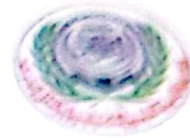




**Institute of Applied Linguistics and Translation**



**College of Language  
and Communication**

## **African American Voices in the Harlem Renaissance: A Socio-pragmatic Study on Selected Poems**

**MA Thesis Submitted in Partial  
Fulfilment of the Requirement of  
Master Degree in Applied  
Linguistics**

**By  
Pance' Medhat Emara**

**Under the Supervision of:**

**Prof. Nazek Fahmy.  
Professor of Literature,  
English Department,  
Faculty of Arts, Alexandria  
University.**

**Prof. Abeer Refky  
Professor of Literature**

**Dr. Shadia El Soussi.  
Lecturer of Linguistics,  
English Department,  
Faculty of Arts, Alexandria University.**

**2022**

## AFRICAN AMERICAN VOICES IN THE HARLEM RENAISSANCE

### ABSTRACT

This study investigates the voices of African American poets during the Harlem Renaissance (1920s-1930s) from a socio-pragmatic perspective using Acheoah's *Pragma-Crafting Theory* (2015). The socio-pragmatic approach is adopted into this linguistic and literary study for the analysis of literary discourse to investigate how language is constructed in the selected poems to convey social and political meanings. This research employs a descriptive qualitative method for analyzing nine poems composed during the Harlem Renaissance. The poems are described by referring to the existence of linguistic elements and counting their frequencies to maintain the objectivity of the analysis. The poems selected for the study are written by the most prominent poets of this era: Claude McKay (1889-1948), Langston Hughes (1901-1967) and Countee Cullen (1903-1946). The study aims to analyze themes related to racial prejudice found in the selected poems. It also investigates and analyzes the African American English (AAE) features used in the poems, comparing them to the features of Standard American English (SAE). Lastly, the study aims to investigate the personal and social deixis and its frequencies in the poems to shed light on the relationship between speaker, addressee, and referent. Finally, the findings show that racism, discrimination, and oppression are the most dominant themes that reflected the political tone and purpose of the poems. Secondly, the findings indicate that African American English is different from Standard American English grammatically, phonetically, and lexically. Thirdly, the results of analysis revealed that person and social deixis are essential linguistic features in the poems.

*Keywords:* Harlem Renaissance, Socio-pragmatic, African American English, Deixis