

## **Language & Marginalization: A Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis of Silenced Voices of Afghan Women from The Margins**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The integration of gender studies with discourse analysis propels forward one's understanding of the expression, experience, and negotiation of gender in relation to language and society. While Gender Studies offers important perspectives on the socio- political dimensions of power relations and identities, the multidisciplinary approach is guided by the Discourse Analysis of Literature to untangle the ways that language constructs and sustains gender boundaries. The examination of the mutual relationship between gender and discourse necessitates the study of the evolution of both fields in tandem. This approach not only enhances our understanding of these theories but also helps to challenge dominant and discriminatory discourses. Intense focus on the harm inflicted upon the so-called 'marginalized groups' constitutes an equally important concern for Critical Discourse analysis. As a result, studying the muted groups' discourses becomes an analysis of the sociolinguistic and cultural conditions that perpetuate their marginalization. The lives of underrepresented, underprivileged and excluded groups are complicated by issues of access and marginalization. This study aims at providing a full critical discourse analysis of several Afghan women's voices. It aims to challenge the stereotypes of disadvantaged women as subservient characters and provide a new viewpoint. Furthermore, the study also attempts to apply the "Muted Groups Theory" and "Norman Fairclough's Model" of discourse analysis.

**Keywords:** [Critical Discourse Analysis, power, gender & discourse, muted groups, stereotypes sociolinguistic and culture].

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## 1- Introduction

Language is an instrument of communication that mirrors one's personality. It is a central feature of any given culture. It is a method of expression that permits an individual to take part in collective events. It also provides authority, movement, and prospect. It serves as both a justification for fierce struggle and as an indication of acceptance. It helps in many aspects of life, whether by bringing people together or by dividing them. It is also utilized as a policy to draw receivers' consideration on one incident over another. Furthermore, speakers accept the credence that language is a weapon used by the powerful to overthrow their inferior. It is a serious constituent in women's freedom fights.

For thousands of years, men and women have had roles that dictated their conduct. Women focused on the "household" and looking after children, whereas males provided for and secured women and children. Nature and nurture have both pushed men and women to fulfill these roles, and they continue to do so. Over the last decade, there has been a widespread outcry against what is perceived to be a continual and unfavorable misrepresentation of the world through the use of biased language. Women are represented as second-class people, sex objects, and the embodiment of evil. Feminists argue that it is time to reveal the falsehood of this language and refuse to accept its continuous usage, as well as inoffensive alternatives. This indicates that the issue of sexism in language served as an aggressive reminder of how some societies see women, and how they regard women as nonentities and scapegoats.

The commonly held feminist view that men have supremacy over language predates feminism. The word “sexism” was initially created to define beliefs and practices that subordinate women relative to men. Now, it pertains to the beliefs and practices which discriminate against or differentiate between the two sexes or any of them. Sex differences pertain to distinctions made as to whether an individual is a male or female. Gender pertains to the distinctions in terms of male or female as well as their, social and cultural roles. In a social construction, however, both sex and gender differences are treated as socially constructed positions. All of which function in the presence and influence of a certain set of settings. Additionally, assuming that there is a single set of features that characterize all men and hence define masculinity is absurd, and the same applies to women. Such a unified definition of sexual character is a known aspect of sexual ideology, and it contributes to reinforce societal inequalities between men and women. It also opens the door for a wide range of sociobiological hypotheses linking brain facts to language behavior. Hence, masculinity and femininity should not be viewed as polar opposites or independent aspects, but rather as methods of experiencing certain relationships.

### **1.1- Aim of The Study**

This study intends to provide a full critical discourse analysis of several Afghan women's voices, “with alias names” that are presented in the article titled "*Afghan Women Share How Life Has Changed Under Taliban Edicts*" authored by IMANI WHITE and published on the Malala Fund's website on DECEMBER 4, 2024. The study also

aims to challenge stereotypes of disadvantaged women as subservient characters and provide a new viewpoint. Furthermore, it also attempts to apply the “Muted Groups Theory” and “Norman Fairclough’s Model” of discourse analysis to the discourse of the women presented in the aforementioned article.

### **1.2- Scope of The Study**

There are several boundaries that limit this study. First, the study is not intended to establish or refute the idea that any language is in its essence fundamentally sexist. Secondly, the material to be investigated is limited only to the aforementioned article. Thirdly, the study only focuses on showing how gender and power dynamics are connected. How discourse, including language, texts, and narratives shapes and reflects patriarchy and how to bring women’s marginalized or suppressed voices to light. Finally, the study does not endorse or disprove any political or religious viewpoints.

### **1.3- Methodology & Research Questions**

This study uses a qualitative research design, in order to understand descriptions in social contexts and develop ideas as well as principles with empirical backing. The material to be investigated was chosen in light of the larger issue of women being oppressed by patriarchal systems. The study also evaluates marginalized women’s social situation in Afghanistan, aiming at getting a better comprehension of the particular case in question. It further seeks to find answers to the following questions: what language tactics contribute to the silence or marginalization of Afghan women? In the face of discursive silence, how can Afghan women communicate resistance or agency?

## 2- Background

In the wake of the new “vice and virtue” law, however, large numbers of “Afghani” women, brought up in-country over the past twenty years and who now live, both inside and outside Afghanistan, are expressing absolute shock and disbelief. The new law is an attempt to silence women completely in public. They can’t speak, sing or pray out loud. It also requests to erase them from practical site in public by forcing them to cover their entire bodies and faces. Furthermore, the law is in breach of most women’s political, civil and human rights as per “International Law”. It also consolidates the Taliban’s brutal grip on the lives of the Afghans and curtails freedom of speech.

The new law supports and strengthens existing discriminatory regulations, such as strict dress rules, the obligation for women to have a male guardian. Furthermore, these practices impose “*Gender Apartheid*” in public settings and it authorizes the use of violence to suppress women if they resist, Chesler, Phyllis (2017). To enforce these infractions, the *Taliban* disbanded the “*Ministry of Women's Affairs*” weeks after taking control and replaced it with the “*Ministry of Virtue and Vice*”, which assigned a “*morality police*” to ruthlessly enforce the rules. Women in *Afghanistan* are outraged by the new law, which silences their voices and marginalizes them. They fight for their independence, agency, movement, and freedom. They demand their right to social and financial autonomy. They also request dignity and risk their lives for a brighter future for all *Afghans*.

### 3- The Feminist Theory

The second as well as third waves of feminism seek to explain the basis of gender inequality and promote women's rights, interests, and concerns, as well as resisting all forms of gender discrimination, stereotyping, sexual objectification, oppression, and patriarchy. Feminism is the belief in gender equality on the social, economic, and political levels. Women in Medieval Europe had no right to own property, study, or participate in public life. In France during the end of the 1800s, they were also required to cover their heads while they were in public, Mc Millan. James (2000). In certain regions of Germany, a husband was allowed to sell his wife. Similarly, women were still not allowed to vote or occupy an elected post in the United States and Europe as late as the early 1900s. It was forbidden for women to do business without a male representative, such as a husband, father, brother, lawyer, or even a kid.

Married women needed their husbands' consent to have authority over their own children. They were also prohibited from most vocations and had little or no access to schooling. Such limitations on women are still in place in various parts of the world. Modern feminist philosophy has long been accused for being excessively gender-centric and for ignoring numerous far more pressing concerns such as racism and socio-economic injustice. Many social reformers see feminism as another type of oppression. Other scholars have questioned the labeling of feminism as an ideology, arguing that it changes depending on the ideology it is connected with. Feminism can be considered as a

component of other ideologies, primarily political, rather than an ideology in and of its own self.

Numerous feminist scholars have demonstrated that our perceptions of what constitutes "womanly" or "manly" conduct are socially created rather than biologically determined. Additionally, Spolsky B. (1998) states that since the majority of cultures distinguish between men and women in a variety of ways, it is not unusual to find linguistic reflections of gender disparities. The societal norms that underpin this prejudice are quickly picked up even by little children. They also learn that men's talk is linked to the outside world and economic pursuits, whereas women's talk is linked to "home" and "domestic" activities. Additionally, he emphasizes how gender disparities have demonstrated the effectiveness of stereotyping.

Feminist text analysis originally emerged in literary studies and stylistics. Many thought that its primary goal was to describe, improve and eliminate genderism. Feminist theorists such as Cameron D. (1992), who defined sexualism as “a set of approaches encountered within specific language forms to represent women in negative and condemnable terms”. As a result, a new type of feminist text analysis was required, as it is possible to connect the use of some language elements to the most sexist approach. Additionally, she further claims that women are still seen as a sex object and many texts still include discriminatory language. She further states that reactions to these instantiations have evolved with new forms. This is because, feminist concepts have spread through many books for female readers. For example, feminist knowledge has become "general knowledge". Thus,

feminist text analysis should take into account the reality that genderism has developed in a much more complex event that cannot be easily changed or eliminated. The participation of women in the public sector and the influence of feminism on society has generally changed gender relations.

#### **4- The Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis (FCDA)**

According to Lazar. M. Michelle (2005), the Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis examines how language and discourse play a crucial role in the creation and maintenance of power relations and gender inequality from a theoretical and methodological standpoint. It looks at how language may both support and contradict prevailing gender beliefs, as well as how these ideals are ingrained in social interactions and representations. It also offers a useful lens through which to examine how hegemonic and asymmetrical power relations systematically empower men as a social group while excluding and disempowering women as another social group. The primary goal of feminist critical discourse analysts is to critique the discourses that uphold the patriarchal social order.

#### **5- Sociolinguistics & Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis**

The feminists' criticism of language and sociolinguistics are two other significant endeavors that explain sex inequalities in conversation. According to the sociolinguist Hudson R.A. (1990), linguistic components in every language appear to reflect social features of the addressee, the speaker, or their relationship. Speech

comprising these dimensions, therefore transports to the listener the speaker's awareness of these qualities, and their manipulation constitute a violation of the speech standards. Additionally, he notes that the cultural constructions that language contributes to boost may treat men and women in totally different ways. According to Hudson, specific languages contain separate systems that men and women can employ. He also states that a study conducted in the last ten years suggests that masculine and feminine speech designs vary, at least in some countries. A significant difference between men and women conversations, appears to be that women are more concerned with solidarity and men with power, Tannen D. (2003). For males, conversation is a bargain in which persons seek to gain and hold onto the upper hand, if possible, and defend themselves against attempts to be undermined by others. Life is a competition for them, a fight to maintain their freedom and stay out of trouble. Women's discussions, on the other hand, are intimacy discussions wherein individuals attempt to find and provide support, affirmation, and consensus. They attempt to defend themselves when they are pushed away by others. It is a battle to maintain closeness and prevent loneliness for them.

Trudgill p. (2001), states that women's social status in society is less stable than that of men. Women need more to use language to secure and communicate their social status. He says that women are evaluated on the basis of their beauty, including their language, while men are evaluated on the basis of their jobs. He envisages the fact that women are often more aware of their situation than men. The reason for this is that society expects all women to behave like ladies, which raises the bar for female behavior.

Additionally, the fact that women prioritize their families and domestic duties above paid employment does not in and of itself convey much prestige. Women face pressure to obtain prestige through alternative methods. Their social unease is also always linked to their sensitivity to language conventions. Women's language has been shown to represent their conservatism, sense of status, upward mobility, insecurity, respect, nurturing, emotional expressivity, connectivity, and sensitivity to the solidarity of others. However, the language used by males is perceived as ejecting their competitiveness, toughness, lack of emotion, independence, competence, hierarchy, and control. As a result, biological distinctions started to serve as a signal for social class inequality as well as for differentiation among different racial, ethnic, and religious groupings.

## **6- Language & Gender**

Language, interaction and communication all reflect the cultural diversity of human society and gender inequalities. Individuals of diverse groups often discuss or converse with members of other groups. This type of conversation is a way to interact and work together in every day interaction. Language, speech patterns, traditions and values may vary from group to group. However, others must adjust to understand and cooperate. They appreciate the cultural identity of each other, they often study each other languages, and are familiar with each other's unique customs.

## **7- Power & Solidarity**

According to Brown and Gilman (1972), "solidarity" refers to the extent of separation between interactants, which can vary from closeness known as "solidarity relationships" to casual acquaintanceship or detachment known as "non-solidarity relationships." Additionally, they claim that solidarity has the same "value" for all persons involved and is a symmetrical "reciprocal" feature. "Power," on the other hand, is about inequality and imbalance. In other words, when one side is older, wealthier, more powerful, or has a higher position, status, or standing in the workplace; he or she has authority over the opposing side. This pertains to the social cognition, which is the set of classifications that we use in everyday social interactions and that control every facet of our conduct. We are used to considering power and solidarity as factors with many contexts that are recycled in other linguistic domains. In the condition of affairs being discussed, this suggests that the interactants have distinct social relationships.

## **8- Muted Groups**

Cameron D. (2005), also believes that the dominant group controls the language system and that weaker groups are silenced because their reality is not reflected. According to Cameron, marginalized people must decode in some way as their reality is different from the prevailing one. They are unable to express themselves on their own terms. As a result, different world models may find it difficult to freely express themselves due to this prevailing model. When groups are controlled in this way, they feel compelled to use the model or models

of the dominating group to organize the world, modifying their own models as much as possible to fit the received ones. She classifies women and places them in the "muted group." She also emphasizes how women are compelled to encode their reality in terms of men's reality, while having a distinct experience from males. She also asserts that "those with higher status," are more verbally aggressive, regardless of their gender.

### **9- The Muted Groups Theory**

Shirly and Edwin Ardener (1978), two humanists, formed a muted group theory in the late 1960s. This theory has attracted a lot of attention from feminists who are concerned with the nature of the language. Edwin was the first to suggest that women are a sub -group. Although Sherly and Edwin Ardener originated the idea, Kramarae (1981) developed and improved its implementation. The fundamental premise behind muted group theory is to investigate how particular groups of people, or even cultures, may be muted, silenced, and ignored by others. It also highlights how women remove obstacles. The hypothesis also investigates how men made, controlled and dominated our language. It also shows that men are always viewed as the powerful group. Their words, behaviors, and experiences convey superiority over women. This has resulted in unequal communication among them. The idea also shows how language may be employed by a dominating group and a group with little or no power. Discrimination against women may take many forms, including labeling, excluding, and making it more difficult for them to express themselves and be heard in both public and private arenas. That is, women may have trouble being taken seriously,

if not entirely disregarded, in both their personal and professional life. Men and women see and experience the world in quite different ways. Women must alter and adjust their communication styles in order to be heard. Another issue is that men have disproportionate power over how language is developed. This comprises the terms and phrases that can be used about or for women. In this way, words may be used to harm or degrade women.

### **10-Stereotyping & Prejudice**

It is via categorizing that stereotypes are created. Through the use of this cognitive tool, we organize our social surroundings into discrete yet seemingly similar groups. "The process of ascribing characteristics to people on the basis of group memberships" is what Reyes A. (1994), define as stereotyping in relation to general psychological attributes such as; being dark, fair, modern, conservative, spiritual, irreligious, gregarious, taciturn, talkative, and so forth. Such examples are of non-stop dimensions that one may own to a certain quantity in terms of others. "Stereotypes, however incorrect, are likely to continue for as long as they emphasize central social discriminations," says Tannen D. (1990), who makes a parallel point. Gumperz (1983) further highlights the importance of social assumptions and biases in determining how speakers understand discourses.

In other words, stereotyping is the process of categorizing people based on obvious differences. For the majority of people, stereotyping is the act of passing judgment and assigning characteristics to other persons or groups. This stereotypical classification method of determining the "other and the world" is based on prejudice and

ethnocentrism. However, is not only an unjust generalization but also an extremely poor predictor. According to a large body of research, stereotypes are real ideas rather than just mental attitudes. Both members of the in-group and those of the out-group are impacted by the psychological potency of stereotypes. They are credible and have the power to inspire acts, sometimes of the most cruel and despicable. We classify ourselves and others into bigger or smaller groups through social categorization, which helps us comprehend our social surroundings. It is a tool capable of systemizing our social surroundings by generating unique and consistent classifications. It is a vocal manifestation of certain opinions or convictions aimed toward a person, a social group, or a member of that group. Additionally, according to Quasthoff, Uta (2011), a stereotype is usually a component of common knowledge that is widely held within a certain community. It also takes a rational form of a decision that assigns or declines specific signs or patterns of behavior to a particular group of individuals. Furthermore, Quasthoff concludes that conservatism does not appear only or mainly as justification. They promote a claim. In addition, they can be either claims or data, each of which is supported by different types of proposals.

Linguistic stereotypes may be inaccurate impressions from the perspective of linguists. However, they are valuable for the general public. If organized and reduced bundles of markers are connected with certain social groupings, we may draw a connection between language and social identities. This claim, however, raises a number of issues. These questions are: how can language be used to quickly establish character and reinforce stereotypes? How do we use language to

identify various qualities and lifestyles with specific groups? What is a social group? What is a social identity? Stereotyping posits that a dominating in-group generates a stereotype of a subordinate out-group. Even in this unequal circumstance, preconceptions might shift from the submissive minority to the dominating majority. They represent not simply the other, but also a favored power dynamic. Once a stereotype is identified, it is simpler to see under the surface and see how and why it operates. Stereotyping helps to create and maintain common beliefs, which are then utilized to explain large-scale social occurrences and justify different types of collective behavior.

## **11-Outgroup Bias**

The term "ingroup and outgroup" refers to a group relationship in which two antagonistic groups hold opposite ideological beliefs. According to Van Dijk (1997), the "ingroup" is always depicted positively, given more prominence, discussed in length, and requires sympathy and compassion. On the other hand, the "outgroup" is negatively depicted, given less prominence, defined in a broad fashion, and subjected to harsh criticism, which shapes the audience's antipathy for them. This distinction is reflected by the word choices used for each group. People are divided into "ingroups" and "outgroups" based on their contempt for members of other groups with which they do not identify. Outgroup prejudice is frequently expressed in the form of blatant hatred. It is a cognitive bias that harbors unfavorable feelings against the outgroup or other groups. The dividing of the world into ingroups and outgroups is typically based on a range of group identities such as sexual orientation, political philosophy, or religious views. As a

result, this outgroup bias is related with a variety of social issues, including sexism, racism, xenophobia, and nationalism.

Customary predisposition leads to prejudice and to perceive the world in the context of intimate and outgroups. Therefore, classifying individuals gives information on who comes in these groups. In general, everyone has a psychological urge to fit with a group that gives them a sense of self-value. The distinction between "us" and "them" is so deeply embedded in people's thoughts. Stereotypes are applied to the entire outgroup without taking into account whether the characteristics ascribed to them are true or not. In conclusion, dominant groups frequently exhibit prejudice, emotional bias, cognitive bias, discrimination, as well as behavioral bias toward disadvantaged groups.

## **12-Critical Discourse Analysis**

In order to comprehend the connection between textual elements and the misuse of social power, critical discourse analysis is used so as to expose ideology and power in conversation. It is a method of analysis that primarily concentrates on how, in the social and political environment, language and discourse are used to enact, reproduce, and legitimize social power abuse and inequality. Essentially, it involves critically dissecting communications to demonstrate how they support or perpetuate a prevailing ideology, taking into account the social, political, and economic context of language use. Toolan M. (1997) asserts that "Critical Discourse Analysis" ought to shift from "simple" instances of racism and chauvinism to the more subtle forms of exclusionary and discriminatory statements. A more practical attention should be

emphasized on words and phrases in such analysis to underline discretionary structures and mark the intensity of texts. He says that one should consider the possible construction of the manipulative text given to someone.

According to Janks H. (1995), Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is based on an important principle of language that sees the use of language as a social activity. She says that each social activity has a historical background and is a method to eliminate the current social link and promote various goals. Therefore, it is an interest-related investigation that connects speech with power relations. What situation does the text occupy? Whose interests are meet? Whose objectives are disregarded? And how are the discourses related to power dynamics? Two well-known contributors to the discipline of "Critical Discourse Analysis" are Norman Fairclough and Taun A. VanDijk. VanDijk (1984) demonstrates that dominance, distinction, distance, diffusion, distraction, depersonalization, destruction, and everyday discrimination are some of the tactics used to justify prejudice against minority groups. By keeping them out of everyday life and social events, these strategies act in various ways to justify and complete the destruction of the "other". Therefore, explanation of complex connections between speech, social feeling, power, society and culture is indispensable for significant discourse analysis or CDA.

### **13-Norman Fairclough's Model of Critical Discourse Analysis**

Fairclough (1992) introduced a critical discourse analysis paradigm that comprises three interconnected discourse-related analytical

procedures. The first dimension consists of the object of analysis, which can be either visual or verbal or both. The second dimension focuses on the methods used to create and receive the item. Thirdly, the socio-historical circumstances that control these processes are discussed. Fairclough asserts that text analysis, interpretation, and social analysis are necessary for each of these aspects. This method necessitates acknowledging the historical basis of some language choices in order to comprehend how these choices are connected to particular social circumstances. In other words, writings are manifestations of conversation that is governed by social norms. Additionally, there are societal constraints on the production and receiving processes. The discourse of the Afghan women in the aforementioned article is analyzed in light of "Norman Fairclough's Model" of discourse analysis.

#### **14- Connotations & Denotations**

Through "connotation and denotations," several connections between language, cognition, context, and culture have been suggested. The associations that words make in the minds of readers or listeners are known as connotations, and they also have emotional and personal significance. As a result, they play a significant role in lexis selection. On the other hand, representation can be described as simple dictionary definitions of words. Some words have strong meanings that are accepted by language users. These words are called "denotations". Such words have a high emotional effect because they have strong meanings, whether they are beneficial or harmful. As a result, depending on the

connection with the chosen lexical components, the readers and the audience may develop unique experiences.

## **15-Analysis of The Article in Question**

the article in question can be viewed as an interaction between the writer, speakers, and the readers. It includes both factual statements and genuine stories. To get her point across, the writer relied on the readers' ability to engage in dialog. Readers should be well-versed in the rules that enable them to connect ideas and sequences to new, old and existing facts, as well as to integrate ideas in sentences and paragraphs in a cohesive manner. Through the article's formatting, the writer was also successful in drawing the readers in. For the article's headline, she utilized effective designs, huge fonts. She also used pictures in the article.

### **15.1- Muted Groups Theory's Applicability to The Article's Discourse**

According to the muted group hypothesis, a certain demographic group, particularly women, may go silent for a variety of reasons. The idea maintains a gender paradigm in which men are the dominating group. According to the hypothesis, minority groups especially “women” may have to sacrifice their own distinctive viewpoints in order to be heard and accepted by the dominant one. On the other hand, the dominant groups in a society stifle the opinions and voices of the muted and marginalized women by practicing “Gender Apartheid” acts against them. This is an everyday phenomenon and a serious threat to countless women and girls worldwide. The fundamental elements of apartheid regimes are reflected in state laws, policies, and practices that subject women to harsh oppression and

injustice in an effort to effectively eradicate their human rights. The new law "Vice and Virtue" in Afghanistan amount to gender apartheid, which is an institutionalized system of discrimination, subjugation, and dominance of women and girls.

#### **15.1.1- Control by the Dominant Group**

In the article, Afghan women, fearing for their futures, are resolute in their determination to speak up. They describe how life has altered as a result of Taliban decrees.

#### **15.1.2- Terminology and Language**

On the lexical level, the writer as well as the speakers' word choice illustrates the climate of hostility, conflict, prejudice, and oppression. For the article's title, the writer used the phrase "Afghan Women Share How Life Has Changed Under Taliban edicts". This title gives the readers the idea that oppression and struggle are ongoing processes. The article also demonstrates that efforts are being made to oppose and destroy. The speakers have continued their own stories while employing the language, which expresses the strictness, severity, heart - wrenching acts of cruelty, pain, discomfort and suffering. This type of language promotes the atmosphere of enmity, resentment and resistance. Additionally, the writer employs the language that suggests vulnerability, prejudice, harassment, as well as resistance.

#### **15.1.3- The Impact on The Marginalized Group**

According to the article, Afghan women's mental health is seriously declining, as seen by high levels of sadness, anxiety, and loneliness. The new law's restrictions which forbid jobs, education, and moving

around freely; are mostly to blame for this. As women's voices are muted, they also feel confined and lonely.

#### **15.1.4- Power Dynamics**

By examining how language is used to negotiate, resist, and exert power, “Critical Discourse “Analysis shows how language may either support or undermine preexisting power systems.

It also sheds light on how language operates to establish and preserve power dynamics. And how language is used to elevate certain voices, diminish others, and influence societal norms. As such, it is essential to explain the intricate relationships that exist between speech, social thinking, power, society, and culture by applying “Norman Fairclough’s Model of Critical Discourse Analysis” to the article in question.

### **15.2- Utilizing Norman Fairclough’s Model of Critical Discourse Analysis**

#### **15.2.1- The Micro Level of Text Analysis**

The writer succeeded in conveying her message and manifesting her ideas to the readers by selecting specific lexemes. She uses language to redirect the recipients’ attention to a particular phenomenon. She uses the terms; “gender apartheid, ban, women’s faces, voices, extreme restrictions, drastically, male guardian, impossible, isolating, exhausting, desperately, crisis, suffocating, power, collective voice, advocate, future, change, international law, negotiations, crimes against, humanity, significant, illegal, protection, countless and derailed”, in order to achieve the required effect and gain

the sympathy of the readers. This makes it possible for the analyst to concentrate on the signifiers that comprise the text, as well as the particular linguistic choices, their arrangement, and their sequencing. To comprehend how these selections are linked to certain social circumstances, it is necessary to acknowledge how these decisions were made in relation to historical events. In other words, the production and reception processes are subject to societal constraints.

Similarly, Hana a seventeen-year-old student says that she used to go on walks in the early morning, visit the library, or hang out at a café before the Taliban arrived, either by herself or with her friends. Now, distress and horror are devastating. She continues saying that she can't even think about leaving her home without a male guardian to accompany her. She adds that her soul has been severely damaged, as the new regulations even forbid women from speaking loudly in public give the impression that women are being eradicated. She uses the words; “fear, anxiety, overwhelming, huge toll, new rules, restrictions and erased”.

On the other hand, Fatima, a designer and an entrepreneur adds that she cannot work outside her house under the new law. She also must to cover her face and the rest of her body with a burqa anytime she leaves the house. She further states that she can't communicate with clients or merchants, which had made it almost hard for her to maintain her business. Now she feels alone and trapped. She goes on saying that her voice is stifled in public. She has to stay away from public events and that she is not permitted to talk loudly. She says that she feels like a shadow of who she used to be because of this

seclusion. She further adds that the majority of her clients in the previous government came via my network and community events. Now she misses the excitement of seeing her clients wearing her products and that she misses those lively interactions. She also states that when a regular customer phoned her to request an Afghani dress for her daughter's wedding, it was one of the most difficult days for her, because she had to inform her that she was unable to meet with her in person or provide any samples. She further expresses that she feels that her dreams slipping away, and that it damages her heart. She uses the terms; “no longer allowed, wear a burqa, cover my entire body, impossible, cannot interact, trapped and isolated, silenced, not allowed, must avoid, isolation, like a shadow, challenging, I miss, I couldn’t, my heart broke, my dreams, and slipping away”.

Alima, a project manager, further states that she has to exchange her USD salary for Afghanis, but the current government have closed exchange businesses. she sometimes has to beg her son or brother to quit his job in order to do these chores. She sums up saying the being trapped at home is so humiliating. Alima uses the words; “have to plead, isn’t straight forward, suffocating, trapped”.

Having worked in Afghanistan for more than 30 years, during the Soviet occupation and the first Taliban government in the 1990s, Rizwana is a psychologist, who declares that she had her own clinic and used to visit ladies from all walks of life, and made house visits occasionally. She further asserts that the mental health constitutes an issue right now, particularly for young people and women, and that she is unable to offer the same kind of help, that she used to offer before.

She further states that youth suicides are reported on a regular basis, yet the current government deny the existence of any mental health problems. She also says that she is unable to function without her license, which hasn't been renewed by the Ministry of Public Health since the mid of 2022, and that now she visits customers via WhatsApp, “mostly women and girls”, but the impact of therapy is not as powerful as before. She also had to close her clinic.

As an attorneys and education advocate, Sara understands the strength of the united voices of Afghan women. She concludes saying that their voices are strong, and the Taliban knows it, she further assures that change can be sparked by women’s singing, reciting poetry, or even by simple speech. She further postulates that the Taliban regime suppresses them because they are afraid of change and that they are the messengers of transition. Sara uses the words; “voices, powerful, sing, recite, poetry, simple, speak, inspire, change, fear, silence, messengers and transformation”.

On the syntactic Level, the present simple tense was mostly employed by the author and speakers to convey facts, broad assertions, habits, and routine actions. In several cases, they expressed prior behaviors and practices by using the past tense. The completion of facts at the past is likewise expressed using the past perfect tense. Additionally, the present continuous tense. is also used to indicate that there are ongoing actions at the time of speaking. A variety of adjectives are also used to express feelings and emotions. Phrases and sentences are linked via conjunctions and referring expressions.

### 15.2.2- The Usage of Personal Pronouns

Discourse analysis dictates that when a speaker or writer overuses personal pronouns Such as; “I, you, we, he, she, it, they”, they are usually emphasizing their authority, experience, or involvement in the text or debate. It is noted that in the article, all the speakers used the personal pronouns “I, me, we and us” a lot. This may signify intimacy, connection with the audience, as well as the development of a certain tone or point of view. It also indorses solidarity and in-group connection. The pronoun "I" is used frequently by the speakers so as to identify themselves as the chief subject matter. Additionally, the use of "we" promotes a feeling of in-group membership or shared identity and suggests that the listener shares the speaker's viewpoint. This may be used to foster a sense of community and to build rapport and trust. Creating a “Specific Tone or Perspective”. On the other hand.

Similarly, "my" refers to a specific experience or ownership, while "we" indicates a social or shared consciousness. Both pronouns can be used to make an intimate, inclusive or united relationship with the audience. "My", usually expresses a speaker's affinity for something or its own involvement, beliefs or experiences. Additionally, it can be used to display affiliation or possession. "We and Us" generally refer to a group of people that the speaker is a member. This promotes a sense of identity and solidarity. It is generally used it to promote harmony or to separate us "from" us ".

In contrast, the use of "them" as an “outgroup” pronoun fosters the position of the speaker as an "in-group" member, separating them from another group called "them". Research on extremist discourse indicates

that this language choice often develops enmity, other, or feelings of isolation by applying a division or separation between the group's group and the target group. Using the pronoun "them" for a certain group, the speaker is subtle forming his identity and creating a distance. The pronoun "them" can be used to attract an alleged difference or differences between the speaker and the out-group members. It also manifests strength and solidarity relationships. The use of "them" can express negative connotations. That is to say that “out-group” members are portrayed as being unbearable, dangerous or otherwise problematic. Power dynamics are also manifested through the use of personal pronouns by depicting the “in-group” of the speaker as inferior and “out-groups” as powerful or impressive. Therefore, the use of "them" attracts the attention to power and social imbalance. Using personal pronouns in a given text, forms a powerful tool in speech analysis to examine social boundaries and express the identity of the group. In addition, it contributes to highlighting the difference between in-group and out-group. Sometimes, they can be a deliberate strategy to alter responsibility or obligation, especially in discussing critical or sensitive issues.

### **15.2.3- The Macro Level of Analysis**

According to Fairclough's model (1995), discourse is a type of social activity with three implications when viewed from a social perspective. To begin with, language is a natural aspect of communication. It is possible to address language as a social process. In fact, numerous non-linguistic elements such as; societal setting, principles as well as individual features can influence language. The

relationship between speech and society is hence bidirectional. Thus, the study of discourse should go beyond the text and deal with language within its social context. Moreover, power and speech are discovered to be closely associated in all cultures. Wodak (2001), also believes that "Critical Discourse Analysis" seeks to examine social inequality as it manifested, signified, established, legitimized, and so forth. As such language aims to identify the discursive components of societal injustices and inequality. Fairclough (1995), asserts that the goal of Critical Discourse Analysis is to address linguistic processes from a social standpoint, highlight ideology, politics, and to clarify the social role of language. According to the aforementioned goals, "Critical Discourse Analysis" is "a form of critical social science geared to revealing the problems which people are confronted with by particular forms of social life, and to contributing tools which people may be able to draw upon in tackling and overcoming those problems.

#### **15.2.4- Intertextuality**

An explanation of the complex inter-relationships between discourse, social cognition, power, society, and culture is necessary for an effective analysis of the discourse of marginalized groups. It is easier to come up with thoughts regarding how speech aids in the reproduction of social power and dominance when people become conscious of their nature. According to Halliday and Hasan (1985), only when the language is placed in a situation or context, it can be understood. In addition, they claim that language or "text," and "reference" are two sides of the same coin. They also claim that the language includes the text itself, its relationship with other texts, and

the relevant elements related to the situation and culture. This means that apart from trying to interpret what is written or said, we also try to analyze the context in which the material is located. In fact, a meaningful interpretation of the discourse of “Muted Groups” is shaped in the discovery of the nature of stereotyping, prejudice, strength and solidarity. This proves that all aforementioned linguistic dimensions interact, combine and interplay in order to yield a meaningful interpretation of how meaning is manifested and conveyed in discourse.

## 16-Conclusion

The issues of speech, power, gender discrimination and marginalization are always up for debate. Discourse often refers to the use of language as a social activity, whereas power is sometimes described as the capacity to affect the actions of others. The two are mostly related and dependent on how discourse works and how power is perceived differently by various interdisciplinary fields. Many studies of language and social interaction deal with power and discourse either directly or implicitly as language examines the relationship between its usage and the social behavior and culture. To sum up, the nature and function of the language are stable through time and language cannot be seen outside its historical and social context. The beliefs about the language remain stable even though the perception of time, location and casualty undergoes change.

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## اللغة والتهميش: تحليل نقدي نسوي لخطاب الأصوات الصامتة للنساء الأفغانيات

### المهمشات

#### ملخص

يُعزز دمج دراسة الاختلافات اللغوية للنوع أو الجنس و تحليل الخطاب الفهم الشامل لبعض المفاهيم اللغوية، و النسوية، و الاجتماعية و تأثير ذلك على اللغة والمجتمع. وبينما تُقدم دراسات اختلافات النوع اللغوية وجهات نظر مهمة حول الأبعاد الاجتماعية والسياسية لعلاقات القوة والهويات، فإن النهج متعدد التخصصات يسترشد بتحليل الخطاب لفك تشابك الأبعاد التي تنشئ بها اللغة حدود اختلافات النوع اللغوية وتُحافظ عليها. إن فحص العلاقة المتبادلة بين النوع والخطاب يتطلب دراسة تطور كلا المجالين بالتوازي. و لا يُعزز هذا النهج فهمنا لهذه النظريات فحسب، بل يُساعد أيضاً في تحدي الخطابات التمييزية السائدة. و يُشكل التركيز الشديد على الضرر الذي يلحق بما يُسمى "الفئات المهمشة" شاعلاً لا يقل أهمية في تحليل الخطاب النقدي. ونتيجة لذلك، تُصبح دراسة خطابات "الفئات الصامتة" تحليلاً للظروف الاجتماعية واللغوية والثقافية التي تُديم تهيمشها. إن حياة الفئات المهمشة والمحرومة والمستبعدة مُعقدة بسبب قضايا الوصول والتهميش. و تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تقديم تحليل نقدي شامل لخطاب عدد من النساء الأفغانيات المهمشات و المستبعدات من الحياة الاجتماعية. كما تهدف إلى تحدي الصور النمطية للنساء "كشخصيات خاضعة". علاوة على ذلك، تسعى الدراسة أيضاً إلى تطبيق "نظرية الجماعات الصامتة" و "نموذج نورمان فيركلوف" في تحليل الخطاب.

الكلمات المفتاحية: [تحليل الخطاب النقدي، السلطة، اختلافات النوع والخطاب، الجماعات الصامتة، الصور النمطية الاجتماعية، اللغويات الاجتماعية والثقافة].