

# A Critical Discourse Analysis of Abubakar Ibrahim's *Season of Crimson Blossoms*

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## Abstract

In literary texts, words are effective tools used by writers to pass their intended messages to the readers. This study uses a critical discourse analysis model to examine “*Season of Crimson Blossoms*” by Abubakar Adams Ibrahim. The novel was analysed using Van Dijk’s perspective of critical discourse analysis. The study investigates the forms of implicit meaning in the selected text using the characterization and utterances. Specifically, it explores the themes of corruption and poverty as portrayed in the novel. It was found that through appropriate characterization, and effective language use, the writer of the selected text was able expose the prevailing imperfections in Nigerian culture and politics. The study concludes that writers should endeavor to always strike a balance between characterization, type of utterance used and context in their texts.

## Introduction

In literary texts, words are effectively used by writers to pass their intended messages to the readers. Such messages are usually directed towards addressing germane issues and occurrences in the society, and are intended for the purposes of documenting, sensitizing, enlightening and correcting.

The text selected for this study is *Season of Crimson Blossoms* by Abubakar Adam Ibrahim. The author of the text is a Nigerian prominent writer and journalist. He has also authored other stories. *Season of Crimson Blossoms* is a novel set in a conservative Hausa society in Nigeria. The story follows the lives of two main characters, an elderly widow named Hajiya Binta and a young gang leader named Reza. Hajiya Binta is a devout Muslim woman who lives a lonely and unfulfilling life after the death of her husband. Her son moved her to the outskirts of Abuja, because of the clash which had begun in Jos where they had been living. She lived with her teenage niece Fa’iza and granddaughter Ummi who had just started going to school. The minors are staying with her as a result of the struggles that affect their part of the country. She meets Reza, a young man who is part of a gang involved in drug trafficking, and they begin a secret romantic relationship. The relationship is frowned at upon by the society because of the differences in their age and social backgrounds.

As the story progresses, Hajiya Binta becomes more and more invested in her relationship with Reza, while also grappling with her conflicting emotions and societal expectations. Reza, on the other hand, is struggling to balance his loyalty to his gang and his growing feelings for Hajiya Binta. Their relationship is threatened by the arrival of Hajiya Binta's son, Munkaila, who disapproves of their relationship and tries to put an end to it. Meanwhile, Reza's gang is also facing pressure from rival gangs and the law enforcement agents.

The story reaches a dramatic climax as Hajiya Binta and Reza's relationship is exposed, leading to violence and tragedy. In the aftermath, Hajiya Binta is forced to confront the consequences of her actions and the reality of her situation as a woman in the Nigerian society.

Through its portrayal of the relationship between Hajiya Binta and Reza, *Season of Crimson Blossoms* explores different themes which include love, ageism, gender roles and patriarchy, religion and morality, corruption and poverty, intergenerational conflicts, power dominance and superiority, opposition and resistance, suspicion and violence in contemporary Nigeria. It is a powerful and thought-provoking novel that offers insight into the complexities of human relationships and the challenges faced by individuals in a changing society.

This study examines the various forms of implicit meaning as transmitted by discourse participants in the selected text. It accounts for how writers use text to project their thoughts and belief systems. The study aims specifically at examining the text using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to explore the themes of corruption and poverty as portrayed in the novel.

### **Literature Review and Theoretical Framework**

In an earlier study, Olaoye and Zink (2020) in a work titled “A Feminist Literary Analysis of the Gendered Embodiment of Religion, Trauma and Shame in Abubakar Adam Ibrahim’s *Season of Crimson Blossoms*” submit that the writer through his novel “reveals how a misogynic society forces a woman to internalize several conflicting ideologies at once, creating individuals that are layered both in memory and reality, and whose bodies speak in the language of unconscious desires and repressed memory”. Onyebuchi and Dauda (2016) in their study of the text pointed out some aspects of tradition that are discussed in the novel and the effect they have on the characters. The paper also notes how these traditions are mainly targeted at women and girls.

Liam (2017), author at African Writer.com, in his review of the novel discussed the place of the writer, morality, and culture in the text. He submits that the novel is a commendable debut which symbolizes the coming of age of the Northern Nigerian intellectual. Nagu (2016) also did a review of the novel and submits that it “explores the theme of love, heartbreak, hope, desire, the human condition and our collective humanity. It examines the moral rules we live by. In an intriguing and very colorful fashion, the novel dissects the fragile facade masking strict morality.” This present study examines the text using CDA as a model. It specifically explores the themes of corruption and poverty which are burning issues, not only in Nigeria, but also in other so called developing countries.

Critical discourse analysis, as a theoretical framework, focuses on how language is employed to construct and maintain social, political, and cultural ideologies. It is a multi-disciplinary approach that integrates ethical principles into issues and aims at not only the demonstration of how textual features are used in certain patterns but also includes social, historical and cognitive contexts that surround the creation of a text. It therefore offers a more comprehensive understanding of discourse as it attempts to situate it in both its social and cultural contexts. Fairclough (2001, p.125), defines CDA as “a form of critical social science geared to illuminating the problems which people are confronted with by particular forms of social life, and to contributing resources which people may be able to draw upon in tackling and overcoming those problems”. CDA combines critique of discourse and explanation of how it figures within and contributes to the existing social reality as a basis for action to change that existing reality in particular respects.

According to Fairclough (1989), instruction operates from the assumption that all texts are driven by a set of beliefs or ideologies that authors hope to advance, and an important part in developing literacy skills and acquire the ability to detect such ideologies. CDA empowers the researcher to detect and expose implicit forms of ethnic prejudice defined as “a predominantly negative social attitude about ethnic minority groups and their members” (Van Dijk, 1985, p.70). It does not limit itself to analyzing the close formal properties of the text; rather, it contextualizes a text in its wider social, economic, historical, cognitive and political contexts. It critically examines how this text relates to other texts, how it is constituted by the existing social practices and how it is constitutive of other new social practices. Janks (1997) in explaining CDA says:

Critical discourse analysis stems from a critical theory of language which sees the use of language as a form of social practice. All social practices are tied to specific historical contexts and are the means by which existing social relations are reproduced or contested and different interests are served. It is the questions pertaining to interests - How is the text positioned? Whose interests are served by this positioning? Whose interests are negated? What are the consequences of this positioning? - that relate discourse to relations of power.

Van Dijk, (2001) claims that CDA needs to account for the various forms of social cognitions that are shared by the social collectivities (groups, organizations and institutions). Social cognitions, he states, are "socially shared representations of societal arrangements, groups and relations, as well as mental operations such as interpretation, thinking and arguing, inferencing and learning" (Van Dijk, 1993, p.257). Van Dijk further identifies two levels of (discourse) analysis: macro vs. micro. Language use, discourse, verbal interaction and communication determine the micro level of social order, while the macro level refers to power, dominance and inequality between social groups (Van Dijk, 2003).

As Amoussou and Allagbe (2018) pointed out,

The crucial question that deserves an answer is “How is critical discourse analysis done or undertaken?” To that question, Van Dijk (1995) answers that the analyst “need”[s] first and foremost to explore which structures and strategies of text and talk to attend in order to discover patterns of elite dominance or manipulation in texts” (p.19). In other words, the discourse analyst should “detail how such forms of inequality are expressed, enacted, legitimated and reproduced by text and talk” (ibid). In practical terms, CDA proponents generally suggest reference to linguistic theories. In that perspective, Van Dijk (2001:97) assumes that explicit CDA needs a solid “linguistic” basis, where “linguistic” is understood in a broad „structural-functional“ sense.

According to Bamigbola (2019), CDA is a great tool for analysis which helps to divulge the stance of different group members in the society. The theories underlying research on CDA give the analysts (be they lay researchers or not) a broad view on the possible methodological approaches they are liable to use, given their disciplinary backgrounds, (Amoussou and Allagbe, 2018, P.16).

In the context of analyzing *Season of Crimson Blossoms* by Abubakar Ibrahim, CDA can be applied to explore the various discourses and power dynamics at play within the text. This study explores the themes of corruption and poverty as portrayed in the novel using Van Dijk's socio-cognitive approach of CDA as a basis.

### **Analysis of the Text**

In this section, the harsh realities of poverty in Nigeria and the corruption that exacerbates it are examined as portrayed in *Season of Crimson Blossoms*. For description and interpretation, excerpts are culled from the thirty-two (32) chaptered and 346 pages text. Relevant references and incidents cited from the novel demonstrate the impact that corruption and poverty have on the lives of the characters in the novel, emphasizing the trauma faced by marginalized individuals in the Nigerian society. The analysis will focus on examining the narrative structure, characterization and the linguistic tools employed by the author to describe corruption and poverty.

### **Narrative Structure and Characterization in the Novel**

The novel is set around the city of Abuja, Nigeria and recounts past events which took place in Jos. It is a story that tells many stories and sends different messages to the readers. The messages focus on the impact of religion and culture on individuals' existence and how corruption affects the economic and social life Nigerians.

As a narrative technique, the author begins each of the thirty-two (32) chapters with a proverb that foreshadows the events that follow. For example, the proverb at the beginning of chapter one reads: "No matter how far up a stone is thrown, it will certainly fall back to earth" (p.7). The second chapter begins with, "A butterfly thinks itself a bird because it can fly" (p.23). The narrative is enriched by sparse sprinklings of magic realism exemplified by "the pungent smell of roaches" (p.23) that often presage "something inauspicious" (p.9), and "the cat with its white-tipped tail and gleaming eyes" (p.119) that always prances the fence whenever Binta's suitor and nemesis, Mallam Haruna, visits.

### **Hajiya Binta**

The economic struggles of Hajiya Binta, the lead protagonist of the novel, portray the experiences of many individuals, families and groups in Nigeria. The struggles she went through with members of her family are described in the following accounts.

For years he went to the majalisa,  
where jobless men sat and argued all day, drank fura da nono in the  
afternoon and returned home at night with dark faces and limp pockets. P. 139

The above narrates the experiences of Zubairu, Hajia Binta's late husband, who was jobless for many years. From the narration, he was not alone in that situation but many other men were jobless like him. Majalisa, in the context of the novel, is a place where people with common interests sat and discuss. Fura da nono is a local drink made from millet and milk. For all the years Zubairu was jobless,

It was Binta's paltry salary as a schoolteacher that kept them afloat in those days until Zubairu started another suya spot. It prospered for several years until he got into a fight with a police sergeant. The officer wanted Zubairu to buy a 'licence to operate' from him, except there was no receipt for the transaction, and the fees were renewable each time the officer got broke. P. 140

The author's usage of the word 'paltry' portrays the level of poverty in Binta's family. Corruption within the police force was a contributory factor to the people's suffering. Zubairu's experience with the police is further narrated in the following account.

The police confiscated his goods and locked him up. It took a week and some significant payments to get Zubairu released. He then tried his hand at several trades: selling used clothes; running a motorcycle taxi (that ended when he crashed the bike and was left with a limp for months) and a failed trade in onions procured from farmers in the villages. In the end, he went back to his suya business and had just got another spot up and running at Angwan Rukuba Junction. He was struggling and Binta's salary had not been paid in eight months. Teachers had been on strike the last six. P. 140

The author reveals through his narration, the prevailing economic condition of civil servants and most especially, teachers, in Nigeria. Regular strike and withholding of salaries have become common occurrences in the nation. Withholding workers' salaries is a form of corruption in the sense that people in charge of affairs often deliberately keep the withheld salaries in their bank accounts to yield before they are eventually paid to the workers. The consequence of the corruption is a deepening of the level of poverty. After the death of her husband, Binta as a widow still continued to grapple with poverty and financial instability. The novel provides glimpses into the stark economic disparities that exist within Nigerian society. The clear contrast between Binta's humble dwelling in a poor neighborhood and the extravagant lifestyle of the elites underscores the socioeconomic inequalities prevalent in the country.

### **Reza**

Reza's involvement in the drug trade highlights the systemic issues that contribute to the cycle of poverty in the society. Reza's mother abandoned him at a young age when he was barely conscious of himself. He was brought up by his one-eyed father who had two more wives. His

mother's reputation was humiliating and there was always talk that she was a streetwalker. This talk among his father's co-wives and gossip of her follies breaks Reza's will to continue living in a house of hostilities with no protector, especially when his father was not around, which was often since he was a cattle merchant. Reza therefore ran away from home at a young age and grew up to become hardened.

In representing the type of politics prevalent in Africa, where every powerful politician has criminals all around to do the dirty work, the plot presents Reza as the go to criminal for a powerful senator in Jos. He made money regularly by working for Senator Buba Maikudi as a political thug, being used as agent for kidnapping and through his hard drug business. In the novel, the author scrutinizes the corrupt Nigerian society where the youths are deprived of requisite opportunities to excel. Instead, they are deployed by unscrupulous politicians to "get in the gutters and do dirty jobs" (P. 303), while their own children study at prestigious universities abroad and lead extravagant lifestyles.

### **Names of Characters**

The names given to some characters in the novel are significant to the concern of this study. Reza for instance is a corrupt form of razor as explained in the excerpt below.

His friends called him Reza, a corruption of razor, a title he earned after weed had given him the courage to cut his half-brother on the arm with a blade....

Talatu said that my father had given birth to an accursed razor. She started calling me Reza to mock me.

Razor is a very sharp instrument used for cutting or shaving. Hassan Babale, who later came to be known as Reza got that name after he had used a razor to cut his half-brother on the arm. Since then, his step mother, Talatu started calling him Reza to mock me.

The name Maikudi given by the author to the senator means a rich or wealthy person. This is also significant because the character, Senator Maikudi is presented in the novel as a wealthy person.

### **The Politicians**

During one of Reza's visits to Senator Maikudi, they discussed as follows:

'And how is your policeman? I hope he's not troubling you anymore.'  
'Not so much. He just raided our place and took our stuff and sold it to other boys.'  
'You see the injustice we are fighting?' The senator threw open his palms as if to receive an affirmation. 'That is why we must never give up.' P. 83

The Senator asked Reza if the police officer still disturb them and Reza told him that their place was recently raided and their stuff were taken away and sold to other boys. Senator Maikudi



gave the impression that he (also representing his party members) has the ambition being a saviour to the people.

In the excerpt below, Mallam Haruna and Mallam Balarabe talked about the corrupt practice among politicians and the electoral commission in Nigeria.

‘You see how these politicians are messing up.’...

‘This idea of using corps members to conduct elections, I’m not so sure about it.’

‘Atoh!’ Balarabe exclaimed. ‘This man, Jega, we thought he was coming in to do something reasonable. See how they are mismanaging the voter registration already.’

‘Power! Power! Power is a treacherous thing, I tell you. Once you join these men in their affairs, no matter how pious you are, they will find a way to corrupt you. P. 152

The corrupt practices include mismanagement of voters’ registration, among others. The extent of the corruption is such that anyone who is associated with politics in Nigeria is corrupt, that is, no saints among politicians. For insatiable and power-thirsty politicians like Senator Maikudi, "there are no permanent friends in politics but permanent interests." (p.301). Therefore, regardless of their loyalty, fellow politicians, corrupt police officers, and street mercenaries such as Reza, Gattuso, and the other boys at San Siro are merely expendable pawns in the political game of chess. The Senator paid Reza to kidnap an opponent’s son in order to distract his opponent’s attention and enable him win the seat in his political party. Although Reza carried out a lot of bad deals for Senator Maikudi, at the end of the novel, he arranged for Reza to be killed to avoid his secret going out. When Reza asked for his help, he pretended to be helping him but led him to his grave. He paid officer Baleri to get rid of Reza.

Inequality reflects through the contrast between Senator Buba Maikudi’s family and lifestyle and Reza’s life and background as shown in the excerpt below.

As Reza watched the senator pour tea for himself, sipping and smiling as he listened to his son whisper, he couldn’t help thinking of his own father languishing on the narrow hospital bed, one on which someone else had probably recently died. P. 146

Reza thought of his father in the hospital and how powerless his brother had been even to buy the needed drugs. He didn’t want to say that Bulama had married and that, on his meagre teacher’s salary, they barely managed through to the end of the month, from what he had heard. P. 147

Reza, while addressing Leila, the girl kidnapped, in the following excerpt talked about some aspects of the disparity between the rich and the poor in Nigeria.

‘You are as stupid as all the rich people I know.’

‘What?’

‘Rich people. They are all stupid, you understand.’

‘How so?’

‘See, we here, people go to school, they study medicine and things so they can cure sick people from useless diseases caused by poverty, you understand. You rich brats, you go to schools in London and America. P. 210

The novel also touches on the exploitation of vulnerable individuals by those in positions of power. This exploitation perpetuates cycles of poverty and reinforces the notion of corruption within societal structures.

### **The Nigerian Police**

The author highlights the corruption within the police force and how it reinforces the cycle of poverty and oppression in the society. The corrupt practices of some police officers also point out some issues that contribute to the cycle of poverty in the society. Reza’s frequent encounters with police officers are highlighted in the following accounts.

Their next-door neighbours, the police, under the charge of the new commanding officer, had raided San Siro and bashed in all the doors. And under the guise of police work, they had carted away sacks of premium and dirty weed, which later turned up with some other dealers elsewhere. Such an occurrence, commonplace as it was elsewhere, was as astonishing as it was unprecedented at San Siro. P. 33

San Siro is a gigantic uncompleted building where Reza and his gang of criminals stay. Surprisingly, this den of criminals is located next to a police station occupied by law enforcement agents. The implication of this is that in a corrupt society, crime and law can exist side by side, provided backs are scratched and money changes hands. With the resumption of a new commanding officer at the police station, San Siro was raided, sacks of illicit hard drugs were seized and surprisingly sold to dealers. This obviously, is corruption at work and is a common practice with the Nigerian Police.

‘You, you want trouble, eh?’

‘No trouble, officer. You wanted to see me?’

‘Yes, yes. You are making trouble for me and I don’t like it.’

‘Me? Making trouble? How?’

Baleri thumped the table between them, attracting one of the officers sitting outside on the bench. ‘Problem, sir?’

The ASP shook his head and waved the constable away.

‘See, my DPO has been calling me, saying his boss has been calling him about this nonsense San Siro business. You want to make trouble for me, eh?’

‘You understand, OC, I don’t know where you came from, but before



you, there have been OCs here and we never had problems, you understand. But you, you just came, raided my place, confiscated my goods, harassed my boys, took my money, locked me out—’  
‘Yeah, yeah, yeah. I know, I know.’ Baleri tapped a biro on the table, pounding out the rhythm of his frustration. He looked up at the calendar on the wall for some time – three weeks into his new post and he had to negotiate with an insufferable weed dealer over the right to do his job. He turned again to Reza. ‘Ok, from now on, no more trouble. You do your business but don’t disturb the neighbourhood, don’t disturb my men and don’t disturb me. Every Friday evening, four o’clock on the dot, bring the small something for protection and you and your boys can go smoke yourself to hell. No fighting, no shouting.’ P. 60

Another corrupt practice of some police officers in Nigeria is portrayed in the above account. Reza went to see the newly posted commanding officer who demanded for regular payment of protection fee from Reza; then he and his gang members will be free to do whatever they like. In the following narration, Gattuso and Dogo, who were Reza’s boys fought and were arrested by the police. The second day, Reza went to pay the bail to get them out of the police cell.

‘You understand, I told everyone that this policeman is looking for ways to make trouble for us but Gattuso and Dogo, stupid as they are, went and started a fight.’ Joe stopped laughing. ‘It has already happened, Reza. *Ka yi hakuri mana.*’

‘If they wanted to fight they could have taken it elsewhere, not here in San Siro, you understand. Making all that noise and drawing the police here like that.’ Reza shook his head. ‘How could they be so stupid?’ Sani sat down and stretched his legs on the floor. ‘It will not happen again, *insha Allah.*’ ....

Reza made a face showing the extent of his disgust. ‘You don’t understand. I don’t like going to the police for anything. Anything! Now if I go to bail them, this OC will think he is doing me a favour.’ P. 118

‘I am here to bail my boys.’ Baleri sat back in his chair and picked up his pen. He twirled it in his fingers with the satisfied air of one savouring a victory sure to come. ‘So they are your boys?’ ‘Yes.’  
‘I see.’ Baleri swivelled on his chair. ‘I see.’ ....

‘You see, these boys were disturbing the public peace, using dangerous weapons and causing grievous bodily harm,’ Baleri began.  
‘We are going to take them to court.’  
‘To court?’

‘Yes.’

‘Well then.’ Reza rose. ‘In that case, there is nothing to talk about, you understand.’ He caught the alarm that flickered in Baleri’s eyes. The officer must have found the thought of losing the extra he would make from the transaction disturbing. It would be the weekend soon enough, a period during which every decent crook knew that the average policeman would be desperate to make some quick cash. Reza turned and made for the door, certain that Baleri would not let him leave just like that. The officer’s stuttering voice reached him as he got to the door. ‘But – we don’t have to go that far if—’

‘How much?’ Reza turned. He saw the battered pride flash in the policeman’s eyes. But it was gone in an instant, consumed by the brazenness of avarice and desperation. Baleri named his price and watched as Reza counted out five one thousand naira notes and put them on the table. He picked up the money and shoved it in his breast pocket. He gestured to the seat Reza had just vacated and cleared his throat. P. 119

‘You see,’ Baleri opened his hands imploringly, ‘this is a small matter. If you had been paying the protection fee, none of this would have happened. When your boys started fighting and trying to kill each other, we would have gone and settled the matter there. No need for all this, eh.’ ....

‘You see,’ Baleri went on, ‘we all know how these things work. You scratch my back, I scratch yours, like that, eh, but you, you are proving stubborn.’

‘You understand, OC, last time we talked about this, I told you I have no problem with you people. But you took my stuff and sold it to the boys at the junction, and you took my money and harassed my boys. There was no respect in that. *Ko kadan.*’

‘Ok, ok. That has happened. Now we can move on.’

‘If you bring back my stuff and the money you took, you understand. But for now, release my boys. When you bring my things, we can talk business, *ka gane ko?*’

Baleri nodded and bit down on his lower lip. He called in one of his officers and ordered him to release the San Siro boys. ....

He slapped the palms of the three policemen sitting on the bench outside and shared a joke with them. When they were cackling, he reached into his pocket for a thousand naira note.

‘For soft drinks.’ He made a magnanimous gesture that included them all. One of the officers grabbed the bill out of Reza’s hand and tucked it

into his breast pocket. P. 120

Many police officers in Nigeria are usually desperate to make money during weekends through any available means. This perhaps is because they will need money for their upkeep and family use. The use of the expression “you scratch my back, I scratch yours” by the OC shows that bribery is a common practice among the police officers.

### Linguistic Devices in the Novel

The whole narrative is enriched with unique linguistic devices, some of which help to picture corruption and poverty. These linguistic devices comprise of carefully selected vocabularies, cohesive devices, rhetorical figures and argumentation.

**Table 1: Examples of Linguistic Devices in the Novel**

Cohesive Devices			
Reference	Conjunction	Substitution	Ellipsis
1. She had woken up that morning assailed by the pungent smell of roaches and sensed that something inauspicious was about to happen. It was the same feeling she had had that day, long ago, when her father had stormed in to announce that she was going to be married off to a stranger. p. 7	1. Lengthy and discordant debate p.10	1. She oiled and cleaned the sewing machine stationed in the alcove where the dining table, if she had had one, would have been p. 9	1. He was butchered and his corpse was ... torched. p.155 2. My uncle, he is a doctor, a psychologist. He helps people like you, people with emotional ... issues, you know. p.190 3. No, no, Hassan. I do. But I just can't ... take it.' p.197 4. And these women, my father's wives, they started talking about her ... that woman. p.199 5. So, this course you are studying, this ...' he searched for the word. 'Palaeontology. p.237 6. Oh, I see. And you are going to marry this ... boyfriend?' p.239 7. But Ustaz, these things happened two years ago. Why is she ... acting up now? p.250
Lexical Cohesive Devices			
Repetition	Synonymy	Antonymy	Hyponymy
			Collocation

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Tea, Mahmood. Tea p.39</li> <li>2. Because my...because my...because p.53</li> <li>3. My life is on track. You understand, my life is on track</li> <li>4. And he was panting like this ... like this</li> <li>5. I am very honoured, sir. Very honoured—'</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A <u>snake</u> can shed its skin but it will still remain a <u>serpent</u> p. 52</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Who is <u>he</u>?... <u>She</u> has many. p. 124</li> <li>2. You don't have to say <u>anything</u> now. Perhaps you could think about it. I will take care of <u>everything</u> when you are ready.' p.190</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The canvas was dominated by shades of reddish-brown and, in the middle, a shocking violent splash of red, the colour that had often startled Fa'iza out of her nightmares. p. 279</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. beaten dog, p. 19</li> <li>2. thick joints, p. 33</li> <li>3. lively arguments, p. 33</li> </ol>
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Some vocabulary items used by the author which are closely connected with the themes of corruption and poverty include *theft, robbery, poverty, poor, corrupt, paltry salary*, etc. Cohesive devices employed by the author include reference, conjunction, substitution, ellipsis, repetition, synonymy, antonymy, hyponymy, collocation, metaphors, idioms and proverbs. Few examples of cohesive devices in the novel are cited in the table above. These devices help to pass strong messages about the characters and the various themes conveyed in the novel.

### Conclusion

In the analyzed novel, the author uses language to project the thoughts of the characters to the readers. The text generally is portrayed as a critique of social ideologies and practices. Even though corruption and poverty are not central themes in the novel, they are touched upon in certain instances as illustrated in the analysis. Although the story is a work of fiction, the author through appropriate characterization, and effective language use, has been able to expose the prevailing imperfections in Nigerian culture and politics.

The author, through the use of language has been able to expose the impact of corruption and poverty on the lives of the characters in *Season of Crimson Blossoms*, emphasizing the harsh realities faced by marginalized individuals in Nigeria. The study suggests that writers should endeavor to always strike a balance between characterization, type of utterance used and context in their texts.

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