

Remembering Through Taste: Sensory Memory and the Reconstruction of Identity in Joanne Harris' *The Lollipop Shoes*

Sruthi S.¹ & Dr. V. Karpagavadivu²

¹Research Scholar, Department of English, Dr. M.G.R. Educational and Research Institute, Chennai, India.

²Professor & Deputy Head (Administration), Department of English, Dr. M.G.R. Educational and Research Institute, Chennai, India.

Abstract

This paper examines the role of sensory memory in the reconstruction of identity in Joanne Harris's *The Lollipop Shoes* through David Sutton's gustemological approach to food, memory, and embodied knowledge. Sutton's gustemological perspective understands taste, smell, cooking, and other sensory practices as embodied forms of knowing through which memory, identity, and cultural belonging are experienced, interpreted, and negotiated. Building on this perspective, the study explores food not merely as a symbol of nourishment or pleasure but as a multisensory medium through which fragmented identities are remembered, understood, and reconstructed. The novel's rich representations of chocolate, confectionery, spices, aromas, textures, and culinary practices function as multisensory gustemological experiences that reconnect characters with their personal histories, emotional selves, and cultural inheritances. Vianne's intuitive chocolate-making embodies inherited culinary knowledge that reconnects her with her itinerant childhood and maternal legacy, while Anouk's sensory encounters with food shape her evolving understanding of family, belonging, and selfhood. In contrast, Zoie's manipulation of sensory perception reveals the unstable relationship between memory, embodied experience, and the performance of identity. Rather than treating memory as a purely cognitive process, this study argues that remembering is an embodied gustemological practice in which sensory experiences generate knowledge of the self and facilitate the reconstruction of identity. By foregrounding the relationship between food, multisensory perception, and identity, this paper demonstrates how culinary experiences preserve individual and cultural continuity amidst displacement, loss, and personal transformation. The paper contributes by introducing David Sutton's gustemological perspective as an innovative framework for understanding the novel's culinary imagination and argues that sensory memory functions as a narrative strategy through which identity is continually reconstructed rather than merely recovered.

Keywords: David Sutton, gustemology, sensory memory, embodied knowledge, identity reconstruction, culinary studies.

Introduction:

Food has long been recognised as more than a source of nourishment. Across cultures and literary traditions, it functions as a medium through which people express emotions, preserve traditions, and negotiate personal and cultural identities. In literary texts, food often carries meanings that extend beyond its material presence, reflecting relationships, social values, memories, and lived experiences. Roland Barthes argues that food is "a system of communication, a body of images, a protocol of usages, situations, and behaviour" (Barthes 21), suggesting that food

communicates meanings in much the same way as language. Warren Belasco observes that "food is never just something to eat" (Belasco 3), but is closely connected with culture, history, and identity. These perspectives have encouraged literary scholars to examine food not merely as a symbolic object but as a meaningful cultural practice that shapes the lives of individuals and communities.

Among the many dimensions of food studies, the relationship between food and memory has received increasing scholarly attention. Food memories are often more powerful than ordinary

recollections because they engage emotions alongside sensory experience. They are not simply memories of a particular meal or recipe but memories of people, places, relationships, and moments associated with those foods. John S. Allen explains that "the taste, smell, and texture of food can be extremely evocative," bringing back not only memories of a place or an event but also "deeper memories of feelings and emotions" that have the power to interrupt the present and revive forgotten experiences (Allen 150). Thus, food becomes an important medium through which the past is experienced in the present.

Food memories play a significant role in shaping an individual's sense of identity and belonging. Abarca and Colby describe food memory as an embodied experience that creates "a polytemporal consciousness" capable of redefining "home and longing for home" while connecting individuals with "the root of one's identity" (Abarca & Colby 4). Similarly, Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson observe that "food-laced memories feed readers' desire to redefine themselves" by enabling them to imagine and recreate lived experiences through food (Smith & Watson 149). These observations suggest that remembering through food is not a passive act of recalling the past but an active process through which individuals reconstruct their identities, reconnect with their cultural heritage, and negotiate their place within changing social and cultural environments. Therefore, food serves as a bridge between memory and identity, especially in narratives concerned with migration, displacement, and personal transformation.

The relationship between food and memory is closely connected with the idea of sensory memory, which emphasises the role of bodily experience in remembering. Memories associated with food are often triggered through taste, smell, texture, sight, and touch rather than through conscious thought alone. A familiar aroma or flavour can unexpectedly revive forgotten experiences because the senses preserve emotional and cultural meanings that remain embedded in everyday life. Unlike memory understood as a purely mental process, sensory memory highlights the body's role in

remembering, suggesting that experiences are continually reconstructed through repeated sensory encounters. Cooking, tasting, and sharing food therefore become embodied practices through which memories are experienced rather than simply recalled.

This understanding of sensory experience is central to David Sutton's concept of gustemology. Combining the ideas of gustatory and epistemology, Sutton argues that food is not merely consumed but experienced as a form of embodied knowledge. According to Sutton, cooking, tasting, smelling, and eating are ways of knowing because they preserve memories, cultural traditions, and emotional experiences within the body. Culinary knowledge is therefore acquired not only through written recipes or conscious learning but also through repeated sensory practices that connect individuals with their families, communities, and histories. Through this gustemological perspective, memory becomes an embodied process in which sensory experiences enable individuals to understand themselves and their relationship with the world around them.

Joanne Harris' novels provide a rich literary context for exploring these ideas. Throughout the *Chocolat* series, Harris presents food as an essential part of everyday life, using chocolate, spices, herbs, confectionery, and cooking to explore themes of memory, identity, belonging, and emotional healing. Her novels are characterised by vivid sensory descriptions that appeal to taste, smell, touch, sight, and sound, creating immersive culinary landscapes where food becomes closely linked to the characters' emotional and psychological lives. Rather than functioning merely as a symbol, food in Harris's fiction acts as a catalyst that reconnects characters with their past, shapes their present experiences, and influences their understanding of themselves.

The Lollipop Shoes, also known as *The Girl with No Shadow* is a novel by Joanne Harris, published in 2007. This book is a sequel to Harris' novel *Chocolat* and continues this exploration of food, memory, and identity. Set in Montmartre, Paris, the novel follows Vianne Rocher, who has abandoned her wandering lifestyle in the hope of creating a stable home for her daughters, Anouk

and Rosette. Their peaceful life, however, is disrupted by the arrival of Zoïe de l'Alba, a charismatic but deceptive woman whose ability to manipulate appearances threatens the family's fragile sense of security. As the narrative unfolds, Vianne struggles between the desire for permanence and the call of her nomadic past, Anouk negotiates the uncertainties of adolescence and belonging, and Zoïe continually reinvents herself through fabricated identities. Throughout these journeys, chocolate, confectionery, spices, aromas, and culinary rituals become closely associated with memory, emotion, and selfhood. The chocolaterie functions not only as a place of work but also as a sensory space where memories are awakened, relationships are strengthened, and identities are continually reshaped through embodied experiences of food.

Although existing research on *The Lollipop Shoes* has explored themes such as magical realism, femininity, motherhood, and the symbolic role of food, relatively little attention has been given to the novel through the lens of David Sutton's gustemology. Most studies examine what food represents, but they seldom investigate how sensory experiences associated with food generate embodied knowledge and contribute to the reconstruction of identity. Addressing this gap, the present study examines *The Lollipop Shoes* through Sutton's gustemological framework to argue that sensory memory functions as an embodied process through which the characters remember their past, negotiate their identities, and create new forms of belonging. By bringing together literary food studies, sensory memory, and Sutton's theory of embodied knowledge, this paper demonstrates that food in Harris's novel is not merely symbolic but a dynamic narrative force through which identity is continually reconstructed.

Research Questions:

The present study seeks to answer the following research questions

1. How does Joanne Harris represent food as a multisensory experience in *The Lollipop Shoes*?
2. In what ways does David Sutton's concept of gustemology explain the relationship between food, sensory memory, and identity in the novel?
3. To what extent do taste, smell, texture, and culinary practices contribute to the reconstruction of personal and cultural identity in the experiences of Vianne, Anouk, and Zoïe?
4. Why is sensory memory presented as an embodied process of remembering rather than a purely cognitive act in *The Lollipop Shoes*?

Methodology:

The research follows an interpretative approach by integrating close reading with theoretical insights from sensory anthropology and literary food studies. Textual evidence from the novel is analysed alongside David Sutton's writings on food, memory, and gustemology to demonstrate how sensory experiences function as embodied forms of knowledge. This study adopts a qualitative research methodology grounded in close textual analysis to examine the relationship between food, sensory memory, and identity in Joanne Harris's *The Lollipop Shoes*. Since the research seeks to understand how literary representations of food construct embodied experiences of memory and identity, qualitative textual analysis provides an appropriate methodological framework for interpreting the novel's narrative strategies, character development, sensory imagery, and culinary descriptions.

The analysis focuses on selected episodes in which food, cooking, aroma, taste, texture, confectionery, spices, and other sensory experiences play a significant role in shaping the characters' understanding of themselves and their relationships with others. Rather than treating these culinary descriptions as narrative details, this study interprets them as embodied experiences through which memory is activated and identity is negotiated. Particular attention is given to the experiences of Vianne Rocher, Anouk, and Zoïe de l'Alba, whose contrasting relationships with food and sensory perception reveal different modes of remembering and self-construction.

Theoretical Framework:

This study adopts David E. Sutton's concept of gustemology as its theoretical framework to examine how food functions as an embodied medium through which memory and identity are reconstructed in Joanne Harris' *The Lollipop Shoes*. Sutton is a cultural anthropologist whose work primarily focuses on food, memory, and sensory experience. His influential review article, *Food and the Senses*, published in the *Annual Review of Anthropology* in 2010, explores the relationship between food, sensory perception, and everyday life. In this article, Sutton argues that food should not be understood merely as an object of consumption but as a multisensory experience through which individuals construct meaning, preserve memory, and negotiate identity (Sutton 209).

Sutton's theoretical perspective is informed by developments in sensory anthropology, particularly Steven Feld's concept of acoustemology. Feld coined the term acoustemology by combining the words acoustic and epistemology to explain how listening and sound function as ways of knowing the world. Drawing inspiration from Feld's work, Sutton extends this sensory approach from sound to food and introduces the concept of gustemology. Acknowledging Feld's influence, Sutton writes, "Taking the lead from Feld's notion of 'acoustemology' (Feld 2000), I coin the term gustemology for such approaches that organize their understanding of a wide spectrum of cultural issues around taste and other sensory aspects of food" (Sutton 215). Thus, gustemology becomes a framework for understanding how knowledge is produced through taste and other sensory experiences associated with food.

The term gustemology is derived from the words "gustation," meaning the sense of taste, and "epistemology," the philosophical study of knowledge. By combining these two concepts, Sutton argues that taste is not merely a biological function but an important way of knowing and understanding the world. According to him, cooking, tasting, smelling, and eating are embodied practices through which individuals acquire knowledge about themselves, their

communities, and their cultural traditions. Culinary practices therefore preserve memory because they are learned through repeated sensory experiences rather than through abstract intellectual instruction. Food, in this sense, becomes a repository of embodied knowledge that connects memory, culture, and identity.

Sutton further explains that culinary knowledge develops through practical engagement with food. Referring to ethnographic studies of cooking practices, he observes that "ingredients are chosen, touched, and manipulated, assessed by sight, texture and smell, tasted and savoured" (Sutton 216). This observation demonstrates that knowledge associated with food is acquired through the coordinated use of multiple senses. The process of cooking involves observation, touch, smell, taste, and bodily practice, making culinary knowledge inseparable from sensory experience. Thus, gustemology challenges the traditional separation between mind and body by emphasising that knowledge is created through lived experience.

Another important concept that is closely related to gustemology is Sutton's discussion of synesthesia. The term synesthesia is derived from the Greek words *syn*, meaning "together," and *aisthesis*, meaning "perception" or "sensation." It refers to the interaction or blending of different senses during perception. Sutton explains that food studies have increasingly recognised the importance of synesthesia because eating always involves more than one sense. He states that "research on food and the senses has usefully converged through the concept of synesthesia (also spelt synaesthesia), or the union of the senses" (Sutton 216). This concept challenges the traditional assumption that the senses function independently by demonstrating that taste is always experienced together with smell, touch, colour, texture, temperature, and even sound.

Sutton further argues that sensory perception is culturally shaped rather than biologically determined. Discussing the significance of synesthesia, he explains that it "draws into question the western five-sense model" and demonstrates that sensory experience "is not simply passively registered but actively created

between people" (Sutton 216). In other words, the meanings attached to flavours, aromas, textures, and culinary practices are learned through everyday social and cultural experiences. Food therefore becomes an important medium through which individuals develop emotional attachments and cultural identities.

The important aspect of Sutton's framework is his understanding of food as a multisensory phenomenon. He argues that food should never be reduced to taste alone because different senses work together to produce meaning. As he observes, "tastes are not separable from the objects being tasted" (Sutton 216). This suggests that the experience of eating is inseparable from the physical qualities of food, such as its aroma, texture, colour, and temperature. These sensory qualities become closely associated with memories of people, places, and experiences, allowing food to function as an embodied archive of personal and cultural history.

Sutton concludes that scholars should pay greater attention to how sensory experiences shape everyday life. He argues that researchers must examine "the multiple contexts in which the culturally shaped sensory properties and sensory experiences of food are invested with meaning, emotion, memory, and value" (Sutton 220). This perspective shifts the study of food beyond symbolism by emphasising that memory is produced through repeated sensory engagement with everyday culinary practices. Remembering therefore becomes an embodied process in which food serves as a medium for preserving emotional experiences and cultural knowledge.

Sutton's concepts of gustemology and synesthesia provide the central theoretical foundation for this study. In *The Lollipop Shoes*, Joanne Harris presents chocolate, confectionery, spices, aromas, textures, and culinary rituals as multisensory experiences that shape the emotional lives of Vianne, Anouk, and Zozie. Through the lens of gustemology, these sensory encounters become forms of embodied knowledge that reconnect the characters with their personal histories and cultural inheritance. Likewise, the concept of synesthesia explains how multiple senses work together to evoke memories and

reconstruct identity. Applying Sutton's framework therefore enables this study to demonstrate that food in *The Lollipop Shoes* is not merely symbolic but functions as a multisensory narrative medium through which identity is continually remembered, negotiated, and reconstructed.

Analysis and Discussion:

Chocolate as Embodied Knowledge: Vianne's Culinary Memory

David Sutton's concept of gustemology proposes that food is more than an object of consumption; it is a form of embodied knowledge through which individuals remember, experience, and interpret themselves and their relationship with the world. In *The Lollipop Shoes*, Joanne Harris illustrates this concept through Vianne Rocher, whose culinary practices function as a repository of memory and identity. Rather than relying on conscious recollection, Vianne's understanding of herself is continually reconstructed through cooking, tasting, and responding to sensory experiences. Chocolate becomes an extension of her lived experience, carrying emotional, cultural, and personal memories that language alone cannot adequately express.

Vianne's relationship with food is rooted in intuition rather than rational calculation. She possesses an instinctive ability to understand people through their culinary preferences, observing, "*I know all their favourites. I know what they want, although I'd never tell.*" (Harris 47). This knowledge does not arise from observation alone but from years of embodied interaction with food and people. Sutton argues that everyday food practices create forms of knowledge that are stored in the body rather than in abstract thought. Vianne's ability to identify individual desires through chocolate exemplifies this gustemological knowledge, where sensory experience becomes a means of understanding human emotions and identities.

The transformation of the old shop into a chocolaterie further symbolizes Vianne's attempt to reconstruct her fragmented identity. After years of wandering and displacement, she deliberately creates stability through culinary labour, We

changed the shop to a chocolaterie (Harris 27). This decision represents more than a professional change; it signifies her effort to establish permanence and redefine herself beyond a transient existence. The chocolaterie becomes a material expression of memory, where recipes, aromas, and daily rituals preserve continuity despite the disruptions of her past.

Food also mediates Vianne's understanding of home. Reflecting on earlier years with Anouk, she remembers that they would *"make hot chocolate over a camping stove"* (Harris 39) while travelling together. Although materially impoverished, these shared culinary rituals create emotional security. Sutton maintains that repetitive food practices reinforce social relationships and personal identity because they connect individuals to familiar sensory experiences. The preparation of hot chocolate therefore functions as an embodied memory of maternal care, suggesting that home is produced through shared sensory practices rather than fixed geographical spaces.

Conversely, the loss of culinary traditions reflects the fragility of identity. Vianne remarks that, *Our galette des rois was not homemade, but from a shop, and no one felt much like celebrating anyway (Harris 52).* The substitution of homemade food with commercially purchased food symbolizes a rupture in family tradition and emotional continuity. Homemade food, within Sutton's framework, embodies cultural knowledge because its preparation involves inherited skills, shared memories, and interpersonal relationships. Its absence therefore signifies the weakening of familial identity under the pressures of displacement. Vianne's culinary practices demonstrate that identity is reconstructed not through deliberate self-reflection but through repeated acts of cooking, tasting, and feeding others. Chocolate operates as an embodied archive that preserves memories of loss, resilience, and belonging. Harris thus presents culinary practice as a lived form of knowledge through which fractured identities can gradually be reassembled.

The Senses Remember: Aroma, Taste, and the Return of the Past

Sutton argues that sensory memory is embodied rather than purely cognitive. Smell and taste possess a unique mnemonic capacity because they evoke memories that are experienced physically before they are consciously interpreted. The use of gustatory imagery demonstrates how the senses collapse temporal distance. It allows the past to re-enter the present through embodied experience. Rather than functioning as descriptive details, aromas and flavours become narrative devices that recover personal histories and shape the characters' understanding of themselves.

The opening descriptions of the chocolaterie establish smell as the first point of sensory engagement. Before entering the shop, Zozie notices the *"fugitive scent of nutmeg and vanilla drifting beneath the blue door (Harris 28).* The aroma immediately distinguishes the chocolaterie from the surrounding urban environment. The smell is deeply connected to memory because it bypasses conscious interpretation and produces an immediate bodily response. It reflects this process by allowing scent to create familiarity before any visual or verbal interaction occurs. The experience of smell therefore initiates a relationship between the individual and the space, suggesting that memory begins as a sensory encounter rather than an intellectual act. This connection becomes more explicit when Vianne recalls,

The autumn wind...smelt of smoke...not Paris smoke, but the smoke of my childhood, a scent of incense and frangipani and fallen leaves (Harris 56).

The distinction between Paris smoke and the smoke of my childhood illustrates that memory is activated through sensory differences rather than chronological recollection. The smell transports Vianne beyond her present surroundings and reconnects her with an earlier stage of her life. Sutton's notion of embodied memory is evident here because the recollection is involuntary; the body recognises the scent before the mind reconstructs its significance. Harris thus presents aroma as a repository of lived experience that preserves emotional and cultural memory across time.

The study also demonstrates that taste functions as an embodied mode of knowing. The description of the chocolates through overlapping sensory impressions,

A breeze, vanilla-scented, nutmeg milk, dark roast of cocoa beans over a slow fire, followed by the invitation, "Try me. Taste me. Test me" (Harris 69).

Taste is not represented merely as consumption but as an experiential process through which memory and identity are negotiated. Sutton's concept of gustemology is particularly relevant here, as tasting becomes a way of acquiring knowledge through bodily engagement. It reinforces the process through multisensory narration where aroma, warmth, flavour, and movement operate simultaneously. The sensory richness demonstrates that memory emerges through the interaction of multiple senses rather than through a single sensory stimulus. Another example appears in the description of *"the smoky scent of apples and burnt sugar, vanilla and rum and cardamom and chocolate"* (Harris 121). Even a character who claims not to enjoy chocolate responds physically to the aroma. The involuntary reaction indicates that sensory memory precedes conscious preference, illustrating Sutton's argument that food memories are embedded within bodily experience. Therefore, the use of sensory imagery is not simply to create atmosphere but to reveal how smell and taste continue to influence identity by reconnecting individuals with forgotten emotions and experiences.

Cooking as Gustemological Practice and Cultural Transmission

According to Sutton, cooking is a cultural practice through which memory is preserved and transmitted across generations. Culinary knowledge is not acquired solely through written recipes but through repeated participation in everyday food practices. Thus this study presents cooking as a form of embodied learning that sustains both familial relationships and cultural continuity. Vianne's preparation of chocolate is characterised by routine rather than spectacle. The daily activities of tempering chocolate, preparing recipes, arranging displays, and serving customers

transform the chocolaterie into a space where memory is continually enacted. These repeated culinary practices correspond to Sutton's understanding of foodways as embodied habits that preserve identity through repetition. Cooking therefore becomes an ordinary yet significant means of maintaining continuity in a life previously marked by instability. The preparation of food also functions as a medium of cultural inheritance.

"Bitter orange, your favourite, seventy per cent darkest chocolate over thick-cut oranges from Seville. Try me. Taste me. Test me." (Harris 231)

It illustrates how everyday culinary rituals transmit emotional security despite material uncertainty. Although the circumstances are temporary, the repeated act of preparing and sharing food establishes a sense of permanence. Sutton argues that cultural knowledge is reproduced through such habitual practices, where sensory experience becomes a means of teaching belonging without formal instruction. Anouk's familiarity with chocolate and cooking emerges through participation rather than explanation, demonstrating that gustemological knowledge is acquired experientially. It suggests that cooking is not simply a domestic activity but a cultural practice through which relationships and identities are maintained over time.

Anouk's Sensory Memory and the Formation of Identity

Vianne represents embodied culinary knowledge, Anouk demonstrates how sensory memory contributes to the formation of identity during childhood. Having spent much of her early life travelling with her mother, Anouk develops her understanding of home through recurring sensory experiences rather than through attachment to a fixed geographical place. Harris therefore presents identity as emerging from familiar food practices that provide continuity despite physical movement.

Anouk's memories are consistently associated with shared culinary experiences. *"We'd lie side by side... or make hot chocolate over a camping stove, or light ..."* (Harris 56). The preparation of hot chocolate, seasonal sweets, and everyday meals provides emotional stability within an otherwise

uncertain lifestyle. Sutton argues that childhood food memories are particularly significant because they establish enduring associations between sensory experience and belonging. It reflects Anouk's sense of security to develop through repeated participation in domestic food rituals rather than through material possessions or permanent residence.

The sensory environment of the chocolaterie also contributes to Anouk's evolving identity. Surrounded by *"the aromas of cocoa, vanilla, spices, and freshly prepared confectionery"* (Harris 78), she inhabits a space where memory is continually reinforced through everyday sensory encounters. These repeated experiences become part of her embodied understanding of family and belonging. Unlike Vianne, whose memories are frequently marked by loss and displacement, Anouk's identity develops within a relatively stable sensory environment created through her mother's culinary practice. The transmission of gustemological knowledge from mother to daughter therefore represents not only the inheritance of cooking skills but also the inheritance of emotional resilience. The relationship strengthens through synesthesia narration. The descriptions of chocolate consistently combine aroma, colour, texture, and taste, allowing Anouk's memories to develop through a sensory experience. Rather than recalling isolated events, she experiences memory through familiar smells, flavours, and everyday routines. This corresponds closely with Sutton's argument that food memories are embodied because they are inseparable from the sensory practices through which they are acquired.

Consequently, Anouk's identity is constructed through participation in everyday culinary life. Food becomes a means of continuity between generations, enabling the transmission of memories, cultural practices, and emotional security through repeated sensory engagement. Harris thereby demonstrates that identity is not inherited as abstract knowledge but gradually formed through embodied experiences of cooking, tasting, and sharing food.

Zoie de l'Alba: Sensory Manipulation and the Performance of Identity

Zoie de l'Alba presents a clear contrast to Vianne. While Vianne builds relationships through care, food, and shared memories, Zoie gains people's trust by carefully shaping her identity to suit different situations. She understands others' weaknesses and uses them to her advantage. Speaking about Vianne, she says, *"The mother is the weak link... trust me to become indispensable, to become her confidante, her friend. She needs me"* (Harris 66). This shows that Zoie's relationships are based on manipulation rather than genuine emotional connection. Unlike Vianne, whose identity is shaped through everyday experiences of cooking and caring for others, Zoie believes that identity can be created through appearance and confidence. She tells Anouk,

"Call it attitude, if you like. Call it charisma, or chutzpah, or glamour, or charm. Because basically it's just about standing straight, looking people in the eye..."(Harris 281)

It suggests that a person's identity depends on how they present themselves. This idea differs from David Sutton's concept of embodied knowledge, which develops through repeated sensory experiences and everyday practices. For Sutton, identity grows through lived experiences, not through performance. This difference becomes clear when Zoie gives Anouk the red shoes, promising they are *"Shoes that could take you anywhere... make you someone else"* (Harris 231). The shoes represent change through illusion and escape. However, Anouk is eventually drawn back by *"the lingering scent of Vianne's hot chocolate"* (Harris 54), which reminds her of home, comfort, and her mother's love. It shows that memories connected to food and the senses have a stronger and more lasting influence than identities based only on appearance. Through Zoie and Vianne, the study suggests that true identity is built through lived sensory experiences and meaningful relationships rather than through performed roles.

The Chocolaterie as a Gustemological Space of Belonging and Identity Reconstruction

The chocolaterie is more than a place where chocolate is prepared and sold. It becomes a space where food, memory, and relationships come together, creating a sense of belonging. David

Sutton argues that everyday practices of cooking, tasting, and sharing food shape embodied knowledge and connect people to their memories. Harris reflects this idea by presenting the chocolaterie as a place where sensory experiences strengthen both personal and social bonds. The atmosphere of the shop is created through rich sensory descriptions such as "*the smoky scent of apples and burnt sugar, vanilla and rum and cardamom and chocolate*" (Harris 79). These familiar aromas create warmth and comfort, encouraging people to enter and connect with the space. According to Sutton, such sensory experiences become part of how people remember places and develop emotional attachments.

It brings people together through shared experiences of food. Vianne observes, "*Those people who just drop by for a look usually end up buying something*" (Harris 42). While customers arrive with different intentions, chocolate becomes a means of interaction and connection, turning the shop into a welcoming community space. For Vianne, the chocolaterie represents stability after years of wandering. Through the everyday practice of making chocolate and serving others, she gradually rebuilds her sense of identity and belonging. This supports Sutton's view that food is not only something people eat but also a way of remembering, belonging, and understanding themselves.

Conclusion:

This study demonstrates that food in Joanne Harris' *The Lollipop Shoes* is more than a source of nourishment or a literary symbol; it is an embodied medium through which memory and identity are experienced and reconstructed. Through David Sutton's concept of gustemology, the study shows that taste, smell, texture, and culinary practices enable the characters to reconnect with their personal histories, emotions, and cultural belonging. The findings support Sutton's argument that food is a form of embodied knowledge and reinforce that sensory experiences evoke deep emotional memories. It highlights that food memories shape identity by reconnecting individuals with home, belonging, and lived experience. The study argues that Joanne Harris

deliberately uses food as a multisensory narrative strategy rather than merely as a symbolic motif. By foregrounding sensory experiences, it suggests that identity is continuously reconstructed through embodied acts of remembering, making food a powerful medium of self-discovery and cultural continuity. By applying Sutton's gustemological framework to *The Lollipop Shoes*, this study offers a new perspective on Harris's culinary imagination and contributes to the growing field of literary food studies. Future research may extend this framework to other novels in the *Chocolat* series or explore its relevance alongside affect theory and cultural memory studies. Such interdisciplinary approaches can further enrich our understanding of the relationship between food, sensory memory, and identity in contemporary literature.

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