



The Empowerment Of Language Over The Meek Creature (Women) Through The Discourse In The Novel “A Thousand Splendid Suns”

Sohail Ahmad, M.Phil Scholar in English Linguistics, Khawaja Fareed University of Engineering and Information Technology Rahim Yar Khan, Pakistan Email - ahmad.sohail664@gmail.com

Muhammad Wasim Khan Kaker, Lecturer in English, Cadet College, Jaffarabad Pakistan.

Saba Rafi, M.Phil Scholar in English Linguistics, Khawaja Fareed University of Engineering and Information Technology Rahim Yar Khan, Pakistan.

Aasima Bibi, Visiting Lecturer, Women University Swabi, Pakistan.

Hina Gul, M.Phil Scholar, NUML Islamabad, Pakistan.

ABSTRACT

A living place is considered the abode of different ethnicities. In society, there is gender difference due to which power relation is considered as the dominance in authority. Language exercise is the best example of its exhibition. In this study, the analysts tried to explore the power relation through discourse analysis. The analysts' focus was upon the discourse in the novel of principles' characters. This study highlighted the power relation through discourse analysis and provided an insight for the equal treatment of women in a society. This study described the sufferings, demoralization and survival of women in a society. The analysts used a qualitative approach through the dialogue of characters in data analysis. Males of any society think of themselves as the authority and consider females as inferior. Humanity should be the priority and this study declared the aspects to overcome those consequences.

Keywords: Feminism, Empowerment, Discourse, Analysis

1. Introduction

Discourse means the use of language when there is a conversation. Discourse is an activity in the connection of cultural, social development of use. It is the conception of a language when it takes place. Discourse is also used in daily communication, conversation and discussion. It can also be in dialogues, chit-chat, and debate (Weigand, 2017). The term discourse has a broader meaning and it can be analyzed in different senses. Originally the word “discourse” came from the Latin word “discursus”, which represented the conversation, speech, discussion. It refers to the wider area of human life, which means that

the discourse exists from the very early stage (Peirce, 2018). The term used for the understanding level of discourse can be defined as "Discourse analysis" because it is to interpret and develop the thoughtful unit of language usage (Barker, 2021). In Discourse, there is no agreement of linguistic use of a language in text with the oral narrative speaking. 'Discourse' is a constant expanse of "especially spoken" language larger than a sentence (Crible & Cuenca, 2017). The term discourse can be defined as a behavioral unit and the utterances of voices in different patterns. It is the plan to follow the logical outflow of words in a language when used to communicate or converse (Johns-Lewis, 2018). Discourse is present in every field of life whether we take the shopkeepers, the teachers, the students, the institutions, the medical fields, etc. We come across the word "discourse" that describes how they communicate, discuss and converse with everyone. It is not the interpretation of language, whether it has meaning or not but it shows the relation of their discussion how they use the language more accurately, but relatively it has a different meaning in a different context (Achugar, 2017).

Discourse analysis is the study of the language beyond the sentence. It is to evaluate the discussion or conversation of two people or more than two. It studies the language and how it is used in the text or context. When people take part in the different patterns of the social life discussions, "Discourse analysis" is the name of analyzing these patterns' (Mullet, 2018). Discourse analysis (DA) is when two or more than two people engage in a discussion and we observe their language very precisely. We analyze their language and want to know that what are the hidden meanings inside their speech? In discourse analysis our focus will be upon the hidden meaning of the text in order in which context it is used. We call it Discourse analysis. It is not only based on of text but also how the language is used. The differences disappear between the spoken and written language and the competencies of the oral discussion when the language is put for analysis; it means the discourse analysis removed all the modifications in any form. The discourse analysis helps in both cases by signifying to describe and explain the language by using its form. Discourse analysis in linguistics is the rule of the prevailing language use in proper communication situations. It shows the power relation through the way of its usage (Goodman, 2017). In daily life, we have a lot of discussion and conversation in every field and there is also the class distinction. For example, if we take the institution field, there is the head and faculty. So, in this case, it also shows the power relation among them because the head of the department has the authority and the dominance of the institute. Discourse deals with the utterances and analysis is the study of these utterances that how they used and how they showed the interaction in a discussion or conversation (Nonhoff, 2017)?

The term Feminist discourse means to think, act or write on feminine subjects. Feminists acknowledge women's position of subordination within a patriarchal society and write on their rights that are not provided to them by the males. Feminist discourse can be surrounded by different patterns of "liberal, radical (Ghosh, 2021). The novel "A Thousand Splendid Suns" is written by the Afghan-American writer "Khaled Hosseini", the prominent writer of this age. "A Thousand Splendid Suns" has gotten the title from seventeenth-century Saib-e-Tabrizi, the Persian poet's poem. The story is about the

two women "Mariam and Laila". This book focuses on the women's experiences of pre-war in Afghanistan (Khan, 2017). As the result of the Soviet occupation and civil war, this novel discusses the enormous difficulties of Afghan women in getting an education. This novel backdrops the women's issues and the girls were strictly forbidden to go to school. The women cannot go alone in the streets; they must be accompanied with "mahram". The women cannot laugh in public places; they will be beaten and punished if they do so. The males are the rulers of that society and the use of language over the women (Atifmal, Paris, & Ahmad, 2020).

2. Literature Review

Discourse can be a perception of a language, how the people talk to each other, and the affection of society. There seems to be numerous intellectuality (Luchkina & Cole, 2021). We find discrimination between men and women entities by functions or by age. In the novel "A thousand Splendid Suns," we find the same things shown by different characters. We have categories of this discourse by dividing in ages, for example, child to young adult, young adult to adult, adult and old persons (Sugianti, 2020). If there is a long and serious treatment of a subject in speech or writing, it is discourse analysis. It is the study of language beyond the sentence, in-text and conversation. When we ask how we make sense of what we read, how we can recognize well-constructed texts as contrasting to those that are jumbled or incoherent, how we understand speakers who communicate more than they say and how we successfully take part in that complex activity called conversation, we are undertaking what is known as discourse analysis (Morgan & Sellner, 2017). In discourse analysis, we have to analyze the language and its meaning as well. For example, in discourse analysis, we have the words "Baby toddler sell". In this kind of discourse analysis, we have two kinds of concepts. First, if we look upon the words, there is a shop in a market and a seller is shouting. Then it does not mean that he is selling the babies, but we know that the seller is selling the babies' garments. If we take the discourse in institutions, then we see that there is written on the faculty's door's room that "Students are not allowed", it means that students cannot enter here and cannot go without taking permission of any faculty member. Students must knock on the door first and then they can enter. It is a concept that conveys the message without any argument (Paul, 2017).

Feminist discourse is the conversation between individuals. Feminist means that females should have the same rights as men, equality and power, or the undertakings to achieve their status in society. Feminism is related the women's social status in society. Women were subordinate in society and the region as well (Hines, 2019). Feminism means the study of the strategies to give the rights and liberate women. When the word feminist put to the meaning, then it defines itself that what is feminism? We think that feminism is based on the conversation between two females. In this discussion, the two female characters are involved break their silence and raise their voices against the sufferings and unequal treatment compared to men. Their voices are for the sake of bringing change and for equal rights in society (Sternadori & Abitbol, 2019). We can study feminism from two different aspects, equality and identity, which are two different things in manner. The rules of an Islamic country allow men and women to get their rights, but in the field of identity,

there is a difference, and women are restricted to some extent (Mirza, 2017). Feminism is the name of empowering women and should have equality based politically, economically, and socially. Women should treat in the same way as men and they will be able to get their rights. The feminist movement is considered the movement of women's fight for their rights (McCarthy, 2017).

Through cultural discourse, it shows the distinction of language practices in daily life. The connection of language and usage with the course of the subject always draws the perception. It means the notion of language always takes consideration with the ultimate authority. Language is the only source that benefits its speaker, while the speaker wants to be superior to those meek creatures (Furman, 2020). In discourse analysis, we focus upon the critical evaluation of written and spoken language cultural discourse. When we talk about cultural discourse, then we talk about ideas. It is the flow of thoughts from one to another. The way they converse and exchange their thoughts varies from time to time, period to period. This cultural discourse can be differentiated from region to region as well (Qiaoan, 2019).

Islam emphasizes the rights of women. The novel "A thousand Splendid Suns" is based on Afghan society and their religion is Islam. Does it indicate how a civilized society would be? The Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (PBUH) said, "Verily, the paradise lies under the feet of your mother." It tells how women would be treated as they have a high degree in terms of genders. Islam has laws that always speak for women's rights as they are inferior to men (Anbar, 2016).

3. Research Methodology

A qualitative approach was used to analyze the novel's text on the dialogues, the power of language usage over the suppressed gender, and the different issues and cultural bondage in Afghan society. How did they live and practice the language? The analysts' focus was on the dialogues and the conversations from the feminist perspective. Through analyzing dialogues, the analysts defined the power relation which came through language usage over the meek creatures. This study led to feminism and their suffering in Afghan society, how they were treating and considering. Women were inferior and did not have the value as the male members of society. The analysts have only focused upon the dialogues of Maryam, Laila, and Rasheed, who are the novel's main characters.

4. Analyses

"You are my little harami this is my reward for everything I've endured an heirloom-breaking, clumsy little harami."

These are the words of Nana, the mother of Mariam. She kept her in a separate home because Jaleel had an illegal relationship with her. It was not a matter that Nana used harsh words to Mariam but it was because of the torments and the inequality. In which society they lived there, the husbands were the house guardian and responsible for every matter. It is because she does not get the rights in society as a wife has.

"Learn this now and learn it well, my daughter: Like a compass needle that points north, a man's accusing finger always finds a woman. Always. You remember that, Mariam."

This is the advice from Nana to Mariam that you must keep yourself as clever as possible. If the men do wrong things, they always find the women are responsible for that and blame the women. She compared it with the compass needle through which we find the direction when we find the way it helps us. It is the same when men do such things and then they cannot handle that; they simply accuse the women as they are responsible for that. Why is she saying that because her husband Jaleel does not give her the proper rights?

"Society has no chance of success if its women are uneducated, Laila. No chance."

Laila is a nine years old child. This is the word of Babi to make her understand and shows the importance of education. This also indicates how the successive society can progress if the women are educated. The key to success lies in the hands of women to build a strong and ideal society. The role of feminism in the progression of society can explain the importance of women in society; they are the same as men. Their equal rights should be considered and there must be justice.

"Bah! Boys get married and run off. Girls stay behind and take care of you when you're old."

This is Mariam's dialogue with her neighbor. There is a concept that boys are everything for their family and respect but girls consider as a curse. Curse in that sense because they have no value in society. It is the general talk, as Mariam explains it. In her words, most of the boys get married and then leave, but these are the girls who are loyal and stay with you as you grow older. It means that females have a great job and a sense of humanity. Boys only get married and then leave, but they do not take care; only girls stay and do serve the family.

"No matter. The point is, I am your husband now, and it falls on me to guard not only your honor but ours, yes, our nang and namoos. That is the husband's burden"

These are Rasheed's words that he has to protect her, but it is in ironic talk; actually, he values that her protection deals with Nang and Names, his pride and honor, but in reality, he uses to beat and lock her in a room. He does not have trust in her and used to think that she would run away. His powerful speech shows that he loves and values her and does not want anything to happen to her but in reality, it is not like that he wants to control Mariam and beat her and treat her like an animal. Nang and Namooos, pride and honor, are considered a greater thing in Afghan society; he uses that in a very ironic way to keep her calm and quiet.

5. Conclusion and Recommendation

Women have soft corners and politeness in their speeches. They can tolerate it. Men have the power and are considered the ruler of society and family. Men are snatching women's

rights in society and oppressing women in different ways through power. Men have a higher degree in society than women. Male dominates the society, although if a male wants to do anything they can, it does not matter if a male is younger than female still he has the priority. In a society, the young male members do not reach to get the authority as the elder but their power over the female members through language. This is why their communication with them and expression is to suppress them.

A society can build an equation of rights and remove the distinction between classes and genders. The use of power and injustice cannot be the foundation of a good relationship and building a strong society. Women should recognize as equal members of society like men. Women should raise their voices for their actual rights as they are allowed from the societies. Love, honesty and generosity are the ideals for women's rights when they engage in a relationship with men. They leave their houses, their parents and their family, even their house where the early days of their lives have been spent.

References

- Achugar, M. (2017). Critical discourse analysis and history *The routledge handbook of critical discourse studies* (pp. 298-311): Routledge.
- Anbar, M. H. (2016). The Status of Women in the Old Ages and in the Age of Islam A Qur'anic Perspective Study. *مجلة الجامعة الإسلامية للدراسات الإسلامية (حديث-تفسير-عقيدة)*, 24(1).
- Atifmal, W. L., Paris, C. M., & Ahmad, M. R. (2020). The career women of Kabul and their struggle for an empowered identity. *International Journal of Society Systems Science*, 12(2), 118-135.
- Barker, M. E. (2021). Exploring Canadian Integration through Critical Discourse Analysis of English Language Lesson Plans for Immigrant Learners. *Canadian Journal of Applied Linguistics/Revue canadienne de linguistique appliquée*, 24(1), 75-91.
- Crible, L., & Cuenca, M.-J. (2017). Discourse markers in speech: characteristics and challenges for corpus annotation. *Dialogue and Discourse*, 8(2), 149-166.
- Furman, N. (2020). *The politics of language: beyond the gender principle? Making a Difference*: (pp. 59-79): Routledge.
- Ghosh, A. (2021). Disciplinary power and practices of body politics: an evaluation of Dalit women in Bama's Sangati and P. Sivakami's *The Grip of Change* through Foucauldian discourse analysis. *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications*, 8(1), 1-9.
- Goodman, S. (2017). How to conduct a psychological discourse analysis. *Critical Approaches to Discourse Analysis Across Disciplines*, 9(2), 142-153.
- Hines, S. (2019). The feminist frontier: On trans and feminism. *Journal of Gender Studies*, 28(2), 145-157.
- Johns-Lewis, C. M. (2018). *Prosodic differentiation of discourse modes Intonation in discourse* (pp. 199-220): Routledge.
- Khan, R. N. (2017). Representation of the Afghan National Identity in Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns*. *Dialogue (Pakistan)*, 12(1).
- Luchkina, T., & Cole, J. S. (2021). Perception of word-level prominence in free word order language discourse. *Language and speech*, 64(2), 381-412.

- McCarthy, L. (2017). Empowering women through corporate social responsibility: A feminist Foucauldian critique. *Business Ethics Quarterly*, 27(4), 603-631.
- Mirza, Q. (2017). *Islamic feminism, possibilities and limitations*: Routledge-Cavendish.
- Morgan, J. L., & Sellner, M. B. (2017). Discourse and linguistic theory Theoretical issues in reading comprehension (pp. 165-200): Routledge.
- Mullet, D. R. (2018). A general critical discourse analysis framework for educational research. *Journal of Advanced Academics*, 29(2), 116-142.
- Nonhoff, M. (2017). Discourse analysis as critique. *Palgrave Communications*, 3(1), 1-11.
- Paul, G. J. (2017). *Introducing discourse analysis: From grammar to society*: Routledge.
- Peirce, C. (2018). Discourse analysis in translation studies' perspective. *DISCOURSE LINGUISTICS AND BEYOND*.
- Qiaoan, R. (2019). Critical cultural discourse analysis: A case study of Chinese official discourse on civil society *The Routledge Handbook of Chinese Discourse Analysis* (pp. 643-654): Routledge.
- Sternadori, M., & Abitbol, A. (2019). Support for women's rights and feminist self-identification as antecedents of attitude toward femvertising. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*.
- Sugianti, I. (2020). Gender Discrimination in Orhan Pamuk's 'Snow' and Khaled Hosseini's 'A Thousand Splendid Suns'. *Lensa: Kajian Kebahasaan, Kesusastraan, dan Budaya*, 8(1), 43-55.
- Weigand, E. (2017). Discourse, conversation, dialogue *Concepts of dialogue* (pp. 49-76): Max Niemeyer Verlag.