A Critical Study of Discursive Power in the Selected Passages of Khaled Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns*

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Abstract

This study focuses on the exploration and evaluation of discursive power (Fairclough's concept of power in and behind discourse, 1989) in KhaledHosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns*. It aims at studying discourses on power from feminist critical discourse studies perspective (Lazar, 2007; Lehtonen, 2007). Fairclough's (1989, 1992) three-dimensional model (namely Critical Discourse Analysis) is applied on the selected discourses of the novel under study for analysis. Power is discursively exercised and challenged at the agency and institutional levels. It is omnipresent in asymmetrical social relations, and it works in manifolds and multi-dimensions. It is exercised and challenged through control, decisions, force, weapons and domination, but language is symbolically and rhetorically a unique site and medium for power exercise and challenge. Linguistic and interactional structures and strategies serve as powerful means for power. The novel under study contains a number of dialogues which indicate that power is exercised and resisted for multiple ends, like interests, social identity, social status, image and supremacy. It is a discursive site for the novelist who has revealed how patriarchal power is discursively exercised and challenged by characters in dialogues. As power is highly context-sensitive and as the analysis of context in relation to text is the fundamental and integral part of critical discourse analysis, therefore, discursive power in the novel under study is critically analyzed in the socio-political and cultural context of Afghanistan where the Afghans, especially women and children, are subject to power abuse.

Keywords: *discourse, power, feminist critical discourse studies*

Introduction

The prime aim of this study is to explore and evaluate the interplay between discourse and power. So the discourse-oriented power can be explored and critically evaluated either in various forms of communication and interaction (e.g. conversation, dialogue, etc.) or other discursive constructions. It has many forms and uses in different contexts. As this study attempts to explore and critically analyze the discourse-oriented power, therefore, it specifically focuses on "power in discourse" and "power behind discourse" (Fairclough, 1989). Power in discourse simply refers to power as control and constraint over the contributions of other participant/character used in the asymmetrical relationships between

individuals in various forms of discourse (conversation or dialogue).Power behind discourse is hidden power (not apparent to the participant/speaker/writer) which affects, constrains and controls speaker's or writer's discourse or his/her contributions relatively in the long-term and structural ways. Power is discussed here briefly.

Power: A Definitional Consideration

The notion of "power" is a highly debated and contested topic in humanities, social sciences and critical discourse studies. It produces knowledge, forms of behavior and regime of truth. It is not a perpetual/permanent domain of a single person or a group because it may be won or lost at any stage. Power is located at the level of subjects or agency and at the level of institutions. It is exercised and/or resisted among subjects, and it emerges in asymmetrical relations where equal power distribution and negotiation are not maintained. Power is dynamic, multi-dimensional, manifold, relational and omni-present in social relations. Foucault (1972, 1976/78, 1980, 1984/86, Lukes (1974), Giddens (1984), Habermas (1987), Morris (1987), and Bourdieu (1991) have conceptualized and theorized power and its mechanism in variable and well-established ways. Morris (1987) conceptualizes power as a disposition which may or may not be actualized or activated. Power, according to Morris (1987, as cited in Haugaard, 2002, p. 283), "is always a concept referring to an ability, capacity or dispositional property."Morris (ibid., p. 287) also argues that "power, as a dispositional concept, is neither a *thing* (a resource or vehicle) nor an *event* (an exercise of power): it is a *capacity*." Lukes (1974, s cited in Haugaard, 2002, p. 45) defines power in terms of agency with cause and effect relationship as "*A* exercises power over *B* when *A* affects *B* in a manner contrary to *B*'s interests." These interests, according to him, are "associated with different moral and political positions" (p. 30).

Foucault (1978) theorizes power rather differently. According to him, power manifests itself in social actions and relations, and it exists when it is being exercised. Although he views power in terms of a relational struggle of domination between independent or free subjects or individuals, yet he does not believe in power as absolute and all-domination in which an individual or a group is all-powerful and all-dominant. Power, like resistance, is not fixed and stable, but multiple. Power is challenged/resisted by counter-power (power resistance) in the same situation and context of power exercise. Foucault (1980) views power as a social practice that emerges in asymmetrical relations. It is inherently accompanied by resistance because the exercise of power without resistance is not power, but subjugation. The dialectical relationship between power and discourse reveals that power is produced,

challenged and circulated in and through discourse in society. Power is both productive and repressive, but Foucault (1980) emphasizes the fundamentally productive and positive aspect of power which produces discourses, forms of knowledge and truth in society. He attempts to give less significance to repression as effects of power (repressive power) which is the negative and narrow aspect of power.

However, it is well-defined by Weber (1978, as cited in Gohler, 2009, p. 36) who argues that "Power is the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will despite resistance, regardless of the basis on which this probability rests." Weber's view of power is one-dimensional as it is exercised and accomplished by an actor over another despite the other's resistance. Giddens (1984) supports the consensual and productive dimension of power. He argues that "Power is the capacity to achieve outcomes; whether or not these are connected to purely sectional interests is not germane to its definition" (Giddens, 1984, as cited in Haugaard, 2002, p. 159). Power operates in the structures of domination. A more appropriate definition of power is Fairclough's (1989) who views power as controlling and constraining the less powerful or powerless participant's contributions and behaviors in an ongoing dialogue. A more identical definition is given by Watts (1991) who has modified Weber's definition of power:

> An individual *A* possesses power if s/he has the freedom of action to achieve the goals s/he has set her/himself, regardless of whether or not this involves the potential to impose *A*'s will on others to carry out actions that are in *A*'s interests. (1991, p. 60)

As far as the concept of power in critical discourse analysis is concerned, it is linked with ideology. According to most of the CDA practitioners (e.g. Fairclough, van Dijk and Wodak), ideology underlies power. In other words, power exercise or resistance is ideological and ideologically supported. Van Dijk (2008) explains power in terms of control and domination such as control over public discourse or access to certain discourse, mind control, context control. He views power both as positive and negative which is determined by its use or abuse for different aims and interests. He does not highlight individual or personal power, but social and/or symbolic power. Moreover, the (ab)use of power by an individual is linked with the social group or institution/organization. He simply defines "*social* power" (2008, p. 9) as the control of one group (or its members) over the actions (verbal or non-verbal, discursive or non-discursive, communicative or non-communicative), and thus indirectly over the minds (knowledge, norms, values, attitudes and ideologies "as well as other personal and social representations") of other groups (or their members) in numerous

discursive and social practices, interactions and communications. He argues that classical and traditional view of power has been replaced by "symbolic power" in the contemporary world. Symbolic power, in his view, is possessed and exercised by the symbolic elites (the politicians, journalists, professors, writers, lawyers, bureaucrats and those who have special or privileged access to public discourse). Similarly, van Dijk (2001, p. 355) identifies various types or ways of power exercise based on various resources employed in its exercise, e.g. the coercive power of the military or violent men based on force; power of the rich based on their wealth; persuasive power of parents, professors and journalists based on their knowledge, information, or authority. In his recent view, those who control most dimensions of discourse (participants, setting, preparation, style, rhetoric, topics or contents, interaction, etc.) are the most powerful.

Weiss and Wodak (2003, pp. 14-15) define and discuss power in terms of relations of difference and the effects these differential relations produce in social setup, and in terms of discourse as a carriage and vehicle for differences in power in social hierarchy. Language, for them, is not inherently powerful; rather it is a means of establishing and maintaining power for the powerful people who manipulate language effectively, and who have all the material and linguistic resources at their disposal. Wodak and Meyer (2009, p. 88) briefly define the concept of power which "relates to an asymmetric relationship among social actors who assume different social positions or belong to different social groups." Moreover, they regard it "as the possibility of having one's own will within a social relationship against the will or interests of others" (p. 88). There are various ways of power implementation which they mention such as actional power accompanied by physical force and violence; controlling people through threats, promises, an attachment to authority (the imposition of and submission to authority) and power as "technical control through objects, such as means of production, means of transportation, weapons, and so on" (2009, p. 89). In sum, it can be said that CDA is engaged in exposing various forms, structures and levels of power discursively and contextually implemented, resisted, legitimized/de-legitimized, transformed and challenged by groups of people for different interests, goals and agendas.

Power: Exercise and Resistance

The notion of "power" is a social and discursive construct as well as practice. Social theories of power have conceptualized and theorized power multi-dimensionally. Moreover, it has been elaborated and analyzed differently in various disciplines, theories and methodologies. Power is highly context-sensitive and related to subject and structure of

the field or institution where power is held, exercised and resisted. It manifests itself in orders of discourse in an institution.

As already mentioned in the abstract, power is located both at the level of agency (the individual level) and at the level of structure (social institutions), the concept of power at these levels is fundamentally different from each other. At the agency level of power, power is "*t+he ways in which the individual human beings aim to influence and control each other either in subtle or more direct, offensive ways," whereas at the structural level of power, it is "the ways in which social institutions, societal discourses and political authority constrain the behavior of human beings" (Farfan & Holzscheiter, 2011, p. 140). The subjectivists preferentially explore and evaluate power at the level of agency, and attempt to view it as the property and/or capacity of the individuals, and give less or no emphasis to power at the structural level. Likewise, the objectivists proclaim that it is produced, reproduced and circulated in/by the structure of the institutions, and emphasize much on the classification and hierarchies in/of the institutional structure in power analysis. However, it is the relationist/relational conception/approach of power which is more pervasive and discursively encompassing. According to this approach, power is relational, dynamic and discursively contextualized. It emerges in/through social and discursive relations (see Oliga, 1996 for more details).

Dahl elucidates power relations as the significant aspects of, within and across political systems (especially the American democracy) in which power is held, distributed and exercised by the ruling elites/leaders. This power-holding and share may be relatively small or great among "different individuals, strata, classes, professional groups, ethnic, racial, or religious groups, etc." (Dahl, 1968, as cited in Haugaard, 2002, p. 8). He has discovered plurality of power elites and multiplicity of power pyramids in his study. Within Dahl's framework, *C* (the controlling person/unit) has power over *R* (the responsive/dependent person/unit) to the extent to which *C* can get *R* to do something which *R* would not otherwise do. Here, power is one-dimensional (one face of power) and greatly related to decision-makings of the authority, but resources (potential power) may or may not be utilized in decision-making. Nonetheless, he discusses other power-associated concepts and terms like authority, influence, rule, force, coercion, persuasion, dissuasion, inducement, compulsion, etc. which are named as "power terms" by him.

Bachrach and Baratz (1962) present two-dimensional model (two faces) of power which is aimed at introducing and recognizing the second face/dimension of power which is related to the (mobilization of) institutional bias in nondecision-making. Such nondecision-making, as the

second face of power, is based on institutional bias/prejudice. For them, the concept of power is associated with the agency (the participants) who participate in frequently/often biased decision-making as well as nondecision-making process of/for/about not only key/important/public, but also routine/unimportant/private issues. Their conceptualization of power is aimed at how *A* attempts to secure his/her/their preferences by affecting *B* through his/her/their decisions and nondecisions on matters and issues, both political/public or private, key or routine, important or unimportant.

Lukes (1974) presents his three-dimensional model of power. Although he has criticized some of the aspects of the two-dimensional model of power, yet he has adopted many of its aspects with some solid modifications and additions. On the one hand, he insists on the collective action of a group, class, institution, a political party or corporation where the action or policy of such a collectivity is clearly manifest, but not attributable to particular individuals' decisions or behavior. On the other hand, he emphasizes the phenomenon of systemic or organizational effects where the mobilization of bias results from the form of organization.

Giddens's (1984) theory/analysis of power is grounded in his theory of structuration which is his attempt to build a bridge between the division or dualism of the subject-centered and object-centered social theories/approaches. For him, power is relational, procedural, dynamic, resourcefully actional, and control/domination-centered. Although he explains the interdependent relation between agency (individual agents) and structures (social structures as integral parts of social systems), yet agency in power analysis is at the forefront. He links power in social systems with relations of autonomy and dependence between participants in the context of inter(action). He calls this as the "*dialectic of control* in social systems" (as cited in Haugaard, 2002, p. 152; italics in original).

Watts's (1991) study on power is related to status and interruptive behavior in face-to-face verbal interaction (family discourse) in which conflict of interests with respect to floor rights and topic development arises between the interrupter and the interrupted. He discusses power as the capacity to impose/reinforce one's will over others as defined by Weber (1978). He argues that power is not merely an individual's ability to implement/reinforce one's will on others, but generally it is the capacity of an individual or a group to possess for achieving his/her or their desired/wanted goals. If power exercise is in conflict with the interests of others, then power implies the ability to impose implement one's will. He argues that no discourse is free from power and its exercise. Moreover, he derives his own definition by modifying Lukes's (1974), which is: "*A*

exercises power over *B* when *A* affects *B* in a manner contrary to *B*'s initially perceived interests, regardless of whether *B* later comes to accept the desirability of *A*'s actions" (Watts, 1991, p. 62). In his view, *A* may affect *B* in a number of ways such as by manipulating the situation or its aspects to the extent that *B* has no other option, but to act consciously or unconsciously in *A*'s intended interests or interests of the institution whose representative is *A*.

The Interplay of Discourse and Power

Discourse and power are interconnected and interdependent in numerous ways which also rely on the kind of specific situation and context in which a particular kind of language/discourse is constructed as an interactive, communicative, representative, discursive and social tool/medium by the social actors (the participating subjects). Both language/discourse and power are highly context-sensitive and substantive phenomenon. There is a multitude of varied ways and means (or power bases/resources) that are utilized to exercise/maintain and resist/challenge power. Power exercise and/or resistance can be done through decisions, actions, force and weapons, but language/discourse is one among such ways that provides various linguistic and discursive resources for power exercise and resistance in different socio-political fields and institutions.

Fairclough et al. (2011) explore and examine critically power in/through language/discourse in a variety of disciplinary, interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary discourses in the field of linguistics and social sciences. They are of the view that the relations of power are discursive in nature, and that power can be exercised, challenged, negotiated and reproduced in/through language/discourse. They have discovered empirically that the interviewers are in the position to exercise a lot of power over the political leaders in their interviews. The decision to launch or finalize interview, to allocate/specify time, to cover the topics and to tackle these topics from multiple angles, etc. provides the privilege to the interviewer to exercise power over the interviewee in great capacity.

Foucault (1972, 1976/1978, 1980, 1984/86), the most influential and widely followed theorist, not only elaborated the terms 'discourse' and 'power' multi-dimensionally, but also demonstrated how they are productively interlinked in various socio-political structures and systems (or fields and institutions). As mentioned earlier, he links power with knowledge and truth, but he argues that it is in discourse where power and knowledge are integrated. For him, discourse is both power-container/carrier and an effect of power. Discourse is a contestable site of power struggle for the one who exercises or resists power. Discourse and

power are socially constitutive and conditioned as discourse produces power and vice versa.

Farfan and Holzscheiter (2011) have endeavored to expound the complex interrelationships between discourse and power theoretically and methodologically. Their focus is on the co-constitutive and dialectical relationship between power and discourse, and on the perception that discourse and power are not static phenomena, but dynamic and "ever changing constituents of social life in interactive, relational, contextual and constructivist ways" (2011, p. 139). Generally speaking, language and communication as the fundamental discursive practices are regarded as the critical role-players "both in the perpetuation as well as the transformation of powerful discourses" (2011, p. 144). They argue that not all research traditions (methodologies) may necessarily and directly use the terms like "discourse" and "power." Discourse analysis and critical linguistics, according to them; attempt to bring together the micro and the macro levels in the study of the interplay between power and discourse. They argue "As power is discourse and discourse is the ultimate expression of power, so discourse analysis is confronted with the multimodalities of its expression in, for example, grammatical, illocutionary and complex communicative forces and specific encounters" (Farfan & Holzscheiter, 2011, p. 150).

Language (discourse) is a powerful and meaningful medium of socio-communicative interaction, and relations of power do manifest in verbal interaction implicitly and/or explicitly, directly and/or indirectly. According to Watts (1991), power is inherent to verbal interaction, and that verbal interaction is a place where power is distributed, negotiated and exercised alongside other interrelated concepts of "self-image," "status" and "dominance" (1991, p. 54). In sum, power is exercised on the basis of higher status in Watts's view.

Van Dijk (2008) studies power not only in monologues and dialogues, but also in discourses as interaction, communication and social practice. His emphasis is on the forms of discursive reproduction of elite power, especially on power abuse, that is on domination, causing social inequality and injustice. Discursive reproduction of power (abuse) involves not only cognitive, but also historical dimension/background and cultural dimension/background. In his view, power is enacted, expressed, exercised and distributed in a number of ways in different discourse genres. Discursive enactment of power in such discourse types is persuasive as the more powerful, by giving political, economic, social and/or moral reasons and by selective release or constraint of information, persuade the less powerful to think and act with obedience and obligation. As there are various levels/dimensions of discourse and power, so power relations are

enacted, expressed, distributed, signaled, concealed or legitimized at various levels of discourse between discourse participants or groups. It is first enacted at the pragmatic level through restricted access or "by the control of speech acts, such as commands, formal accusations, indictments, acquittals, or other institutional speech acts" (2008, p. 39). Second, the control or domination of turn allocation, strategies of self-presentation or the control of any other level of spontaneously occurring talk or formal dialogue is (ab)use of discursive power. Third, it is the more powerful speakers in classrooms or courtrooms who select and control the type of discourse genre. Fourth, usually topics in other kinds of conversation are controlled by the principles of the communicative or interactive situation, but it is normally the more powerful speakers who control and/or evaluate the initiation, variation or change of topics, and often control and/or evaluate style and rhetoric as well.

Discursive Power: Power in and behind Discourse

As the novel under study comprises of dialogues or conversations as discourses between competing voices of characters (participants), therefore, it is necessarily and analytically relevant to discuss and focus on Fairclough's (1989) "power in discourse" and "power behind discourse" extensively. Fairclough (1989, p. 43) argues that "power in discourse is concerned with discourse as a place where relations of power are actually exercised and enacted." Power in or behind discourse, in Fairclough's view, is unstable as it may be won (exercised) or lost by a person or group at any stage in or through social struggle. He argues that "power in discourse is to do with powerful participants *controlling and constraining the contributions of non-powerful participants*" (1989, p. 46; italics in original). He distinguishes three main types of constraints: constraints on contents (what one says or does); on relations (the social relations of the participants/people in discourse) and on subjects (subject positions of the participants/people).

According to him, the more powerful participant may control the less powerful participant directly or indirectly. The more powerful participant exercises power in discourse by the use or manipulation of various devices such as "interruption," "enforcing explicitness," "controlling topic" and "formulation" (1989, p. 135). Interruption as a kind of intervention is the interference of a participant, especially a powerful one in the ongoing speech or discourse of another participant, remarkably a less powerful one. One of the many purposes of interruption is to use it as a source of controlling and constraining the contributions of the less powerful participant. "Enforcing explicitness" is the way of how the more powerful participant forces the less powerful one to make his/her meaning clear or unambiguous by asking questions. Similarly, it is the more

powerful participant in a strong position who decides, determines and controls the topic or topics of interaction. Fairclough (1989, p. 136) explains that "formulation is either a rewording of what has been said, by oneself or others, in one turn or a series of turns or indeed a whole episode; or it is a wording of what may be assumed to follow from what has been said, what is implied by what has been said." The purpose of formulation is to check understanding or to reach a decided characterization of what has occurred in interaction. However, formulations are used as the ways of controlling the participant to accept the other's own version of what has happened, and thus limiting his/her options for future contributions.

"Power behind discourse" is hidden power (not apparent to the participant/speaker/writer) which affects, constrains and controls speaker's or writer's discourse or his/her contributions relatively in the long-term and structural ways. Fairclough (1989, p. 55) argues that "The idea of 'power behind discourse' is that the whole social order of discourse is put together and held together as a hidden effect of power." In other words, there are relations of power behind discourse. He argues that "in terms of 'power in discourse', discourse is the site of power struggles, and, in terms of 'power behind discourse,' it is the stake in power struggles – for control over orders of discourse is a powerful mechanism for sustaining power" (1989, p. 74). Power behind discourse is a matter of "the conventions of discourse types constraining participants' contributions" (1989, p. 74) in terms of the contents, relations and subjects. Like power in discourse, power behind discourse puts constraints on the speaker's or writer's "contents of discourse and on the social relationships enacted in it and the social identities *subjects+ enacting them," (1989, p. 74) but here these constraints generally may have long-term structural effects on the knowledge and beliefs, social relationships and social identities of an institution or society as well. It is also an aspect of power behind discourse which denies and restricts access to certain discourses. Access to some powerful or dominant discourses may be denied or restricted to public or common people with more or less justifiable arguments by the powerful elites or what Fairclough (1989) calls the dominant blocs.

Related to Fairclough's "power in discourse" is Thornborrow's (2002) study on power in classroom talk (institutional discourse) which aims at observing and analyzing what discursive resources are used by the participants with different statuses, institutional roles and identities to get things done in talk as interaction in institutional setting. She also shows that speakers are in the position to draw on the discursive resources in different ways with different results as the talk progresses. She argues that power emerges in unequal encounters, but is less apparent in ordinary

conversation or family discourse than institutional discourse which is characteristically asymmetrical, status-related and goal or task-oriented, and in which the speakers' identities, institutional relationships and roles are already context-established. She explains the kind of discursive power (power in language/discourse or power in talk as interaction) which is related to power in "language as (inter) action" (2002, p. 7). Power, in her view, is a social, discursive and interactional practice and phenomenon which is contextually sensitive. She views power (discursive power or power in discourse) "as a set of resources and actions which are available to speakers and which can be used more or less successfully depending on who the speakers are and what kind of speech situation they are in" (2002, p. 8), and that power in talk (discourse) is simply "one participant's ability to affect or influence what the next participant does in the next turn" (2002, p. 136). She explains the accomplishment of power in discourse at the level of structure through the turns and the kind of space and access granted to the speakers, and at the level of interaction, through what they can accomplish in that space.

Fairclough (1992) and van Dijk (1993) view power as a discursive and social practice which is associated with and determined by the participants' institutional role, their socio-economic status and gender or ethnic identities. This implies that socio-economic status and institutional role/identity pre-exist, and that they are actively established, enacted and applied in institutional discourse by the participants, especially the more powerful one. Similarly, social, economic, professional and political status and roles/identities can be associated with power in family or societal, economic, institutional or professional and political discourses respectively. This view is also supported by Thornborrow (2002) in her study on power in institutional discourse (classroom talk) which associates status and rank with power in talk.

Like Fairclough (1989), van Dijk (2008, p. 31) also emphasizes the importance of power which is manifested not only in or through discourse, but also as "a societal force 'behind' discourse." This is the point where the link between discourse and power is intimate, "and a rather direct manifestation of the power of class, group, or institution, and of the relative position or status of their members" (2008, p. 31). He is of the view that differences in power relations between parents and children vary from culture to culture, and that parents' exercise of power as controlling the behavior of their children may be direct or indirect. The parents may more directly control their children's behavior/actions "through scolding, threatening, directing, or correcting children in talk," and more indirectly in "the form of advice, requests, or inducement through promises" (2008, p. 43).

Similarly, Watts's (1991) study on power in family discourse is very relevant to Fairclough's (1989) power in discourse, and he has not only analyzed interruptions as a form of intervention as one of the many ways/aspects of power exercise, but also associated terms like, self-image, status and dominance to the distribution and exercise of power in family discourse. He argues that power and status tend to be more apparent and overt in institutional discourses than in discourses among the members of a close-knit group such as family discourse, and that power exercise is based on higher status. One of the many reasons why members exercise power is to maintain, establish and enhance their status. In his view, position is built and determined through age, wealth, education, and abilities, but status is not only dependent on the set of these values and other features associated by a certain culture related, but it also "fluctuates from culture to culture and, within a culture, from social group to social group" (1991, p. 55). It is also involved in the hierarchies of social systems which contribute to determine the possessors of greater power in certain social activities.

Research Question

How are power exercise and resistance discursively constructed and represented by Khaled Hosseini in his novel *A Thousand Splendid Suns* (2007)?

Research Perspective and Method of Analysis

Considering the given research question, the selected discourses on power in the novel under study are analyzed in relation to its textual, co-textual, intertextual, socio-political, cultural and historical contexts from critical discourse analytical perspective. The perspective of feminist critical discourse studies (Lazar, 2007; Lehtonen, 2007) is applied for interpretation and analysis of the aforementioned issue in the selected passages of the novel under study. Critical discourse studies perspective does not entertain the notion of language as an objective and non-neutral phenomenon and product. The prism of this perspective perceives language as subjective, relational and plural in nature. This perspective also questions the stability of linguistic meaning and the transparent representation of reality – reality as discursively constructed. Moreover, feminist critical discourse studies critique the prevailing social structures of gender and power in gendered discourses under which women are oppressed, subordinated and marginalized discursively and socially. This perspective is analytically active and political in empowering the less powerful or powerless women as a group or class.

Following feminist critical discourse studies perspective, this study is conducted within the critical discourse analytical paradigm which does not see language as an isolated object of analysis. It studies language in relation to society as language use is a form of "social practice" (Fairclough, 2003), and language is an essential and integral part of social life. The procedures of Fairclough's (1989, 1992) Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) are applied on the selected passages of the novel under study. Critical Discourse Analysis is an issue-oriented discursive and social analysis. It is both a theory and a method of analysis. It differs from other approaches in that it takes both the textual context and the broader socio-political and historical context into consideration. It is a multi-disciplinary (interdisciplinary) approach to the study of social evils and odds.

Van Dijk (2008, p. 85) argues that CDA "is a type of discourse analytical research that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance and inequality are enacted, reproduced and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context." Wodak (2002, p. 11) also argues that the aim of CDA is to investigate "critically social inequality as it is expressed, constituted, legitimized, and so on, by language use (or in discourse)." As the novel under study is a discursive site of struggle for power abuse, identity crisis and inequality on the basis of gender, ethnicity and nationalism, therefore, it is appropriate to apply productively Critical Discourse Analysis on the selected passages of the novel under study in order to understand and analyze how the novelist constructs and represents power issue through "patterns in language use and patterns of language use" (Griffin, 2005). It is not restricted merely to the analysis of linguistic features of a text; rather it relates discursive structures and features at the micro level to the structures and features of the sociopolitical and cultural contexts at the macro level. It also relates text to other texts very systematically, and thus makes it an intertextual study (for more details, see van Dijk, 2008).

Fairclough's (1989, 1992) Dialectical-Relational Approach to CDA

The current study applies Fairclough's (1989) three-dimensional model of CDA on account of its suitability and applicability to the text of the novel under study. Fairclough views discourse as a text, as a discursive practice and as a social practice. Based on these levels, he has designed three aspects/dimensions/stages of his dialectical-relational approach to CDA: description, interpretation and explanation.

Description

This stage deals with discourse under study as a text which focuses on the identification and labeling of formal linguistic/textual features related to vocabulary, grammar and textual structures in terms of the ten

questions as outlined in Fairclough's (1989) stage of description. Questions 1-4 belong to the experiential, relational, expressive and metaphorical (ideological) values/associations of vocabulary respectively. Questions 5-8 are concerned with the experiential, relational, expressive values of grammatical features and logical connections respectively. Similarly, questions 9-10 are related to textual structures like interactional conventions and larger scale structures of the text (see Fairclough, 1989, for further details).

Interpretation

The stage of interpretation deals with the participants' processes of text production and consumption (or broadly speaking, discourse production and interpretation) in which discourse is taken as a discursive practice. The interplay between discourse (or discursive structures) and society (or social structures) is not direct, but mediated with the participant's (discourse-producer's or discourse-interpreter's) "Members' Resources" (MR). MR is also termed as "interpretative procedures" or background knowledge. Different people may have different MRs, and they can use these differently and in different degrees. Interpretation of text and context (both situational and interdiscursive/intertextual or historical and socio-political) is indispensible for the interpretation of a discourse.

A critical discourse analyst keeps knowledge about social orders, interactional history, phonology, grammar, vocabulary, syntax, semantics, cohesion, pragmatics and schemata, etc. as elements of his/her MR in his/her mind, and interprets a particular domain/part of a text or context by applying the particular element of his/her MR.As texts are dialogic in particular and interdiscursive/intertextual in general, therefore, a series of other discourses and other texts can be relied upon in interpreting the interdiscursive and intertextual contexts respectively. Moreover, a critical discourse analyst will have to analyze presuppositions and speech acts as well for interpreting the intertextual context.

Explanation

This stage deals with seeing discourse as social practice. Discourse is viewed as a part and as a social practice (of the processes) of social struggle. It is associated with the dialectic of social structures (here relations of power and dominance) and social practices (including discourse as a social practice). However, social structures (i.e. social determinants) and social effects of discourse are interlinked by MR as social construct in this stage. MR are both cognitive and social as the cognitive aspects of MR are involved and reproduced in the processes of producing or interpreting a text whereas the social aspects of MR are

involved in analyzing which social determinants (or social structures) determine (with varying degrees) and shape discourses which (as social effects), then, affect, shape, sustain, or possibly transform and change these structures.

MR, in this stage, are seen as ideologies – that is, the assumptions about culture, social relationships, and social identities incorporated in MR. In this stage, social determinants and social effects of discourse as well as the dialectical and somewhat interdependent relationship between these are explored and critically examined at the situational, institutional and societal levels. At these three levels of social organization, discourse is viewed as situational, institutional and societal practices respectively. At the situational level, a certain discourse is viewed and evaluated in the particular, immediate and actual situation where it occurs. At the institutional and societal levels of discourse analysis, the social aspects of discourse, involving sociological/social analysis, are explored and critically examined.

A Thousand Splendid Suns

Hosseini's novel, included in this study, is *A Thousand Splendid Suns* which emerged on the global screen in 2007. It is a story related to when the tragic history and stories of the suppressed and suffering Afghan women whose feministic voices were either silenced or marginalized in the patriarchal society of Afghanistan. It is a tale of motherhood (mother-daughter), a pathetic and heart-broken story of the bond between two girls, Mariam and Laila. These girls, with their different life experiences, are destined as wives of Rasheed. Rasheed, a traditionalist and tribal man, represents traditionalism and tribalism under the umbrella of patriarchy in which Mariam's and Laila's freedom and respect are at his disposal. He is the embodiment of patriarchal and tribal character. He favors the Taliban and their Islamic agenda. Jalil and his family of three wives and almost nine children are Farsi-speaking Tajik like Nana (Marium's mother) and Mariam. Similarly, Laila and her family are Farsi-speaking Tajik. On the other hand, Rasheed is a Pashtun. Tariq, Laila's lover, and his family are also Pashtuns. The novelist has shown the effects of patriarchal forces on women in Afghanistan by narrating the domestic issues of violence and discrimination between Rasheed and his two wives. It is a multi-thematic and polyphonic novel. It is a tale narrated from women's perspective represented by the third person voices of Mariam and Laila. It is a story of identity crisis, women oppression and marginalization at the domestic and social levels of patriarchy in the Russian and Taliban eras.

Mariam is the illegitimate daughter of a wealthy man named Jalil. Mariam and her mother, Nana, who had been one of Jalil's servants, are

kept in a remote and separate house called *kolba.* Mariam is taken as a bastard which is somewhat socially an unacknowledged/unrecognized identity and a symbol of shame in Afghanistan. Therefore, they are deprived of their due rights and privileges like the ones given to Jalil's other legitimate wives and children domestically and socially. After Nana's suicide, Mariam at the age of 15 is forcibly compelled to marry Rasheed, a Kabul shoemaker, who is 30 years older than Mariam. When it is learnt that Mariam is barren, he seeks to find faults for beating her. Life becomes terrible for her. She alone suffers a lot at the hands of Rasheed for 19 years. She is forced to wear *burqa*, and she bears Rasheed's abuses and agony at the time of the Russian regime and genocidal civil war in Afghanistan. Accidentally, Laila, a 15-year-old war orphan, is married to Rasheed in 1992. Laila is fertile to have produced two children for Rasheed. Mariam, who was already in torture and trouble, initially becomes hostile to Laila.

Later on, they become close friends, and learn how to fight against the evils of the day, and their strong friendship proves to be challenging for Rasheed. They share a lot of hardships and anguish. In eras of war and Talibanization in Afghanistan, these two women resist and challenge patriarchy by helping each other during Rasheed's power abuse and violence. Mariam and Laila are subjected to Rasheed's power at the domestic level and to the Taliban's power at the social level. They are so oppressed by Rasheed that they escape their home with the hope to find peace, but they are arrested and sent back by the patrolling *Mujahideen*. Rasheed's fault-finding nature and violence are endured by them. After some time, Tariq, Laila's lover, visits their home, and Laila comes to know about Rasheed's hoax with her. Rasheed does violence after knowing about Tariq's visit to his home. Rasheed had duped Laila, but Laila had also hidden the secret of Aziza's illegitimate birth from Rasheed who was already aware of this secret. Snubbing and beating had become a normal routine at Rasheed's home. On one occasion when Mariam observes that Rasheed is close to kill Laila by suffocating her, she kills Rasheed to save Laila. Mariam confesses her crime before the Taliban, and she is executed by them. Laila and Tariq meet again and start a new life, but Mariam's memories are still fresh in their minds.

Analysis

The data selected from the novel is large. However, a couple of passages as sample are analyzed below by applying CDA as research method and the perspective of feminist critical discourse studies. The sentences of the passages are numbered, and the words, phrases and sentences are enclosed in inverted commas for ease of reference and analysis.

Discourse on Power Abuse in Domestic Context

The passage under study is a discursive construction and representation of domestic violence in which Rasheed abuses patriarchal power to oppress Mariam. Rasheed seeks lame excuses to oppress his wife whose subordinate status and position are dominantly exploited by him.

(1) Then she heard [Rasheed previously threw the rice-filled plate away from the table]

(2) “Get up,” he said. (3) “Come here. (4) Get up.”

(5) He snatched her hand, opened it, and dropped a handful of pebbles into it.

(6) “Put these in your mouth.”

(7) “What?”

(8) “Put. (9) These. (10) In your mouth.”

(11) “Stop it, Rasheed, I’m—”

(12) His powerful hands clasped her jaw. (13) He shoved two fingers into her mouth and tried it open, then forced the cold, hard pebbles into it. (14) Mariam struggled against him, mumbling, but he kept pushing the pebbles in, his upper lip curled in a sneer.

(15) “Now chew,” he said.

(16) Through the mouthful of grit and pebbles, Mariam mumbled a plea. (17) Tears were leaking out of the corners of her eyes.

(18) “CHEW!” he bellowed. (19) A gust of his smoky breath slammed against her face.

(20) Mariam chewed. (21) Something in the back of her mouth cracked.

(22) “Good,” Rasheed said. (23) His cheeks were quivering. (24) “Now you know what your rice tastes like. (25) Now you know what you’ve given me in this marriage. (26) Bad food, and nothing else.”

(27) Then he was gone, leaving Mariam to spit out pebbles, blood, and the fragments of two broken molars. (Hosseini, 2007, pp. 93-94; emphasis in original)

Analysis and Interpretation

The passage under study is a discourse on (patriarchal) power abuse in domestic violence. Rasheed is abusing his patriarchal power over Mariam, a subordinated and oppressed woman, and lame excuses are sought out to do so. Badly cooked rice is taken as an unreasonable excuse

for abusing power in gender violence. Previously, Rasheed had thrown a rice-filled plate away from the table, and presently angry Rasheed enters the living room by opening the front door (sentence 1). As soon as he enters, he issues commands to Mariam as “Get up” in sentence 2, 4 and “Come here” in sentence 3. The language of power is accompanied by his physical force when he forcibly opens her mouth and drops “a handful of pebbles into it” (sentence 5). He abuses power when he commands her to put the pebbles into her mouth (sentence 6). Mariam astonishingly reacts and asks him what he is saying (sentence 7). The interrogative in sentence 7 also indicates her resistance to his power abuse. The expression in sentence 6 is repeated emphatically in three different sentences (sentence 8, 9 and 10) to demonstrate his furious tone. Mariam urges him to stop forcing her, but her statement is interrupted by him as the long dash in sentence 11 indicates. This interruption is one of the ways of controlling the contributions of Mariam, and this interruption is one of the ways to exercise power in discourse (see Fairclough, 1989 for further details). He uses physical or “actional power” when his “powerful hands clasped her jaw” (sentence 12), and when he roughly pushes “two fingers into her mouth” prying it open, and forces “the cold, hard pebbles into it” (sentence 13).

Mariam’s struggle against him, her mumbling and how he keeps pushing the pebbles into her mouth in sentence 14 indicate that he was abusing power (“actional power”) despite Mariam’s resistance. Moreover, the word “sneer” also indicates his merciless smile. Once the pebbles are in, he commands her to chew (sentence 15). Mariam “mumbled a plea” with her mouth full of “grit and pebbles” (sentence 16), and tears overflowed from “the corners of her eyes” (sentence 17). Despite Mariam’s pitiable plea, Rasheed angrily roared to chew as the capitalized expression “CHEW!” indicates (sentence 18). The discourse-producer has manipulated the capitalized expression as a discursive strategy to express Rasheed’s bellowing. Rasheed was a smoker, and a “gust of his smoky breath slammed against her face” (sentence 19). Mariam had no option, but to chew, and this chewing caused the cracking of something “in the back of her mouth” (sentence 20 and 21 respectively). Rasheed appreciates the way she chewed, and her “cheeks were quivering” (sentence 22 and 23). Rasheed punished her on account of bad cooking, but he might have taken her bad cooking of rice as an excuse to beat her. After the punishment, he reminds her of her knowledge about how her cooked “rice tastes like” (sentence 24). He also complains that his marriage with her has given him nothing except bad food (sentence 25 and 26 respectively). After his exit, Mariam spat “out pebbles, blood, and the fragments of two broken molars” (sentence 27).

The analyzed passage indicates that power was abused in terms of imposing one's own will over the other despite the other's resistance (see Weber, 1978 for more details), and in terms of controlling the contributions (behaviors/actions) of the target speaker. The target speaker's behavior and action are controlled not only through interruption, but also through commands/warnings as discursive strategies (see also Fairclough, 1989 for further details). Rasheed is also abusing his physical power accompanied by his language of power to impose his own will over Mariam. Therefore, this power may also be called as "coercive power" and as "actional power" (see van Dijk, 2001; Wodak& Meyer, 2009 for more details). It is manifest from the analysis of the text that women, like Mariam, are treated as servants and subordinates to traditionalist Pashtuns like Rasheed who are strongly supported by their association and affiliation with the male-dominant society to exercise power in greater quantities, and to control women under the rubric of culture-driven ideology (see van Dijk, 2008 for more details). The researcher, as a feminist critical discourse scholar, challenges the prevailing gender "ideological structure that divides people into two classes, men and women, based on a hierarchical relation of domination and subordination, respectively" (Lazar, 2007, p. 146). He also challenges all traditional and current forms of gender asymmetry or sexism, including "exclusionary gate-keeping social practices, physical violence against women, and sexual harassment and denigration of women," that cause oppression, deprivation, inequality, violence, powerlessness and restrictions for women (Lazar, 2007, p. 148). Woman's position, status, identity, rights and privileges are to be acknowledged domestically and socially on equal grounds for peaceful gender relations in that territory of Afghanistan where these issues still exist.

Discourse on Power Exercise and Resistance between the same Genders

The passage under study is a dialogue between Mariam and Laila in which power is challenged and exercised between the same genders. Mariam, having known that Laila is more privileged than her as a subordinate to Laila, not only challenges Laila's privileged position and status, but also exercises power over her to make her understand that she is not subordinate to her.

(1) "I won't be your servant," Mariam said. (2) "I won't."

(3) The girl flinched. (4) "No. (5) Of course not!"

(6) "You may be the palace *malika* and me a *dehati*, but I won't take orders from you. (7) You can complain to him and he can slit my throat, but I won't do it. (8) Do you hear me? (9) I won't be your servant."

(10) “No! I don’t expect—”

(11) “And if you think you can use your looks to get rid of me, you’re wrong. (12) I was here first. (13) I won’t be thrown out. (14) I won’t have you cast me out.”

(15) “It’s not what I want,” the girl said weakly.

(16) “And I see your wounds are healed up now. (17) So you can start doing your share of the work in this house—“

(18) The girl was nodding quickly. (19) Some of her tea spilled, but she didn’t notice. (20) “Yes, that’s the other reason I came down, to thank you for taking care of me—”

(21) “Well, I wouldn’t have,” Mariam snapped. (22) “I wouldn’t have fed you and washed you and nursed you if I’d known you were going to turn around and steal my husband.”

(23) “Steal—”

(24) “I will still cook and wash the dishes. (25) You will do the laundry and the sweeping. (26) The rest we will alternate daily. (27) And one more thing. (28) I have no use for your company. (29) I don’t want it. (30) What I want is to be alone. (31) You will leave me be, and I will return the favor.
(32) That’s how we will get on. (33) Those are the rules.” (34) When she was done speaking, her heart was hammering and her mouth felt parched.
(35) Mariam had never before spoken in this manner, had never stated her will so forcefully. (36) It ought to have felt exhilarating, but the girl’s eyes had teared up and her face was drooping, and what satisfaction Mariam found from this outburst felt meager, somehow illicit.

(37) She extended the shirts toward the girl. (38) “Put them in the *almari,* not the closet. (39) He likes the whites in the top drawer, the rest in the middle, with the socks.”

(40) The girl set the cup on the floor and put her hands out for the shirts, palm up.

(41) “I’m sorry about all of this,” she croaked.

(42) “You should be,” Mariam said. (43) “You should be sorry.”

(Hosseini, 2007, pp. 202-203; italics in original)

Interpretation and Explanation

The passage under study is a discourse on power exercise/resistance between the same genders in which Mariam, Rasheed’s first wife, cannot tolerate her subordinate status in relation to the more privileged position and status of her rival, Laila. Mariam was

mute in Rasheed's previous and powerful speech because she could not resist his power exercise, and now she exercises power over Laila by challenging the supposed power and dominant status of Laila in the ongoing dialogue because she considers her position and status more dominant than Laila's. Rasheed had previously assigned Mariam the duty of serving Laila, but Mariam challenges Laila's identity and dominant status, and refuses to be her servant (sentence 1 and 2). Laila ("the girl") reacts surprisingly at Mariam's remark in sentence 3, and responds in sentence 4 and 5 that Mariam should not be her servant.

Mariam is furious and intolerant at her own degraded position and subordinate status as a wife, and challenges Laila's gender identity and dominant status by arguing that she may be "the palace *malika*" and she herself may be "a *dehati*," but she will not accept her orders (sentence 6). She also ventures to say that Laila can "complain" Rasheed, and that he can "slit" her "throat," but she will not take orders (sentence 7). The interrogative in sentence 8 is another way of exercising and challenging power. What was said in sentence 1 is repeated in sentence 9 which indicates that Mariam is not going to be her servant at any cost. The verbal fight here is ideological and at the unequal domestic position and status between the two rivals. Negation in sentence 10 indicates Laila's denial of what Mariam thinks, but the long dash in the sentence shows that Mariam has interrupted and disconnected Laila's turn of speech. This interruption signals Mariam's use of power in discourse as explained by Fairclough (see Fairclough, 1989 for more details). Mariam is apprehended of her exclusion in and casting out from her house. That is why she challenges Laila in sentence 11 by arguing that Laila is "wrong" to think that she can "get rid" of her by using her "looks." She reminds Laila of her first arrival and dominant position in that house by the expression "I was here first" (sentence 12).

She negates the possibility that she can be "thrown out" (sentence 13), and also challenges Laila that she will not allow her to "cast" her out (sentence 14). Laila, in sentence 15, negates what Mariam perceives. Mariam distributes domestic work, and assigns Laila her "share of the work" in the house (sentence 17). Laila nods as a sign of agreement, and she explains that she had come down to thank her for taking care of her (sentence 20), but her turn is again interrupted by Mariam in this sentence as a sign of power exercise in discourse. It is the discourse-producer who gives voice to each character and more or less space to their voices in the ongoing dialogue. Sentence 21 and 22 indicate Mariam's regret at why she had looked after her who, after her recovery, became her rival in the house. The very word "steal" in sentence 22 stuns Laila who exclaims with wonder by the word "Steal" in sentence 23, but her turn is again

interrupted by Mariam's speech. Sentence 24, 25 and 26 indicate how Mariam distributes domestic work between her and Laila. Sentence 27 indicates power in Mariam's discourse, and sentence 28, 29, 30 and 31 indicate that Mariam wants isolation from Laila's company.

However, these sentences, whether affirmative or negative, indicate Mariam's imposition of her own will over Laila as power in discourse (see Weber, 1978 for more details). Mariam's expression "Those are the rules" in sentence 33 is indicative of Mariam's dominant position and status in this discourse as she enforces the rules to be obeyed by Laila. According to the discourse-producer, "Mariam had never before spoken in this manner," and "had never stated her will so forcefully" (sentence 35). This sentence indicates that the more forcefully a person or group states or imposes his/her or their will, the more power in discourse (discursive power) he/she or they exercise. Sentence 36 indicates that Mariam is not moved by Laila's gloomy condition. Sentence 38 is an imperative (order) in which Laila is asked to put the shirts in the *almari*. Order in discourse, according to Fairclough (1989), is another discursive strategy to be used for exercising power over the subordinate. Although Laila says sorry to Mariam in sentence 41, yet Mariam does not cool down, and uses discursive power by the repetition of "You should be" sorry in sentence 42 and 43. Looking at the text from feminist critical discourse studies perspective, it is arguable that Mariam's exercise or challenge of power is aimed at strengthening and stabilizing her position and status at Rasheed's home. It is pertinent to add that men and women struggle for establishing their social status in diverse ways, but this competition in relation to status also occurs within the members of the same gender category, i.e. men vs men, and women vs women (see Eckert, 1997 for further details). Nevertheless, the text under study confirms Eckert's views that women are regarded as more status-conscious than men, and that "women are more status-*bound* than men" (Eckert, 1997, p. 217, italic in original). Mariam fears of her exclusion and sense of deprivation because she had observed how Rasheed played politics over Laila's beautiful body as a source of her privileged position before Rasheed. Laila appeared dearer to Rasheed on sexual grounds, and Rasheed's sexist language caused power exercise/challenge as verbal fight between Mariam and Laila. Moreover, Mariam did not want herself to be subjected to Laila's power like the way "individuals are constituted as subjects in and through their subjection to power relations" (Allen, 2009, p. 299).

Discursive Construction and Representation of Power

This section addresses the research question relating to how the discourse-producer has discursively constructed and represented power. The analysis of the selected discourses on power in the novel under study

demonstrates that power was exercised and challenged between the Taliban and other Afghan civilians, especially women, between the individuals of more or less rival ethnic groups, and between opposite or same genders. The discourse-producer has attempted to show in his novel that the Taliban and the tribal and traditionalist Pashtuns like Rasheed are the real power abusers in the Afghan society. He has tried to challenge patriarchal systems/structures – tribal and traditionalist patriarchy in the guise of Rasheed and religious patriarchy in the form of the Taliban. Afghan civilians, especially women suffered, and were oppressed within these two extremes of patriarchy. That is why he has resisted their peculiar patriarchal powers in a number of monologues and dialogues by manipulating discursive structures, devices, techniques and strategies in the novel under study.

The analysis also indicates that the Taliban exercised/abused their power over the Afghans in terms of enforcing their own will, religious ideology and ideological rules and principles (see Weber, 1978 for further details). They also exercised/abused power in terms of administering/monitoring and controlling the Afghan civilians' actions in social life (see Foucault, 1976/78, 1980, 1984/86 for more details), and in terms of controlling and constraining the participants'/characters' contents (what one says or does), relations (their social relations in discourse) and subjects (their subject positions) (see Fairclough, 1989 for further details). However, they used force (the use of force is called "coercion" or "coercive power," (see van Dijk, 2001 for more details) to implement the Islamic law, but the imposition of this Islamic law was non-Islamic because Islam never teaches to impose its law on the Afghan Muslims by force. The discourse-producer has discursively demonstrated in the novel under study that their power was abused in violence, punishment, innocent murders, massacre/carnage of the Hazara minority, destruction of the Buddha statues, explosion of girls' schools, ban on women's education and their independent movement outside their homes, and ban on the artistic and recreational activities.

Like Taliban, Rasheed also exercised/abused patriarchal power over his wives in the same way as Taliban did. Rasheed's wives as feminine characters resisted and challenged Rasheed's patriarchal authority and power in a number of ways. Such a discursive resistance to power is a struggle for women's empowerment (power-to).He did not treat them as equally valuable and venerable human beings, but abused his patriarchal power in enforcing his own will, wishes, ideology and traditional values over them, in harshly beating them, in discriminating against, humiliating and disgracing them, and in exploiting them as workers and sex tools. Force was abused to achieve his desired goals and ends. The constructed

power is an issue because it is abused against the opposite gender whose status, role and identity are endangered and unequally recognized. The thorough analysis of all the selected discourses on power in the novel under study sheds light on the notion of power including its exercise/abuse and resistance/challenge with the following findings:

Power is relational, intersubjective, procedural, processual and contextual phenomenon between the present participants/characters in real or ideal/imaginary discourse as interactive, communicative and dialogic phenomenon. However, it can be exercised and challenged in contexts – both real and ideal – in which the reader/listener/addressee may not be present. Power emerges more in the serious and formal situations like institutions than the informal or less formal domestic contexts as Lazar and Kramarae (2011, p. 233; italics in original) argue that "power is inherent in *all* verbal interactions – just often more overtly in institutional settings than in casual conversations in 'personal' groups such as family and intimate friendship networks."

Power more or less depends upon the socio-economic status, institutional role/rank and gender or ethnic identity of those who exercise or resist power. It also depends upon the quantity and quality of power resources – material, physical and symbolic resources including language. A powerful person or group may not always and necessarily exercise/abuse power in all contexts. Rarely, a weaker person or group may exercise or challenge power by using limited or restricted power resources. Power exercise/abuse or resistance/challenge is based on a multitude of reasons like for gaining material resources. However, the root cause of power exercise/abuse or resistance/challenge is difference – difference in language, race, caste, ideology, religion, culture, history, nationality, authority, socio-economic status, institutional role/rank, gender or ethnic identity and socio-political and economic interests and agenda (see Weiss & Wodak, 2003 for difference as one of the cause of power). The analysis of the selected discourses on power in the novel under study confirms many of the prime causes of power abuse or resistance mentioned above. Discourse is a powerful medium of and site of social struggle for power because it provides certain discursive devices, tactics, techniques, strategies, structures (syntactic, semantic and pragmatic structures, etc.) and speech acts to be manipulated by those who exercise or resist power for their own aims and objectives.

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Book Review

1. *Can Schools Save Indigenous Languages?*

Nancy, H. Hornberger (Ed.), 2008
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Driven by the phenomenon of globalization and ensuing longing for upward mobility, societies, families, and/or individuals struggle to be economically better off. In the sociological struggles, societies, families, and/or individuals adopt, negotiate, and shun languages. These processes of adoption, negotiation, and shunning of languages occur in complex ways. Such processes necessitate questions such as whether the forsaken indigenous languages—the repositories of folk wisdom and culture (Hornberger, “Voice and Biliteracy in Indigenous Language Revitalization: Contentious Educational Practices in Quechua, Guarani, and Maori Contexts,” 2006)—can ever be saved. If indigenous languages are at the verge of extinction, whether the languages can be revitalized and brought into life, and, whether the work of saving indigenous languages can be done through schooling. Important issues such as these constitute this edited book.

The book has been divided into two sections. Each section is divided into four chapters. The first section contains four case studies. The second section consists of analytical commentaries on the four case studies.

In the first chapter, Hornberger—the editor of the book—analyzes the questions “Can schools save indigenous languages?” In addition, she provides an overview of the chapters in the context of the question this book seeks to address. Her discussion accurately displays the theoretical concerns regarding saving and revitalizing indigenous languages. In the second chapter, she discusses the case of revitalizing Sami language in the light of the first chapter. The Sami language lost its rights under the influence of Norwegian in Norway until 1959 when Sami was recognized in a limited way. Sami was permitted as a medium of instruction in certain primary schools. After passing acts and laws in favor of Sami from time to time, the language was fully recognized when 097S—Norway’s reforms for Sami—were carried out. Despite its recognition at wider level, Hornberger notes that Sami still faces challenges. Specifically, Sami is struggling in the areas where the language is used with mainstream education as a foreign language in Norway. The major challenges include an adequate and efficient allocation of time for Sami instruction, effective teaching

methodology, and dearth of bilingual teachers. I agree with Hornberger that these are the challenges that decide the revitalization quality of an endangered language.

Third chapter brings forth perspectives from Latina America where about forty million people speak four hundred indigenous languages. In this chapter, Lopez shows that although Latin American governments have brought some fundamental changes in their laws, which allow that education be given in major indigenous languages of the peoples, they face a large number of challenges similar to the case Sami. For instance, the challenges include lack of standard writing systems, unfavorable attitudes of indigenous people toward their languages, dearth of teaching material, and insufficient number of trained teachers to teach in the languages. In addition, demands made by leaders of the indigenous communities that their languages should not only be taught to their children but also to the children of other major communities, otherwise such language revitalization steps are strategies to keep the indigenous peoples away from assimilating in mainstream society, further complicate the language revitalizational efforts. The chapter makes me realize how multilayered the issue of revitalizing indigenous languages can be in a society.

Unlike the above third chapter, the fourth chapter discusses the revitalization of Maori language in New Zealand. The revitalization of Maori is marked as distinctive and successful case because the Maori people are found willing to save their language. Indigenous people's attitudes towards their indigenous languages are indeed the major determining variable for saving languages. The Maori have initiated various bilingual programs. Programs such as full immersion spend 80% of the school day in Maori-medium education and others teach Maori as a foreign language along with the mainstream English education. The chapter underlines that since most of the Maori-speaking students' first language is English and Maori is their second language, the Maori language faces challenges despite its success evident in different bilingual programs. For instance, although additive bilingualism should be the sole objective of heritage language programs, it is not. In fact, additive bilingualism can only be achieved when at least 50% of school day time is spent in the heritage language. However, 50% of the school time is still not spent in Maori in the bilingual programs that have been initiated with mainstream English education. In addition, the programs are also marred by the challenges such as the dearth of trained and qualified bilingual teachers. The chapter highlights that the impact of English appears inhibiting the revitalization process in the programs. This chapter shows to the reader that keeping a bilingual balance is indeed a difficult task as far achieving additive bilingualism is concerned.

The final case study discusses the revitalizing of Hnahno language in Mexico City. The chapter notes that educators also face the similar challenges what has been noted with Sami and Maori languages. Hnahno is the language of the indigenous people of Mexico City. They belong to the lowest class of the city. Majority of these people either beg or do manual jobs in Mexico City. What add to the problems of revitalizing Hnahno language are the people's questions regarding advantages of studying in the indigenous language. The people believe that education given to them in their indigenous language cannot win them an entry into their mainstream society because other dominant languages drive and determine social mobility in their mainstream society. Resultantly, the people manifest unfavorable attitudes toward their language and remain absent in the language revitalization classes. In addition, availability of the teachers who could speak the heritage language fluently, dearth of teaching material in the language, and non-existence of standard writing system of the language are the grave challenges that are facing the revitalization of the Hnahno language.

The second section of the book is a commentary on the above case studies. In fact, this whole part boils down to pointing out and discussing the problems and challenges. For instance, with regard to revitalizing any language through schooling, it is strongly recommended that at least 50% of a school time be allocated to the heritage language medium as it could effectively be used for the purpose in question. In this context, it is suggested that the language immersion duration of Sami and Maori bilingual educational programs must be increased up to 50% of a school day as the students could adequately be enabled to learn in their first language. With regard to the teachers whose first natural language is a second language in their society, effective measures such as training and offering incentives to them are suggested in order to facilitate and encourage them to help in the revitalization efforts. The section shows that issues such as (a) indigenous peoples' demands of using their indigenous languages at wider level as not only they but other people also learn their language, (b) their unfavorable attitudes toward their heritage language, and (c) the dearth of resources for teaching in the indigenous languages are linked to the domain of political decisions, priorities, and choices. Baker (*Foundations of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism,* 2006) and Garcia (*Bilingual Education in the 21st Century: A Global Perspective*, 2009) have discussed that issues such as these tend to be political in nature; it depends upon the ruling class of any society to decide whether or not such languages be nationalized and/or officialized; and, how efficiently resources be provided for revitalizing the languages as the indigenous people could be included in mainstream society.

I find that although schooling alone is not enough in saving languages, the book ends with an optimistic note that taking efforts for revitalizing indigenous languages is better than doing nothing at all. In this context, the examples of Maori in New Zealand, Sami in Norway, and Hebrew in Israel are brought into discussion. I think one can contend that the countries such as New Zealand, Norway, Israel may comparatively be pluralistic in their orientation in their language policies and economically better off too. Therefore, the countries may afford revitalizing measures. It think what this book misses to a great extent is that it does not offer solid suggestions regarding revitalizing indigenous languages in the countries that are economically poor and have assimilative orientation in their language policies. Most of the regions of the world where majority of the indigenous languages are in danger are financially poor. Additionally, assimilationist ideologies prevail in their languages policies. Revitalizing indigenous languages in the countries fraught with perpetual poverty and deep-rooted assimilationist ideologies in their language policies seem to me “a forlorn hope” (Edwards, “Forlorn Hope?,”2002) than a possibility unless the indigenous people themselves are motivated to take measures.

Reviewer

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2. *Through white noise: Autonarrative exploration ofracism, discrimination and the doorways to academic citizenship in Canada*

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Khalida Tanvir Syed has been a part of university teaching faculty in Pakistan, Canada and Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. She graduated from the University of Alberta in 2008. Her research interests include language, literacy, literature, Aboriginal issues, culture, multicultural issues, and human rights education.

Taking inspiration from Paulo Freire's theory of critical pedagogy, *Through White Noise* recounts multicultural learning –teaching experience of "luminal" immigrants, Khalida, Jon, and Reena who advocate for the antiracist academia, particularly, in Canada and, on the whole, in the postcolonial multicultural societies that, in return, actualize social justice. Questioning "painfully white" Canadian educators' supremacist doctrine "WHITE is always RIGHT," the writer records the racist white noise that discriminates the natives and immigrants and, thus, not only violates but also discredits the Privacy Act, Human Rights Act, and Multiculturalism Act.

This book is comprised of a Prologue, six chapters and an Epilogue. In the "Prologue," the writer listens to the white noise and reads it *against the grain*. The white discourse is found always racist whenever the talks seek exception by their refrain "I don't mean to sound racist here" (pp.1-2). The writer, conscious of being an immigrant in the white setting, recalls her first "border-crossing" experience, shares rosy imaginings of Canadian multicultural mosaic and landscape, and expresses her nervousness how to reconcile with the challenge of adaptability and survival in the first world country. She compares multiculturalism with the spectrum of rainbow where each color while retaining its individuality contributes to the overall pattern. She reflects with conviction, "For me, difference is beautiful; it is not a thing to be assimilated or fixed. Flowers are different, trees are different, the sun and the moon are different, colors, languages, and cultures are different too. Many things are different" (p. 5). She leaves her privileged home, Pakistan, for the discomforting and challenging host, Canada, to experience Bhabha's creative space of *in-betweenness*. She starts experiencing cultural dissonance when the flight agent makes her wait in "a different line" because of her third-world roots. The amplified whiteness in Winnipeg invokes cultural shock in her, "Everything in the Airport is white: mostly white people, mostly speaking English. Outside the

terminal, everything is white – people, cars, trees, land, and sky. I am overwhelmed with whiteness and overjoyed to see snow for first time in my life. I am fondly gazing at the white, white, white snow and I want to touch it, play with it. I become like a small child with a new toy, not wanting to be distracted" (pp. 5-6). She as an exotic other resists assimilationist ideology of dominant culture attained at the cost of deculturation, and highlights the esthetics of marginal texture like a naturalist.

Chapter 1 unveils how Khalida enters into the white noise. Her story is a personal and pedagogical venture aiming to diversify and decolonize British-designed inflexible colonial curriculum in Pakistani universities and monolithic teaching practices for culturally diverse students. She works for the introduction of multicultural perspective in Pakistani classrooms and the inclusion of post-colonial Canadian literature that relates significantly to the postcolonial situation and problems of Pakistani society and encourages cross-cultural dialogue. She reflects on her versatile experiences as a student and a teacher. Her childhood experiences with the "other"—Shakuntilla, a Hindu widow and surrogate grandmother, and Zarreen, a Christian fellow—objectified Khalida's given family values of coexistence with the other and respect for the different religions.

Chapter 2 unfolds the white privilege in the multicultural Canada and its academia through Jon's story. The writer visualizes Jon's experience of listening to cricket match in the Principal's office as a schoolboy from the position of a colonized who reflects on British using games as means to colonialism while Joan interprets it as an individualistic treatment of marginalization that affected negatively his academics. Jon, when an undergrad, had the privilege to be part of civil rights and anti-apartheid movements in England and, later, got the advantage of teaching in the Caribbean to experience diverse cultures and learnt about his privileged location. He is still privileged with all his Englishness in his new border crossing as compared with the other third-world immigrants.

In contrast with Jon's privileged story of border-crossing, Chapter 3 examines Reena's marginalization. Reena is a brown female professor and belongs to a minority culture. She grows up as a child in the upper-middle class nuclear family in Shillong, India and studies in an English Roman Catholic school in the elite language of colonizer. Taking the example of Reena's appropriation in colonial school in South Asia, the writer contemplates if the Pakistanis would ever resist colonial education as the Aboriginal people in Western Canada have done. Gender-segregated schooling made Reena aware of her womanness cultured in "Victorian morality." In her border-crossing to Germany after her marriage with her

“controlling” husband, she experiences silence at being odds with the alien majority culture. After her second border-crossing to Canada, she continues her studies, imagining it as the possible way to regain her self-esteem lost in marriage and life of a suppressed housewife, break her silence, negotiate a personal space, and realize and explore, later in Quebec, her academic being, erstwhile battered by her book-repellant husband.

In Chapter 4, the writer explores the relevance of culture and multiculturalism for education, teacher education and anti-racist upright society. From her own experiences in Pakistan, she builds on Said’s perspective on culture and recounts how the colonial powers in India used culture as a divisive force and yardstick to divide the people as “us” and “them.” She critiques that the visible and prevalent culture of Pakistan looks South Asian in its outlook when the society is composed of diverse invisible cultures owing to language differences. Her mother tongue Punjabi taught her as a child how to talk in a straightforward manner while at school, the Siraiki vernacular required from her to remain polite even in anger. The interactive space of invisible cultures what Bhabha calls hybridity and third space creates relational identities of individual even in Pakistan. The conservative multicultural societies in the west privilege white culture and prescribe assimilation for the immigrants into the dominant culture. The writer understands that the educators and the students should be critical and learn the sensitivity to otherness. Overall, the education system should encourage and support ethnic, linguistic, religious and economic plurality in the academia.

In Chapter 5, the writer finds a parallel between her grandmother’s quilting and the writer’s conversation with her own lived life and engagement with the other research participants. The actual fabric quilt woven by her grandmother and grandmother’s companions had to be gifted to the younger generation. Similarly, her present book is her metaphoric quilt that weaves together the threads of participants’ racial, multicultural and multiethnic life, and means to be handed down to the readers. Syed reads and analyses the privilege as power in Jon and Reena’s life stories, and studies how lived experiences of locations and relocations, shape and reform identities in the transformative multicultural space of Canada.

Chapter 6, relatively terse chapter, highlights the significance of Syed’s work in the multicultural pedagogy toeing in the line of UNESCO. The multicultural teaching practices and educational planning both in Pakistan and Canada would evolve and transform teachers into better educators, and give voice to the different cultures, perspectives and experiences into the classroom.

The Epilogue opens up possibilities for future research. The writer shares her emptiness that she experienced as an immigrant when she enters into the new dominant culture. The multicultural setting proves an uphill task that demands from its new entrants to learn more, know more and travel in the unknown in order to enter into the "academic citizenship" (p. 109) of the new country.

Syed's book takes the debate of invisible culture into visible culture into account and explores the possibility of negation of assimilationist agenda by the dominant culture. The inclusion of marginalized voices and autonarratives into the classroom and teaching practices would evolve pedagogy of the fair-minded. It would further encourage critical thinking, awaken open-mindedness, allow difference and accept otherness experienced in the form of ethnicity, regionalism, linguistic variation and minor cultures in the mainstream academia.

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