

Metaphor and the Carrying Forward of Embodied Experience in the Development of Individuality and Freedom in Emecheta Buchi's *Second-Class Citizen*: A Question of Sociability

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Abstract: *Buchi Emecheta's novel, Second Class Citizen, presents an innovative pathway for examining the development of individuality and freedom when framed within Gendlin's postulation of 'carrying forward'. In this light, it reconceptualises the novel from its predominantly feminist interpretations to the notion of 'sociability' and the benefits it affords the characters who are able to carry forward their experience of relocation from their native Africa to new locations in the diaspora, in the form of freedom, individuality, choice and mobility. Consequently, even though Buchi Emecheta is known for her feminist stance in her books, the study focuses on her interpretation of the female taking hold of her inherited capital, that is, the resources she has as a woman, and using them to bridge into and onto a different level of society in the social hierarchy, and thus in general, investigates the possibility of social mobility through breaking out of ready-made modes of thinking and bonding by bridging into other forms of cultural and social capital.*

Key Words: *Carrying forward, freedom, meaning-formation, metaphor, sociability.*

I. Introduction:

With the emergence of new forms of subjectivity and new forms of community induced by a constantly changing world, it is inevitable that we learn how to think more creatively with words, and that we learn how to form new concepts, and new constellations of meaning. This becomes more and more relevant as emigration and immigration issues dominate the news in contemporary times and societies. The aim of this study is therefore to investigate how contemporary African novels are assisting in the task of coping with a constantly changing world through the formation of new concepts and new constellations of meaning in respect of emigration, immigration, and the encounter with new spaces and the unknown.

Many contemporary African novels pursue new concepts or are repackaging old concepts in the light of new understandings of the continent and the issues and experiences that are projected through them; but in this paper's opinion, Buchi Emecheta's *Second-Class Citizen* presents a classic example of the creation of new pathways to understanding existence in new and unfamiliar locations and situations, and of creating new forms of subjectivity and community by means of carrying forward embodied experience and the language (Foucault 1972) in which the choices made are expressed. To some extent, this viewpoint goes beyond the view of *Second-Class Citizen* as an African feminist novel, which premises itself on the beliefs and desires of the characters in the novel concerning the power relationship between males and females in different cultural milieus. The paper focuses instead on questions of sociability, premised upon the importance of language, metaphor, embodiment, and concept or meaning-formation for existence in new spaces, situations and experience, and especially in new socio-cultural contexts.

For this reason, the paper departs from the more traditional and empiricist approach, also referred to by Barry (1995) as the liberal humanistic or text-led approach to the understanding of texts which focuses on the concrete and close reading of texts seeking objective analysis, to draw upon a more rhetorical and literary theoretical or ideas-led approach that tends to be more philosophical and conceptualising in accord with literary theoretical traditions such as structuralism, post-structuralism, postmodernism and psychoanalytic criticism (Barry 1995). A literary theoretical approach to the interpretation of the novel is in tandem with the intentions of the analysis of the text as an argument about ways of new meaning-formations, of articulating new subjectivities, and new types of community leading to the development of individuality and freedom. Whereas the traditional and empiricist approach may attempt to access the 'truth' of a supposed fixed meaning and hence focus heavily on evidence from the text, the literary theoretical approach fans out from the text into more philosophical and interdisciplinary discussions seeking evidence from sources other than the text because it focuses on the possibility of creating different articulations and configurations of meanings from the significations in the text achieved by self-reflexive subjectivities and the collaboration of contingent factors; and it also seeks thereby to find out how these link with the production of dialectical relationships and with universal tendencies applicable to humanity. Apart from this, it does not forget an emphasis on the discourses that create

the textuality of the novel to produce the new and contingent meanings and in which they are expressed. It, thus, examines language more from its indexical perspective than from its perspective of representation. Consequently, the reference to language in the literary theoretical approach is not necessarily equivalent to its basic grammatical functioning but points more towards discourse at a rather philosophical level, implying systems of thought and speaking, or organizing principles (Bourdieu 1990) that open up fields of discussion and new possibilities of meaning. This approach to language which may also be described as post-structuralist (Foucault 1972; Piantanida and Garman 1999), creates avenues for the opening up, re-examination, and redefinition of ready-made concepts and fixed meanings, methods and truths. An important advantage that these approaches offer in sum is that they provide a way of seeing and understanding old problems in a new light according to definitive basic principles. Seeing and understanding old problems in a new light according to definite basic principles enable the ability to devise new solutions to new problems that may also arise in new locations, spaces and socio-cultural contexts. This is also significant because of the rapidly changing world in which we live that constantly throws up new situations and new problems as well as leading people to new locations and spaces.

II. Carrying forward as a method of meaning-formation:

Many ways of meaning-formation are constantly being advanced in our rapidly changing world of technology and postmodernism, counter-posing the fixed social meanings handed down from traditions of education, beliefs, and ideologies. This paper follows closely the practice of meaning-formation postulated by Gendlin (1997) in his philosophy of language. The practice of meaning-formation is relevant because it can enable individuals not only to interrogate the social imposition of meanings, but also to transcend them to become skilful in carrying their own experience forward in new forms of meaning and action. Gendlin's postulations on language, consequently, are significant in their potential for developing individuality and freedom, and in suggesting, in the model of the thinking of Wittgenstein (1951), that our freedom is dependent on our capacity to break out of ready-made language or fixed meanings and methods by carrying forward the ready-made language we inherit and which we find ourselves already using and inscribed within.

Carrying forward, is a concept formulated by Gendlin (1997) to articulate the generation of new meanings from embodied experience. Underpinning the concept is a process of restructuring, driven by ideas of freedom, creativity, innovation, individuality and choices from within inscribed situations or positions. In this view, choices are relevant, because in the end, they rearticulate a specific focus or orientation for specific situations and moments of life which constitute embodied experience. Carrying forward thus implies a process in which numerous possibilities are created by the complexities of embodied experience, and choices rearticulate pathways from the pertinent problems arising from the situations of a constantly changing world and circumstances. Carrying forward is made possible because of embodied experience. And embodied experience is possible because every lived experience consists of objective contents, and socio-cultural meanings and forms, but also of emotions and mental articulations of these for making sense of what the experience must be and mean for the individual (Gendlin 1997). Underlying the concept of carrying forward, therefore, is a principle of self-reflexivity and the processing of lived experience or embodied experience through selection and restructuring on account of the intricacies produced by the complexity of experience.

This understanding suggests that social forms can no longer remain fixed, but can be altered and opened up to make a place for greater experiential intricacy. On this basis, Gendlin (1997) postulates a kind of social situation which includes in its very structure the expectation that each participant will restructure it further to enable the building of new kinds of community. Such communities can be distinguished as ones in which social relations are founded on principles of meaning-formation rather than on already shared, ready-made meanings and methods. The possibility of such existence also depends upon the sensitivity that emerges from the interplay between language and embodied experience; for this is crucial for the discovery of the inadequacy of inherited language and structures and the subsequent restructuring of meaning. In this regard, what leads us to such 'discovery' and the subsequent reconceptualisation of our experiences is the appreciation of the situatedness of our thinking, knowing and speaking (Schneider 1997). Situatedness implies contingency, that is, a context, transitoriness, and an articulation of experience that is aware of its own constructedness, intricacies and possible restructuring through the articulation or reconfiguration of choices.

III. How does this outlook manifest in an African feminist novel like *Second Class Citizen*?

1.1. Overview of the novel: The turn from African feminism to sociability:

The novel, *Second Class Citizen*, written by Buchi Emecheta, a prolific Nigerian author resident in the United Kingdom, is the second of at least a dozen novels. The novel follows the life and experience of the main character, Adah, as a young girl in Nigeria and the manner in which both culture and circumstances forced her into an early marriage for survival when she lost both parents. She had hoped to make a better life with her husband in England and to realize a dream of educating herself to her highest potential when she joined him,

especially because she sponsored his education abroad while she continued to work in Nigeria; but the marriage turned into a nightmare when she arrived, eventually leading to a divorce. Her husband, Francis' insistence on his cultural rights as husband and 'owner' of Adah, and the consequent physical and sexual violence perpetrated on her to elicit these 'rights' tend to be the centre of attention for the novel and for other works dependent on it. The argument in this paper is that although the novel, *Second Class Citizen*, has been read and interpreted in a black feminist mode, it can nevertheless transcend this interpretation and be restructured to a broader mode of sociability. In this vein, it will focus on questions of mobility, location and new experience, existence in new locations and spaces, and approaches to appropriating both the inherited capital and the resources of the new environment to bridge into new spaces and the social hierarchies of the new environments such as the urban societies of the diaspora avail. Sociability, therefore, involves the ability of persons to mobilize and utilize the resources that compose a person's primary identity as a resource to articulate and re-negotiate the meaning and skills capable of enabling a person to restructure experience in order to gain access to the structures of new spaces and previously unknown social formations and societies. (Bourdieu 1990)

This analysis will focus on the main character, Adah, and her skillfulness at forming new meanings, and hence transcending the ready-made language of social meaning and social forms of social capital handed over to her in the form of bonding capital. By carrying it forward to bridging and linking capital, she developed the capacity to extend her horizon of life and terms of life. This capacity enabled her to access cultural capital and symbolic capital in the United Kingdom, leading to economic success and emancipation. In contrast, her counterparts like Francis and the other immigrants before her were unable to break out of the ready-made language, methods, and social forms of social capital typical of bonding capital that they had inherited and hence remained trapped in merely 'getting by' in the United Kingdom through adopting the language and metaphor of being second-class citizens, unable to acquire the cultural capital and symbolic capital that could enable them carry forward their language and utilize the resources of the society to enable themselves.

Adah's arrival in London, to the hovel in which Francis dwelled, and the slum conditions in which he and his fellow Africans lived created a feeling of disillusionment after her great expectations of life in England while she was still living in Nigeria. This situation raised several questions in her mind which she put to Francis, suggesting intuitively that Francis could have secured better accommodation if he had tried harder. Francis was predisposed to explain issues away in a classically traditional deterministic fashion, and summarized his own being and existence and that of his fellow Africans in England in the metaphor of 'second class citizens' as a riposte to Adah's questions:

Then he spat out in anger: 'You must know, my dear young lady, that in Lagos you may be a million publicity officers for the Americans; you may be earning a million pounds a day; you may have hundreds of servants: you may be living like an elite, but the day you land in England, you are a second-class citizen. ... because we are all second-class. (37).

In order to fit into this metaphor and its conception of living in the United Kingdom, Adah would have to adopt the actions compatible to it, that is, to take up a job that fits the designation of the second class citizen and act accordingly. Hence as Adah describes it perceptively, "Francis had become so conditioned by this phrase that he was not only living up to it but enjoying it, too". As a consequence, "He kept pressing Adah to get a job in a shirt factory. Adah refused. Working in a factory was the last thing she would do." (38). Thus Adah describes how Francis' conceptualization of existence seems to have been routinised into a particular structure that composed his grammar of choices, arrangement, and action, also indicating a passive acceptance and existence in a role. But how did Francis acquire this conditioning, and how did Adah, coming from the same cultural background, nevertheless, feel that such conditioning into a metaphor of the second class citizen was unhelpful in the new location of their existence, requiring breaking out of it to such an extent that she rejected the symbol of passive acceptance by rejecting the job at a shirt factory, which other African immigrants would have found rather liberating and gladly welcomed as second class citizens?

1.2. Conceptualising felt meaningfulness:

Lakoff and Johnson (1980), provide a way of understanding how such conditioning that characterized Francis can happen. They explain that individuals are always seeking ways of structuring and grounding their experience. They propose a way of understanding what this means by making a distinction between experience and the way we conceptualize it, suggesting that people coming from the same cultural experience and background may also be able to conceptualize their experiences differently. All experiences such as the emotional, mental, cultural and any others which appear intangible, are just as basic as physical experience, and all of them, including the non-physical experiences, are typically conceptualized in terms of the physical. What this process seeks to achieve is to define what is not very clearly defined, especially the non-physical experiences, in terms of the more clearly defined. This approach to defining the less clearly defined experiences in terms of the physical culminates in what Lakoff and Johnson (1980) identify as the use of metaphor and metonymy in the symbolisation of physical and non-physical experience. By this understanding, we realise that

metaphor is pervasive in everyday life. That also means that 'Our ordinary conceptual system, in terms of which we both think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature' (Lakoff & Johnson 1980:3) and our physical, mental, and emotional experiences are conceptualized as such. By extension, our everyday functioning is itself governed by the concepts or metaphors which structure what we perceive, feel, experience, and how we get around in the world, and how we relate to other people. In this way our conceptual system 'plays a central role in defining our everyday realities.' (Lakoff and Johnson 1980:3). The way we find out what this conceptual system consists of is by examining our language.

Language is a system of communication, but it does not represent the objects it refers to. Gendlin therefore develops an alternative to the old representational conception of language in which he argued that language, instead of representing an object or experience, rather 'carries forward' experience, situations and objects through experiencing. Language is thus about the process of conceptualising felt meaningfulness (Levin 1997:52). The concern, therefore, in the novel, is about how the characters attempt to 'carry forward' their experience through the mental structures made possible by the words, ideas and metaphors by which they conceptualized their felt meaningfulness. On the other hand, they may fail to do so preferring to inhabit their inherited languages and social meanings, and hence privileging the inherited metaphors manifesting as bonding capital with its associated social practices.

In conceptualizing the felt meaningfulness of his experiences and that of his fellow Nigerians, Francis adopts the metaphor of the second-class citizen. It is a metaphor that encapsulates an order of hierarchy, determinism, non-assertiveness, and a passive acceptance of situations as they are, and not as they can be carried forward or restructured. Adah, on the other hand, is able to carry her experiences and language forward. The basis of this enablement may be found in the way she uses the language of the dream in the process of conceptualizing her felt meaningfulness about her numerous experiences of life in a society that circumscribes her possibilities through its social forms of bonding capital. Her aspirations, however, emanating from her experience of life, urge her to transcend all the barriers to their attainment. The merging of reality and aspiration in a condensation emerge as a dream in which she sees alternative and multiple possibilities and a way of transcending barriers to achieve her aspirations to live in the United Kingdom. The dream and the Presence she conceptualized through the dream, become a means of indicating, defining and creating new pathways towards her set goals, and a way of articulating choices and hence carrying forward her experience and language into new social forms. She articulates it this way:

It all begun like a dream. You know, that sort of dream which seems to have originated from nowhere, yet one was always aware of its existence. One could feel it, one could be directed by it; unconsciously at first, until it became a reality, a Presence. ...Adah did not know for sure what gave birth to her dream, when it all started, ... (1).

Thus, the first sentence of the novel, in which the main character sets about grounding her experience in language, enacts the process of conceptualization of felt meaningfulness and the process of carrying forward meaning, which become her organizing principle and characterize her whole approach to life in the novel. It manifests in the metaphor of the dream. According to Walsh (1920):

One of the most interesting features of dreams is their wonderful condensation of persons, places, and things. For example, a dream scene may really be made up of several places we have seen: a dream person may have traits of feature or manner that belong to two or more persons. For this reason we may doubt that dreams are founded on actual experiences, since the dream characters or scenes are not to be found in real life in exactly the same form as in the dreams. The dream is a composite entanglement and embodiment of various experiences which are not found in real life, but which yet can be deciphered and disentangled as connected with real life issues, occurrences and experiences through a conscious or reflexive process.

Walsh's analysis is important because it throws light on the fact that dreams describe a situational thickness that indicates the interpenetration of both the formed and unformed in the experience of a meaningful situation. Such situational thickness also points to an excess beyond conceptual patterns, putting into doubt the adequacy of analysing the content of experience as simply a set of beliefs and desires. Instead, it puts into focus that our use of language is not simply governed by rules but is also pervaded by innovation and metaphorical creation that alters meaning as we carry it forward (Kolb 1997:74).

This understanding reinforces Gendlin's observation that language includes situations as well as words and that it is not 'just verbal'. Language brings with it the bodily feel of living in the situations. It is for this reason that 'Words change situations. Human situations are lived and changed largely by talking.' (Earle 1997: 89). Adah's conceptualization of her experiences through the metaphor of the dream sets her up for an attitude towards existence that would consist of the reflexivity which inevitably enabled her to restructure every situation through carrying it forward through the re-conceptualisation of the language and the social form in which it is embedded. Thus, the dream and the Presence in the dream become a metaphor that frames the situations that occur in the novel, and the processes of meaning-formation that carried those situations forward,

especially for Adah. She describes the social form she inherited vividly in the life as it was lived in her native village of Ibuza and that of Lagos, as symbolizing the inter-animation between nature and nurture:

She had been taught at an early age that the people of Ibuza were friendly, that the food there was fresh, the spring water was pure and the air was clear. The virtues of Ibuza were praised so much that Adah came to regard her being born in a God-forsaken place like Lagos as a misfortune. Her parents said that Lagos was a bad place, bad for bringing up children because here they picked up the Yoruba-Ngbati accent. It was bad because it was a town with laws, a town where Law ruled supreme. In Ibuza, they said, you took the law into your own hands. If a woman abused your child, you went straight into her hut, dragged her out, beat her up or got beaten up, as the case might be. So if you didn't want to be dragged out and beaten up you wouldn't abuse another woman's child. Lagos was bad because this type of behavior was not allowed. You had to learn to control your temper, which Adah was taught was against the law of nature. ... (1-2)

This inter-animation of nature and nurture introduced a complexity and intricacy into Adah's conceptualization of life, which she needed to resolve. What Adah was able to do with what she had been taught and therefore what she had imbibed at an early age was not to take it for granted and accept it passively as a given for existence, but to experience it as a murkiness, fuzziness, or a vagueness that, like a dream, consists of a complexity that needed to have its metaphors deciphered in order to redefine and carry it forward or restructure its meaningfulness.

'Murkiness, fuzziness, and vagueness' are terms used by Gendlin to explain the feel and nature of the non-defined or as-yet-to-be-defined experience and the complex character of experience as the individual wades through it before being able to define it. He explains that these features of experience do not manifest as either indicators of the world as it exists or as indicators of products of the mind. In the words of Earle (1997:92), rather, they 'manifest the unspoken order of the world whose raw causal power is unconstrained by our conceptual arrangements.' That is what experience is. On the other hand, conceptual arrangements are made possible within this murkiness, fuzziness, and vagueness because of the signals received from outside the beliefs and desires that are fixed as givens in our own experience. Thus, there 'is cognitive advance because signals get through from outside the cognitive systems we have inherited or designed. We can feel what we are not supposed to notice' (Earle 1997:92-93). Thus, the complexity which occurs on account of experience can be disruptive, due to the murkiness, fuzziness, and vagueness it produces; nonetheless, Gendlin's thrust is that we can transmute these into usable intricacy. Thus, feeling, which characterizes the manifestation of Adah's imagery of the Presence in her dream is hereby portrayed as a necessary aid to recognizing experiences that can be conceptualized, or that are eventually conceptualized to guide action. And how does one begin to make meaning from the murky fuzziness of dreams or metaphor, and how does this work in the novel, how do the characters make meaning of their felt situations, and what frameworks guide them in carrying forward their situations?

1.3. The framework for meaning-formation and restructuring of embodied experience:

Here, Pierre Bourdieu's (1986) forms of capital provide a framework to guide our understanding of the dynamics of meaning formation, the participation frames within which these occur, and the resources utilized and appropriated within this action, and the shape of the social forms affected in the novel. According to Bourdieu, it is the contextual and social framework of experience and resources that enable beneficiaries to accumulate capital for the purpose of functioning within specific contexts. Different forms of capital can be accumulated as a result of differing contextual and social experiences and their resources. Contextual and social experiences and their resources shape the social forms available to an individual or a community. Bourdieu (1986), notes that there are a variety of capital that can be accumulated from the differing contextual and social experiences and the resources they possess. In discussing the forms of capital and how they occur and operate, he postulated the concept of embodiment. Embodiment entails time and a structure of distribution. With time, the contents of embodiment define and distinguish themselves into various forms of capital. Bourdieu describes them as 'capital' because of their exchange and social value within the social context. Capital and its distribution therefore become a central concern, as they create a value that is structured into various forms of exchange and benefit.

Thus, Capital, which can also be understood as 'accumulated labor' when reified or objectified in persons, is able to turn into an embodiment that propels action. As an embodiment in persons, it is living labor; and as living labour, it takes on power as a social energy and emotion. This social energy and emotion nonetheless, operates according to certain principles of regularity or 'grammar' that constitute it into what Bourdieu refers to as a 'habitus' or a 'lex incita'. This constitutes an intuitive sense and skill of a particular social world. Consequently, capital influences and orients the subject or agent in two ways: by a certain regularity in conformity to the type of capital embodied, and yet at the same time, by a degree of choice and conversion of capital within the limits and orientations of the social world in which the embodiment functions. Thus, in the emotions expressed by the characters, especially the main character, and in their representations and

conceptualizations, certain discourses emerge that indicate both orientations of the embodied capital and the social world in which they are operating and positioning themselves, and sets up a framework for interpreting and understanding their abilities for meaning-formation and their carrying forward or the lack of it.

Viewed from this angle, to be able to access a particular environment requires the kind of capital that is appropriate for persons in a particular kind of social formation, comprising social capital in the three forms described by Woolcock (2001) - bonding capital, bridging capital, and linking capital, and cultural capital. Woolcock identifies bonding capital with the close ties that exist between family members, close friends and neighbours and distinguishes this from bridging capital which is a relationship between dissimilar persons at the same level of a hierarchy, implying the connections between people who share broadly similar demographic characteristics. Linking capital is associated with the ability to forge relationships and alliances with sympathetic individuals in positions of power, and the capacity to leverage resources, ideas, and information from formal institutions beyond one's community (World bank 1999). In this regard, a World bank report (1999) and other researchers (Fukuyama 1999), also referred to by Woolcock (2001) suggest that bonding capital, if over-emphasised, can be non-productive and perpetuate poverty through insularity and isolation from the institutions that can enable them bridge into the broader currents of society. Hence poverty is conceptualised as largely a product of the powerlessness and exclusion of persons from formal institutions beyond community, and hence also the inability of persons to get access to resources, ideas, information and formal institutions because of the lack of bridging and linking capital.

These ideas of bonding capital, bridging capital and linking capital appropriately summarise the conditions, experiences, decision-making and choices of the various categories of people in the novel, and particularly of the African migrant population epitomized by Francis, and Adah. Bonding capital is a social form that can be carried forward into bridging capital; and bridging capital can in turn be carried forward into linking capital. Nonetheless, the ability to 'carry forward' depends upon the ability to redefine a murky and fuzzy experience or situation by discovering the inadequacy of inherited language in order to re-conceptualise it or to interrogate the social impositions of existing social forms. This is the way in which language can be carried forward through innovation and metaphorical creation (Kolb 1997:74). Besides, it also depends on the ability and willingness to explore new ways to build new kinds of community, and as Gendlin (1997:58) emphasized, depends upon communities in which social relations are founded on principles of meaning-formation, rather than on already shared, ready-made meanings.

This is what seems to be lacking among the African migrants, and typified in the embodied practices and pronouncements of Francis. For the African migrants, bonding capital was a given and fixed natural truth that could not be questioned. To question it was to invite ostracism or isolation and hostility as it would index the inability to fit in or to belong – a sign of 'discriminating against your own people' as Francis put it. The desire to fit in and to belong had compelled Francis to live and think in the United Kingdom in the language and structure metaphorised as 'second-class citizen' because, for him, as for the rest of the African migrants, it was the only way to fit in in order to 'get by'. The emphasis in this community was conformity to their inherited social forms symbolized by the narrator in references to members of the migrant community and the decisions they took: always in reference to what is done in Nigeria and the way it would be done. Such reference is to enable them repeat the same without recourse to the ability to interrogate those references against their immediate situations and their 'experiencing' of those situations according to the details, murkiness, and fuzziness of their new situations, and without their reconceptualisation, rearticulation and renaming of these. Thus, their arguments against Adah violating their norm of giving out their children for foster-parenting inevitably led to her isolation because she would rather reconceptualise her choices and decisions according to the situations she was meeting and her 'experiencing' of them, and not according to the inherited norms that bonded the immigrant community together and routinized their responses to 'experiencing'. The immigrant Nigerian community reacted unfavourably to Adah's choices since they did not conform to the set ways in which they were used to responding to their experiences in the United Kingdom arguing:

It was all right for her, being a first-class citizen for the part of the day when she worked in a clean, centrally heated library, but what about her children? Who was going to look after them? ... While it was still news that she got herself employed in a library, doing a first-class citizen's job, Francis was prepared to look after their children, but soon her job was no longer news. Everybody accepted it with a sniff. 'Who is going to look after your children for you?' Francis asked one day

She could feel their neighbours speaking through Francis. Their landlord and landlady were in their late thirties. They had been married for ten years or more, but the wife had had no children. They had resented Francis' idea of bringing his children to England in the first place. They had warned him that it was going to be difficult for them, but left him alone when he told them that Adah had already paid for their fare. They consoled themselves with the fact that, after all, the children would not stay with their parents at Ashdown Street. They would have to be fostered. Most Nigerians with children sent their children away to foster-parents. No sane

couple would dream of keeping their children with them. So rampant was the idea of foster-parents that African housewives in England came to regard the foster-mother as the mother of their children. ... No one cared whether a woman was suitable or not, no one wanted to know whether the house was clean or not; all they wanted to be sure of was that the foster-mother was white. The concept of 'whiteness' could cover a multitude of sins. Everybody expected Adah to do the same. It came as a big surprise, therefore, when they realized that she was not making any attempt to look for a foster-mother. (43-45).

The kind of things that kept the migrants together as a tight-knit community sharing and cultivating bonding capital were being interrogated by Adah. As Gendlin (1997) articulated, 'intricate possibilities are always implicit in the space in which the dominant structure is articulated'; and these provide the grounds for making both cognitive advances and articulating new structures from experiencing. The intricate possibilities generate anomalies pointing to the presence of excesses in meaning that could be tapped and advanced. What is articulated from 'experiencing' to carry forward language or a social form is the formulation of new meaning from the intricate possibilities of the existing structures of meaning.

Consequently, whereas Adah's experiencing of life in England among the immigrant African population is circumscribed by bonding capital, the varying intricate possibilities this experiencing presented enabled her to notice and feel things she was not supposed to see, notice or feel. Pursuing these intricacies as leads, she was able to articulate something different from the bonding capital that the immigrant community was immersed in and offering – that is – bridging capital. Her literacy provided the first stray signal that there could be a way of redefining her status in England and of escaping the 'second-class' status that the African migrants had enrolled themselves into and bound themselves by through bonding capital and its reproduction. She remembered:

After all, she had several 'O' and 'A' levels and she had part of the British Library Association Professional Certificate, to say nothing of the experience. Why should she go and work with her neighbours who were just learning to join their letters together instead of printing them? ... But Francis mixed with them very well, and they were pushing him to force her to take the type of job considered suitable for housewives, especially black housewives'. ... But, as usual, God had a funny way of answering people's prayers. An envelope arrived one morning telling her that she had been accepted as a senior library assistant at North Finchley Library, subject to certain conditions. She was so happy about this that she ran into the backyard where she hung out the babies' nappies and started to whirl round and round in a kind of Igbo dance. (38).

Through bridging capital, Adah will have access to the 'first-class citizens' resources, and hence access to improving her economic conditions in England. Forging closer relationships with distant friends, colleague library workers, and hence people with broadly similar demographic characteristics brought her immense benefits. When her daughter, Vicky was suddenly taken ill while she was at work, she had immense sympathy and support from her colleagues at the library where she worked. Cynthia broke the news in a kindly manner and encouraged her, while Miss Stirling, her supervisor, drove Adah to the train station so that she might catch the train quickly and get home early to attend to the crisis. Similarly, when she gave birth to her children, on each occasion, she was very warmly supported with gifts, warm compliments and even a party. But above all, the discovery of her talent for writing and its value were teased out and encouraged to grow through the assistance of Bill and Peggy who were her supervisors at the Chalk Farm Library. Contrary to Francis' discouraging attitude towards her talent in writing, her Chalk Farm Library colleagues believed in her writing and encouraged her to work towards its publication:

She was going to show **The Bride Price** to Francis, to show him that she could write and that she had not been wasting her time as he thought. But first she must take the manuscript to her friends at the Chalk Farm Library. Bill read it and so Peggy and the others. She thought they would laugh and tell her that it was a good first attempt. But Bill took it quite seriously, she should show it to somebody in publishing! This scared Adah. She did not know anybody in publishing, she did not know whether she could type the whole lot. It was so enormous, that manuscript. The words, simple, not sophisticated at all, kept pouring from her mind. She had written it, as if it were someone talking, talking fast, who would never stop. Now Bill said it was good, she should get it typed out, and he was going to show it to somebody. It was imperative now that Adah should tell her Francis ... (177) ... She told Francis about **The Bride Price** in the evening. But he replied that he would rather watch **The Saint** on the new television which they had hired. Adah pleaded, and wailed at him that it was good, that her friends at the library said so. He should please read it. She said that Bill thought it should be typed out, because it was good. Then Francis said, 'You keep forgetting that you are a woman and that you are black. The white man can barely tolerate us men, to say nothing of brainless females like you who could think of nothing except how to breast-feed her baby'. (178).

Adah's bridging capital has enabled her to access the resources of her library colleagues and the possibilities that issued from them, and thus to overcome Francis' kind of fatalism and discouragement, extending the horizons of her life and the forms of life available for her to operate in. Adah's own way of

thinking was changing as a result of this, her courage was growing, and she was discovering a new personality and direction for her life. Francis, on the other hand, was trapped in his bonding capital with its culture that could not see beyond its second-class citizenship and the conceptualization of himself as such. Thus, Adah realized that:

In her happiness she forgot that Francis came from another culture, that he was not one of those men who would adapt to new demands with ease, that his ideas about women were still the same But all the time she kept hoping that his long stay in England would change him. Did they not come to England for further studies? Surely he would change somehow. Adah knew that she was changing herself. Many things that mattered and had worried her before had become less important. For instance, it did not matter to her any more whether she became a librarian or a seamstress. What mattered was that she should not be bothered with unhappiness, because she wanted to radiate happiness to all those around her. And when she was happy, she noticed that her children were happy too. (175).

The consequences of bridging capital and carrying forward one's language through it by forming new social metaphors and forms are enormous, both for personal bearing and orientation, and for self-discovery as well as for economic growth and liberation. In the domain of social capital then, the link between bonding capital and economic growth dictates that higher levels of bonding social capital which can be associated with networking within homogenous communities are likely to go together with lower rates of economic growth, since spending more time with family and close friends comes at the cost of working and learning time. On the contrary, networking and participation across different communities generate trust and are positively correlated with economic growth, and are associated with bridging social capital. Hence, as much as Adah's courage and horizons grow and her new direction of life becomes clearer, so do her economic prospects grow as she is easily able to think of alternative ways of empowering herself through work opportunities and the kinds of people and places she could access without the drag of living within a conceptualized and representational 'second-class' citizenship.

A similar attempt to access bridging capital was made earlier by Pa Noble, Francis and Adah's Nigerian landlord, albeit through some of the most ignoble channels, to exit from participation solely in his African migrant community to participation across communities in a bridging social capital mode. His approach was ignoble, and predominantly risky, and yet it produced better economic prospects for him than his counterparts who continued to be locked up in bonding social capital in order only to get by as second-class citizens. Carrying forward is a conscious act such as happened in the life-course of Adah. It comprises conscious decisions and choices made as alternatives to, or confirmations of existing social forms and conceptualizations, and hence also the readiness to carry the consequences of those decisions and choices in carrying forward the inherited language. As Adah put it in her relationship with Francis: his inherited world offered her only this – 'There was no need to have an intelligent conversation with his wife because, you see, she might start getting ideas. Adah knew she was a thorn in his flesh', but she took a decision and made a choice – 'Francis could beat her to death but she was not going to stoop to that level' (175), referring to the passive acceptance of her denigration by Francis. Pa Noble's decisions and choices were different. His story was pathetic as he allowed things to happen to him in a way that showed that he did not understand whatever he was doing reflexively or that his decisions were made in desperation to be accepted by his fellow workers and in his desperation to get a white woman as a wife. In order to be accepted by his fellow workers, Pa Noble had tried to prove his superhuman strength as a black man by attempting to carry a building lift all by himself. The consequences were grievous, leading to a debilitating deformity, and winning him the sympathy of his fellow workers who helped him to get a compensation large enough to help him buy a house for renting in a 'first class' vicinity. His actions, although helping him to network between different communities, were nevertheless not reflective, and therefore did not help him to carry forward his inherited language of being a second class citizen, although it is likely that his actions stemmed from a desire to do so. Consequently, although he bought property in a 'first-class' environment, he could still not integrate with the environment and the population around him. Thus, in another non-reflective way, he told the community he networked with in order to get their sympathy that,

... he was born in a tree. His mother fed him with milk until he was almost twelve. He had to be weaned because he was by then old enough to join the menfolk in the farm work. He never wore clothes until he was taken into the army. Yes, he said all children in Nigeria were brought up like that. There was no food, people died of dysentery every day. He ate meat only twice in a year during the yam festival and the festival of his father's gods. In fact, he only started to live when he came to England. And, of course, he started to enjoy life only when he met his Sue. (95-6).

IV. Conclusion:

Carrying forward language is crucial to the creation of new meaning and new forms of social existence. However, it is possible only in situations where individuals are capable of recognizing the complexities of their

experiencing and while redefining them, are able to reconceptualise them into new metaphors that can guide thinking and action.

In social situations such as relocating to new areas and places as typified in migrant situations, and diasporas, the ability to redefine and reconceptualise the complexities of 'experiencing' result in the application of bridging capital and linking capital which produce interactions and networking with different communities outside the individual's own homogenous cultural grouping and leads to the widening of horizons, perceptions of different forms of life that become accessible for improving their circumstances and life chances, including economic growth.

Through reading Buchi Emecheta's novel, *Second Class Citizen*, an argument can be made that a conceptual framework of carrying forward, and social capital in the forms of bonding social capital, bridging social capital and linking social capital can also help to define the social context of the 'experiencing' in the novel and carry forward its meaning from an emphasis on feminism to sociability to the benefit of the émigré, the immigrant, and those seeking integration for a better life in new locations and previously unknown locations. restructuring of meaning and the

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