAD MEMORY IS A DISEASE* in which she is comparing the process of getting rid of all her insecurities and achieving fulfillment to the process of purifying bodies from toxins. She is emphasizing the fact that her traumatic experiences are like toxins spread in her body. Using the negative Attitude, Appreciation, Reaction (quality), “bad” to describe “shit” maintains the negative influence of what she endured in her life as “shit” is already bad. She also refers to her negative self-image identified by “less-than”, negative Affect, Dissatisfaction as well as “the only Black family” which could uncover her feeling as an inferior or marginalized person in her society; her self-authenticity is denied in accordance with her person and social identity. Thus, the non-verification of her identity is illustrated. Then she affirms her objective via the behavioural process “reborn” which signals the idea of having a new beginning, stressed by the positive Affect, Satisfaction adjective “successful”. Finally, her purpose is also elucidated by the mental process “wanted”, an Irrealis Affect, Inclination (Desire), which maintains her will to get rid of the poverty and abuse her mother was living in.

In the following excerpt, Viola's emotional shift from negative to positive Attitude is clearly visualized:

6. *I was **unsettled**. I was an **awkward, angry, hurt, traumatized** kid. I couldn't articulate what I was feeling and nobody asked. I didn't believe anybody cared. I was **saturated in shame**. There was so much we **didn't have, or couldn't do**, so much **anger and violence** that threatened the love. I was trying to be **better**. I focused on not wetting the bed.... My baby sister was **cure** at this point. Not for the bed-wetting, but she was day-to-day **joy** because she **loved** me. She **saw** me. (p.95)*

She starts by attributing some negative traits and emotions to herself: “unsettled”, “awkward” and “traumatized” (Affect, Insecurity), as well as “angry” and “hurt” (Affect, Unhappiness). Thus, her feelings of unhappiness and insecurity are prevalent due to her traumatic circumstances. Furthermore, she adds another emotion employing the metaphor “saturated in shame”, which shows how greatly she was immersed in shame and unacceptance of herself. This could emphasize EMOTION (SHAME) IS FLUID. She also refers once again to the state of deprivation and inability she suffered from with her family, adding “anger” and “violence”, other two nouns that emphasize the negative Affect, Unhappiness. All these instances show how her person identity is non-verified in addition to the state of lack of self-authenticity. Despite all this, she decides to be “better” (positive Affect, Happiness). Her first step is not to wet the bed as it psychologically affects her. Moreover, her positive feelings appear when her baby sister is mentioned and described as “a cure” (Affect, Security) and “joy” (Affect, happiness). The word “cure” maintains the conceptual metaphor PEOPLE ARE MEDICINES comparing her sister's presence to a remedy

for all the hardships that she endured. It is worth mentioning that the first time Viola talks about her sister in her memoir, she depicts her birth as being both “transformation” and “shift”; this shows the great significance of her sister’s role in her life. She sums it up in the last two mental processes “loved” (Affect, Happiness) and “saw” (Affect, Security). This shows how her sister’s presence made her feel acknowledged- feelings she deeply longed for.

In this context, Viola is comparing her feeling of being “frozen” after being chosen in the Arts Recognition and Talent Search Competition and all the situations in which she was “frozen” in a different way:

7. *I was **frozen**. Silent. **Frozen** like I had been as my sisters yelled at me to throw that firecracker out the window. **Frozen** like when my entire family begged me to jump down from what we thought was our burning apartment. **Frozen** like when I sat **silently** all those many times while being lectured by teachers, nurses, and principals about my bad hygiene. But this was a good kind of **frozen**; a **spectacular, glorious** kind of **frozen**. **Dumbfounded** by the sheer unbelievability of the news my mom was sharing with me. **Stupefied** by the idea that the work I invested in a crazy dream actually paid off. **Astonished** that individuals I had never met actually **saw me** and **deemed me worthy** to participate in this prestigious competition. (p.121)*

She repeated the word “frozen” four times referring to different hardships during her childhood, apart from the first instance which refers to the new positive feeling, then she recalls

the other negative instances. Her silence is the result of facing fire or being humiliated due to her inability to have good hygiene; both are traumatic. The adjective “frozen” in the following three times can be considered negative Affect, disinclination. However, when she begins depicting her feelings after winning, there is a shift in her emotions into positive ones “good”, “spectacular”, “glorious”, “dumbfounded”, “stupefied” and “astonished which are all positive Affect, Happiness. Using the adjective “astonished” with its synonym is to maintain her ecstasy. Finally, there are two mental processes “saw me” and “deemed me worthy” which fulfill her self-esteem and indicate that her identity is recognized and verified by the judging members of the competition. Hence, her self-authenticity is fulfilled. Moreover, she adopts someone else’s point of view that sees her “worthy” (Appreciation, Valuation). Obviously, she starts to value herself and appreciate her worth. Thus, this instance shows the beginning of the verification of her person and social identity. Once more the conceptual metaphor SILENCE/SHOCK IS PARALYSIS is recaptured.

Viola is describing her journey to Africa using two antonyms “starting” and “ending” to maintain that Africa represents a transitional stage in her life where she finds her identity that was marginalized in her country:

8. *In Africa at age twenty-five, I felt my life both **starting and ending**. I was in an in-between time. Africa was an **elixir**. (p.171)*

It is the beginning of her new attitude towards herself and the end of being everything except herself. She reaches the

authentic version of herself. Also, there is a metaphor in “Africa was an elixir” where she is comparing her journey to Africa to a cure, which would help her to heal her pain. Thus, the conceptual metaphor PLACES ARE MEDICINES is vivid.

Viola’s eight –year – old version of self is at conflict with her twenty-eight-year-old self:

9. *At the age of twenty-eight, I woke up to the **burning** fact that my journey and everything I was doing with my life was about **healing** that eight-year-old girl. That little third grader Viola who I always felt was **left defeated, lying prostrate** on the ground. I **wanted t to go back** and **scream** to the eight- year-old me, “Stop running!” I **wanted to heal her damage, her isolation.** (p.7)*

Viola vividly portrays the war inside her using the metaphor “burning fact”. She also describes her broken self, employing the negative Attitude Affect adjectives of Unhappiness “defeated” and “prostrate” creating the image of a defeated soldier who nearly surrendered, by which she refers to the non-verification of her person identity. Then she marks her resisting self, using the material and verbal processes “go back” and “scream” that mark the transformation she wants to create in order to reach her healed self. Repetition is also employed in the use of “healing” and “heal”; using both noun and verb emphasizes her aim to empower herself. Therefore, the conceptual metaphor HEALING IS POWER & NEGATIVE FEELINGS ARE DISEASES are pervasive in this extract.

The Engagement she utilizes is heteroglossic as she is talking to her younger self saying “Stop running”. She is referring

to the stable mental picture of herself running from those boys who used to bully her after school (the extended metaphor she always employs in her memoir), which shows how she used to run from her traumatic experiences like bullying. Perhaps she wants herself to accept what happened. Her desire for change is portrayed via the use of the Attitude Irrealis Affect Desire verb “wanted” repeated, maybe to affirm her urge to change. Finally, the parallel structure is employed in “her damage, her isolation” signaling negative Attitude, Affect, Unhappiness and Insecurity respectively. This signifies her broken self that needs to be healed as mentioned before.

The following excerpt comprises heteroglossic and monoglossic Engagement representing Viola’s and her agent’s, Mark, points of view about their parents. They are talking about her parents’ reaction after she got the Tony Nomination:

*10. My agent Mark said to me, “Viola, you have **great** parents.” His statement **shocked** me. I said, “I do?” He said, “Yes. They are **great**.” I asked him why he said that. He said, “I’ve been in this business a while and have seen a lot of stage parents. It becomes more about them and not about their kids. Your parents are not that way at all. They just want to see you fly. They’re just **happy** for you.” It was **a seed planted** that made me look at my parents in a completely different light. It **woke me up**. (p. 198)*

Mark employs the positive Attitude, Judgement, Social Esteem (Capacity) adjective “great” to describe her parents. It is the first time for Viola to admit that her parents are great. This

encounter is the beginning of her reconciliation with her past with her parents. Mark employs a metaphor in depicting her parents' emotions towards her in addition to a mental process expressing Attitude, Affect, Inclination (Desire) "want to see you fly", revealing their desire to see her succeeding. Moreover, the adjective "happy" maintains their positive emotions as it represents positive Attitude, Affect, Happiness.

Then Viola shifts to express her new perspective towards her parents as portrayed in the use of the adjective "shocked" Appreciation, Reaction (Impact), depicting the effect of her agent's question upon her as well as the conceptual metaphor CREATION IS CULTIVATION in "it was a seed planted", comparing this encounter to a seed as it represents her first step in her acceptance to what she faced with her parents during her childhood. It is worth mentioning that this is the second time for her to employ this metaphor. This could signify her search to create a new life. Another conceptual metaphor SITUATIONS ARE LIGHT is used in the mental process "woke me up", comparing this incident to something that lights up her path and raises her awareness.

In the following extract, Viola expresses her major need through the mental process "wanted", an Attitude, Irrealis Affect, Inclination (Desire). She is deliberate in defining her want precisely by describing the features of the home she longs for. She employs a number of adjectives falling under Appreciation, Reaction (Impact) like "safe", "peaceful", "nurturing" and "reliable", in addition to "filled with love" which is Appreciation, Reaction (quality):

*11. I just wanted to find home. Not find a home but find home. A safe place sanctuary that was peaceful, nurturing, reliable . . . and filled with love. I had gone from running from bullies, poverty, acting student, pounding the pavement, getting theater/film work to LA. I was ready to arrive at some destination. (p.214)*

It is clearly obvious that her great need for security and safety as well as love and acceptance can be fulfilled in the form of having “home”. Then she returns to the extended metaphor she has adopted from the beginning of her memoir, which is the image of her running from bullying, hunger, poverty, etc., i.e., representing her escape from her childhood traumas. In addition, she shows her willingness to accept all her wants and needs as marked in the relational process “was ready” Irrealis Affect, Inclination (Desire). Finally, the conceptual metaphor LIFE IS A JOURNEY is employed in “to arrive at some destination. This reveals her desire to reach her authentic self, i.e., her person identity.

On the other hand, the following excerpt is full of affirmations by Viola foregrounded through repetition, marking a step towards self-healing.

*12. As soon as he came into my life, my life got better because I created a family with him, with someone who loved me. I was no longer solely defined by the family that raised me and my childhood memories. Julius and I created this new chapter in my life, starting from a blank slate. I could create my own family and I could create it intentionally with what I had learned. (p.221)*

First, the clause “my life got better” is repeated three times in her memoir when she refers to her life with her husband, Julius. Moreover, both the noun phrase “my life” and the material process “created” three and four times respectively, to emphasize the transformation that she witnessed in her life. Her emotions are portrayed through “better” and “loved” which are positive Attitude, Affect, Happiness. It seems that Viola has become decisive in creating a new life on her will, as marked by the adverb “intentionally”. She has found the validation and the verification of her identity she has been searching for. Consequently, she finally reaches the state of self-authenticity and self-worth. She also employs the conceptual metaphor LIFE IS A BOOK in “Julius and I created this new chapter in my life, starting from a blank slate”; she is shaping her life with her husband from scratch comparing her life to a book she is writing with her husband. She also uses a negated Judgement, Social Esteem, Truth (Veracity) mental process “no longer defined” which confirms that she has let go of what happened to her, and she has accepted it. Consequently, she has fulfilled her self-authenticity.

By the end of the journey, she achieves self-healing through her perseverance and through the support of her husband. Success and fame followed:

*13. Then came **the Oscars**. My first **Oscar nomination** in 2009. My first time feeling like the **chosen one**. That first **Oscar nomination** was extremely **exciting**. There are no words to express what the **life journey** of an actor is, **the bumps in the road, the struggle, the unemployment**. An **Oscar nomination** washes it away.... **Oscar nomination** means you've become a **success**. (p. 266)*

Viola is foregrounding her being nominated for the Oscars via repetition as she repeats the phrase “Oscar nomination” four times perhaps to demonstrate her excitement as being highlighted in the positive Affect, Happiness “exciting”. She also employs the adjective “chosen”, which is Judgement, Social Esteem (Capacity) to reveal her sense of pride, through which her self-authenticity is demonstrated in accordance with her person identity. Moreover, she uses the conceptual metaphor LIFE IS A JOURNEY to emphasize the obstacles that she has encountered in her career as being clarified in the parallel structure “the bumps in the road, the struggle, the unemployment”. In addition, she emphasizes the impact of her nomination employing another metaphor “washes it away”, revealing how greatly significant the nomination in removing them all. This could lie under the conceptual metaphor SUCCESS IS PURIFICATION. At this point, Viola has reached a milestone in her life, and she sees herself fulfilled. Her role identity as a famous actor is verified, i.e., her self-efficacy.

She refers to a very successful liberating role she played in the following excerpt:

*14. How to Get Away with Murder was where my **radical transformation** took place. In the course of playing Annalise, I understood that I was no longer and never was that **ugly Black nigga**. The role **liberated** me. I said to myself: **All I've got is me. And that is enough.** (p.284)*

Viola is referring to a leading lady role who was a sexy, smart, vulnerable character in a courtroom TV series. At the very beginning, Viola did not find herself suitable for the role. Later, she

had the feeling that she deserves this role and created a different character changing it from being “sexy” to “sexualized”, which means she starts to have her own voice. She has utilized this role to redefine the world’s view of Black women in America. In this excerpt, she describes it as “radical transformation” Appreciation, Reaction (Impact) since the movie has been a tool through which she realized her worth and power as a woman, and she let go of all the psychological barriers. Once again, her role identity is verified; consequently, her self-efficacy is highlighted.

Furthermore, she refers to the phrase “the ugly black nigga” with which she was bullied, i.e., she is denying the identity that was being thrown upon her during her childhood using negation. Here, she has overcome the reflected appraisals that saturated her soul before. There is also a conceptual metaphor (ACTING IS FREEDOM) in “The role liberated me”, maintaining the influential impact this role had upon her, freeing her demons. She has implemented this role to stand against the racist ideology of her society against Black women. It is the first time for her to use her voice as a Black actress. She ends it with a monoglossic Engagement, representing her inner dialogue which has witnessed a change, too. Her words to herself show how far she perceives herself now. Thus, it can be said that Viola has just verified identity as a Black actress in her community; her role identity is maintained.

The excerpt below is taken from the last page in the memoir. It is triggered by the raised question of a friend of hers (Engagement):

*15. The question still echoes, how did I claw my way out? There is no out. Every painful memory, every mentor, every friend and foe served as a chisel, a leap pad that has shaped “ME!” The imperfect but blessed sculpture that is Viola is still growing and still being chiseled. My elixir? I’m no longer ashamed of me. I own everything that has ever happened to me. The parts that were a source of shame are actually my warrior fuel. I see people—the way they walk, talk, laugh, and grieve, and their silence—in a way that is hyper focused because of my past. I’m an artist because there’s no separation from me and every human being that has passed through the world including my mom. I have a great deal of compassion for other people, but mostly for myself. That would not be the case if I did not reconcile that little eight-year-old girl and FIND ME. (p.291)*

The text represents a monoglossic realization of her friend’s question. Since Viola is referring back to her personal experiences, the Attitude system is the most prevalent. She describes “every memory” using the adjective “painful” which represents an explicit negative Appreciation (Reaction). She might have chosen the word to show how her childhood was overwhelmed with pain. Then she adopts the parallel structure signaled by “Every painful memory, every mentor, every friend and foe” maybe to foreground the balance she wants to have in her life. Also, the antithesis in “friend and foe” shows that her character has been shaped by both the positive and negative circumstances she encountered. Moreover,

the process of shaping herself is portrayed through the use of metaphor in “chisel” and “a leap pad” that affirms that every hardship has created her current version. The conceptual metaphor *HARDSHIPS ARE SCULPTURES* is obvious in this instance. She has become aware of her worth by describing herself as being “imperfect but blessed” which is Attitude, Appreciation, Balance and Affect, Satisfaction respectively. She also depicts herself as being a “sculpture” to extend the metaphor she employed to *A SUFFERING HUMAN IS A SCULPTURE* comparing herself to a sculpture to emphasize that the process of shaping has not finished yet.

Her usage of both “chisel” and “chiseled” a metaphor vividly conveys the slow and demanding survival and healing journey she has faced. Then she justifies her cure pointing to the fact that she is “no longer ashamed”, positive Affect, Satisfaction, describing this fact as “My elixir” which encompasses the conceptual metaphor *POSITIVE THOUGHTS ARE MEDICINES*. Before that, she used to stress the state of shame she had. Now, she has accepted every turmoil and trauma she has endured. The transformation in her character is clearly expressed in “The parts that were a source of shame are actually my warrior fuel”, which recaptures the *LIFE IS WAR/BATTLEFIELD*, portraying how her weaknesses have become her strength in her war against her traumatized injured self and her society to find her own self. This signifies what has happened in her perspective; from explicit negative Attitude of Affect, Dissatisfaction to invoked positive Attitude of Appreciation, Reaction (Impact). Also, stressing the fact of her being an artist might signal her pride in her role identity as an artist. A shift to explicit positive Attitude, Affect, Satisfaction is indicated in “compassion” for both people and, most importantly, herself. Once again, she stresses her acceptance of people, herself and her past. Finally, she sums it up giving the key to all of this transformation using the mental process “reconcile” marking the invoked positive

Attitude, Appreciation, Composition (balance). This demonstrates the state of peace she has created with her younger self, the traumatized eight-year-old girl. The excerpt ends with the mental process “FIND ME”, capitalized, conveying that her person identity is verified through the state of self-authenticity she finally fulfills, and this could also refer to her journey in finding her own worthy verified identity. Hence, she reaches a perfect state of reconciliation with her past.

## **Conclusion**

As proven from the investigated extracts, Viola tends to foreground her thoughts using repetition when she wants to make affirmations about her traumas or the objectives she wants to achieve. Similarly, she resorts to repetition when her identity is not verified. Parallel structure is also prevalent, conveying either the image of a pattern or regular occurrences in her life, or the sense of balance she wants to create in her life. Furthermore, Viola’s frequent use of fragments shows her broken self in some cases or excessive flow of emotions in others.

In addition, Viola portrays her emotions through abundant intense metaphors. Her metaphors depict images conveying her Attitude whether positive or negative. Hence, her use of metaphors is deemed to be invoked Attitude to reveal her deep powerful feelings. Moreover, most of the conceptual metaphors employed are medical ones like BAD MEMORY IS A DISEASE, and PLACES ARE MEDICINES, HUMANS ARE MEDICINES, POSITIVE THOUGHTS ARE MEDICINES which share the same source “medicine”. This can be considered a partial extended metaphor. Another pervasive conceptual metaphor in Viola’s memoir is LIFE IS WAR/BATTLEFIELD, lying under the main conceptual metaphor LIFE IS A JOURNEY. This visualizes the struggles and the impediments she has faced throughout her life.

Finally, referring to the Appraisal Model in the analysis in the light of the Identity Theory helps detect the transformation which occurred in her character throughout her self-healing journey. The most significant Appraisal system present in the extracts is the Attitude system since Viola's emotions are very prevalent. The analysis also demonstrates the gradual development from negative to positive emotions as revealed in the frequent use of Affect. The Identity Theory aids in illustrating the cases of identity verification versus non-verification. The theory uncovers the cases in which Viola's social/ ethnic identity is restricted by her society. In addition, the identity theory facilitates tracing the aspect of self-esteem, and consequently the type of identity being verified or non-verified, whether it is person, social/group or role identity. Her person identity is fulfilled once she has accepted all her traumas and has become her own authentic self. Her social and group identities are verified since she has become proud of her ethnicity and accepted her affiliation with a poor family. Her role identity is also highlighted whenever she discusses her fame or success. It also helps clarify how Viola's gender identity becomes more salient after she gets married to her husband.

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