

Critical Discourse Analysis of Gender Representation in Grade Seven English Language Subject in The Ministry of Education in Afghanistan

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ABSTRACTS

The present investigation of gender representation in English textbooks in the Afghanistan context uses critical discourse analysis. The data were collected from the content of the school texts book that was taught to seven grade English language learners. The research used Fairclough's (1995) three-dimensional framework to analyze the data. Variables like women and men's social and domestic roles, visibility of females and males, females and males' activities, females and males' semantic roles, and pictorial representation were analyzed to make clear hidden sides of inequalities or power imbalance between men and women. The finding of this study displayed that the seven grade textbooks were discriminated in favor of males in definite roles of activities. For instance, men occupied the role of prayer, engineer, and pilot, shepherded more than women. The study also showed that the textbook displayed bias between women and men in terms of pictorial, representation visibility, and some activities roles in which men had the upper hand. The result also depicted that there existed stereotypical roles and activities associated with males and females in these books men and women were presented with bias in terms of social status, power, and dominance. In other words, there was significant discrimination and anti-feminism in the analyzed textbooks.

Keywords- Gender, discrimination, pictorial, visibility, display.

I. INTRODUCTION

The advent of analysis of critical discourse (CDA hereinafter) the information back to its origin in 1990 (Wodak & Meyer, 2009). Its related turn around the community matter under discussion of social inequality, injustice, racism, ideology, hegemony, abuse of power, and power relation via the study of the linguistic properties of discourse and structures of discourse and depending on that social form and social cognition.

CDA is a theoretical interdisciplinary framework that encompasses multi approaches from several disciplines and science to study the underlying relationship between language and society. It researches the social matter and difficulties by studying the social and political roles that language do in constructing the incontrovertible ideology of social, equality and power. CDA shares different models presented by initial

linguists like Wodak, Fairclough, and Van Dijk whose efforts proceed with the major basics of CDA. For Fairclough and Wodak, "CDA sees itself not as a dispassionate and objective social science, but as engaged and committed; it is a form of intervention in social practice and social relationship"(Fairclough& Wodak, 1997).

To Van Dijk (2001) " 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 (Van Dijk,2001. Then CDA does not present a descriptive point of view of discourse; might as well explain the impressive roles and function of language in forming and constructing social structures and interplay. Fairclough (2001) introduces a framework and not only one theory. CDA, as viewed by Wodak (2001), is a cluster of methods with similar theoretical backgrounds and aims to attempt to research the vague

ideologies and agendas fulfilled within discourses. CDA is not only related to the internal structures, features, and linguistics of discourse like other analytical discourse theories. CDA comes from linguistics of critical and works on humanities and social researches. CDA is also called a problem-oriented approach to tackle social and political matters and formats. CDA analysis discourse in its political and social context to clarify the hidden ideologies and role of discourse. About sociolinguistic patterns, CDA endeavors to scrutinize how discursive practice and discourse format enact, reproduce, and legitimate power abuse and social inequality. CDA studies do not discuss language as only a concept of communication. Rather, language is used by them as a powerful argument that does social, political, and cultural roles. In this aspect, Fairclough (1995) rightly expressed that CDA is oriented to study how language is formatted to cope with its basic social roles.

1.2. CDA Model

Critical discourse analysis is a multidisciplinary theoretical framework that uses various branches of science to decode the complicated relationship between discourse and society underneath ideologies. Thus, each CDA approach attempts to mix proper discursive and social impact in the process of study. In this case, the original and the most important CDA branches share the same theoretical underground but each one concentrates mostly on the specific social event in discourse. Hereupon it is qualified to shed the light in summary on CDA branches with more details on the Fairclough model which is accepted in the present research.

1.2.1. Model of Fairclough

Fairclough has been identified as one of the initial people in the CDA realm. His studies developed and improve the theoretical base of CDA and have various applications in the education area. Fairclough concentrates on analyzing discourse in the light of sociocultural shaft in the relation to the discursive shaft. He thinks of discourse as a social practice that is produced by social actors reciprocally in social life. Then, discourse is not only a set or a shape of sentences it reverberates ideological performance and dominations. Fairclough (1989) studies discourse from three aspects 1 Text (spoken or written) 2 discourse practice including discourse production, consumption, and distribution, and 3 sociocultural practice. Additionally, Fairclough set three levels of discourse analysis for these aspects: description, interpretation, and explanation. In the light of the Fairclough model, discourse is studied and described linguistically to find out the discursive strategies, vocabularies, and context to discover a hidden aspect of discourse. The present research accepted the Fairclough model to study if there is a gender differentiation shown in grade seven of the Afghanistan English language textbook. The present investigation of Fairclough's model depends on a discursive structure of Afghanistan's cultural and social structures.

In light of the Fairclough sociocultural model, the study of discourse begins with analyzing the text (description). Text analysis is managed via the analysis of the texture of the text, words, transitivity, modality, topicality consumption, and ambiguity. Words can transfer ideological concepts. For example, overwording emphasizes the certain meaning and means that affect the addressees knowing and understanding. The use of antonyms, synonyms, euphemisms, and metaphors makes and shapes ideological and social councils. Transitivity is a mighty method in showing the agency model in the discourse like the use of active, passive, foreground, background, and nominalization. This renders how language affects people's cognition, ideologies, and councils. To make clear the point rather, the use of repetition and metaphor could find proper meaning and opinion in people's minds. A metaphor makes complicated abstract senses conceivable by making proper semantic maps.

1.2.2. Van Dijk s model

Van Dijk is one of the most important leaders of CDA. He presented the socio-cognitive method whose origin lies in psychology. What makes the socio-cognitive approach different from other CDA models is its cognitive junction. For Van Dijk, the relationship between social structure and discourse structure can be efficient via personal and social cognition. Then the theory of Van Dijk mode is introduced in the triangular interdisciplinary structure that joints discourse to the community through the cognitive interface. In the light of the socio-cognitive approach, discourse is affected by the process of cognition such as thinking, understanding believing, and hoping acts in the brain of humans in memory of the short term. The process of cognition then shapes the proper mental representation of social practice and structure. Critical discourse analysts should handle social and personal cognition while analyzing discourse to find out the impact of linguistic characteristics and format in forming people's beliefs, thoughts, and ideologies. Van Dijk supposed three levels of analysis to decode the underneath system of beliefs. The ambiguous connection between discourse and community is indirect and it inhabits the addressee's cognition. The socio-cognitive approach concentrates on the two micro-structure and macro-structure levels of discourse. It studies the inside structure of discourse and the interaction of individuals (micro and macro), and the overall function of discourse (macrostructure) such as abuse of power, social inequality, and system of belief. Van Dijk has supposed three levels of study to decode the beneath ideologies and power in discourse. In the initial level, the social structure. Group connection and institutional structure are studied. In the second step, the social and individual structures with their sub-steps are studied. The third and last step includes the analysis of discourse structure, syntactic characteristics, rhetorical figures, semantic devices, and pragmatics.

1.2.3. Wodak's Model

Wodak (1997) presented a historical method for CDA. His model investigates discourse in its background and historical setting. For Wodak discourse is structured and depends on historical reasons and collective knowledge. Then to investigate the connection between discourse and community not just are linguistic features required but all extra-linguistic reasons like place, time, participants, and culture are depending, too. Discourse meaning is not linguistically formatted but environmental elements are contributed. The historical approach to CDA has been accepted by many investigators to find out the hidden beneath ideologies like sexism and racism.

1.3. Language and Gender

One of the original attempts and applications of CDA is to investigate the underlying and transparent gender portrayal in discourse, especially in textbooks. Gathering textbooks for English language teaching (hereafter ELT) requires a spread consciousness of various reasons that are interconnected like social and political background, culture, and ethnicity (Amirian & Esmaili, 2015) exploring textbooks under CDAs basic could discover the hidden social and political and cultural motivation that in cycle reflect underlying ideologies. With the regard to the system of educational, CDA concentrated on studying EFL textbooks from various aspects, for instance, gender bias, gender roles, inequality of gender, social values, and feminism, the educational texts are not only conveying information and knowledge of science in a different discipline; more they transfer ideological, social, cultural and even though political assumption and application. Language plays an important role in forming the attitude of people, thoughts, and ideologies. With this regard depiction in discourse is one of the original interests that attract researchers to handle education material and figure out the impressive role of language in shaping social structuring social structure among males and females.

The present research studies the seven grades of the English language in Afghanistan's secondary period of the school thought to students all around our country, under Fairclough's three-dimensional approach. It tries to investigate the underlying gender impressive, gender social roles, gender discrimination, and gender domains'. This study is implemented because of decoding the way gender is shown in textbooks in light of the social and cultural background. In this research paper, the study of textbooks in the light of the CDA theoretical framework is used for textbooks contents, discourse structures, linguistic properties, and discursive practice.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Several investigations have been conducted to study the representation of gender in EFL materials. For instance, Jannati (2015) used content and semiotic study to recognize gender roles in Iranian EFL textbooks. The

study found out textbooks showed a gender imbalance in favor of males. Women are connected with less power full and stereotypical social roles. For instance, women are responsible for doing internal activities.

In another research paper, Shahrokhi and Samadikhah (2015) accepted Fairclough's (2015) three-dimensional, model of CDA to describe, interpret and explain gender representation in these textbooks, the investigation displayed that the textbooks are gender discrimination in the favor of men in term of characters, photo representations, title, activities, and status.

Similarly, Amirian and Ismaili (2015) also used Fairclough's (2015) three-dimensional model of CDA to examine gender in EFL textbooks. Finally, the study identified many patterns of sexism towards women such as bias against women and viewing women as tools for the business announcement segment Suleimai (2017) adopted the CDA aspect to analyze EFL textbooks in the Saudi context. The investigation searched gender repetition in three dimensions: gender connection, positions of subject, and contents. The result of the study identified that textbooks introduced the sexist attitude in favor of men. It was discovered that women are few presented in the textbook and they are less frequently specialized than men.

Javan and Tahriri (2018) adopted Fairclough's (2015) three-dimensional model to test the representation of men and women as social actors in the EFL series of junior high schools in Iran. The result of the research displayed that EFL textbooks were discriminate against men and the study showed that women were less visible than men. The finding also displayed that 60% of the social roles found in the series are men monopolized.

Tahriri and Moradpour (2014) utilized the CDA model to study how genders are shown in the Top Notch series. The study used Fairclough's (2001) three-dimensional model to study three major perspectives of gender, for example, connection, place, and content. They showed that both genders are shown almost equally.

In another investigation, Aljuaythin(2018) studied how males and females are represented in the two EFL textbooks in Saudi schools. It also tries to identify gender roles and stereotyping in these textbooks. The research used the tree level of Fairclough's (2015) three-dimensional model: description, interpretation, and explanation. The study of two textbooks displayed that shown gender is discriminated against in favor of males. Females in these two textbooks were marginalized.

Bataineh (2017) examined gender representation in a business textbook thought at Sohar University. The investigation studied gender visibility gender, gender first, and occupational roles using content study. The finding of the research includes that there was equality in the pictorial of male and female in the textbook. The investigation also displayed that females occupied more job roles than males. At the stage of

gender firsts, that information showed that nouns and pronouns connected with men appear before women nouns and pronouns.

In other research, Sahragard and Davatgarzadeh (2010) used Van Leeuwen (1996) and Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) to study the representation of gender in the interchange textbooks (third edition). The result of the study showed that females are shown as more successful, prominent, intellectual, and powerful.

Bataineh and Kayode (2018) studied the visibility of women and men in sixteen Omani school textbooks. The research focused on three dimensions: title the third personal pronoun, and names used in these textbooks. The finding of the study displayed that women were less visible than men.

Islam and Asadullah (2018) examined the representation of women and men in EFL textbooks taught in Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Pakistan. The result of the investigation displayed that males were represented as superior to females, for example, men had a higher position than women.

Ahmad and Shah (2019) explored the representation of gender in the fifth-grade EFL textbook taught in Punjab (Pakistan) by using Fairclough three-dimensional model. The result of the study displayed that the textbook was gender discrimination in favor of men. The research also revealed that while males were represented as effective and dominant, females were represented as underhand and less dominant.

In another investigation, Agni Setyaningish, and Serosae (2020) used content analysis to study gender representation in EFL textbooks in Indonesia. The examination showed an imbalance in the representation of men and women in favor of males in four aspects: different activities, roles, and jobs; textual and visual representation; adjectival show and order of before mention. The study found that females are underhand in these books. Similarly, Curaming and Furaming (2020) adopted critical discourse analysis the study gender representation in textbooks in the Philippines. The research showed that men and women were represented as superior to women which displayed that gender inequality remained in favor of men.

In the Jordanian context, various researchers studied the representation of gender in EFL textbooks. For instance, Hamden and Jalabneh (2009) studied which sex dominates the dialogues and comprehension passages in Action Pack Series textbooks taught in elementary schools in Jordan. The investigation displayed that males are the main features in dialogue and comprehension passages in these texts.

Reviewing past research displayed that the representation of gender in Afghanistan textbooks is under study topics. The investigations studied gender representation of gender in EFL textbooks in Afghanistan. It is worth mentioning the present study of the new studies which pay attention to investigating gender representation of gender in seven-grade school textbooks using critical discourse analysis.

III. METHOD

3.1. Data collection

The data were collected from the content of the seven grade of the English language of Afghanistan curriculum. This book has been taught in the second period of school in every corner of Afghanistan. These books include

Unit	Title Pages
1	Good morning
2	My classroom
3	My school
4	Review
5	My family
6	My house
7	My room
8	Review
9	My clothes
10	My body
11	Shopping
12	Review
13	Daily activity
14	Food
15	Countries
16	Review

3.2. Data Analysis

Fairclough's (1995) three-dimensional framework was chosen to analyze the data. Fairclough proposed three levels of CDA: "description of the text, interpretation of the relationship between text and interaction, and explanation of the relationship between interaction and social context." In the first level "description", the study adopted (Amirian & Ismaili, 2015) criteria that are founded on Fairclough's three-dimensional model. These criteria are visibility of male and female, female, and male and social and domestic roles, male and female semantic roles, women's and men's activities, and photo representation. In the second level and third levels, the data were rendered and explained in connection with social context.

IV. RESULTS

4.1. Pictorial Representation

The first aspect is related to the picture representation of women and men. Table 2 shows that 9% of these pictures show both genders in equal share. Whereas men-only pictures constitute 59% of all pictures, women-only pictures constitute 25% of all pictures were related to women the rest of the pictures in

which both genders are mixed come to 5% related to more men, 2% of pictures were related to women. Table 2 demonstrates the frequencies of pictorial representation of men and women.

Table 2: Pictorial representation of women and men

Pictorial representation	Number	%
Men only	59	59%
More men	5	5%
Females only	25	25%
More females	2	2%
Equal	9	9%
Total	100	100%

Source: Amirian and Ismaili (2015).

4.2. Domestic and Social Roles of Men and Women

The second aspect represents the social and semantic roles of men and women. The data show that women and men have some different semantic and social roles in terms of frequency (Table 3). These roles include teacher, student, salesman, waiter, doctor, pilot, and principal. The data also show that women occupy the role of shopping, cooking, and nursing. On the other hand, women occupy the role of teacher, student, doctor, and pilot less than men. These results show an imbalance in the same semantic and social roles of men and women.

Table 3: The Domestic and Social role Men and Women

Domestic and social role	Men frequency	Women frequency
Teacher	24	12
Student	20	8
Salesman	14	0
Customer	2	18
Doctor	7	5
Engineer	5	0
Pilot	5	2
Principle	4	0
Nurse	1	3
Cook	1	7

4.3. Activity

The third aspect represents the activities done by men and women in this textbook.

On one hand, table 4 displays that some activities are dominated by men, such as doing pray, playing, and gardening. Shepherd, mechanic, and studying. Other activities were occupied by women like cleaning, washing, teaching cooking, and housework.

The result showed that men are more active out outdoors women are more active in indoor activities.

Table 4: The activity related to women and men.

Activity	Men frequency	Women frequency
Praying	8	5
Teaching	4	7
Cooking	2	6
Studying	7	2
Washing	0	6
Cleaning	1	5
Hose working	2	6
Gardening	4	0
Shepherd	4	0
Watch	3	2
Mechanic	4	0

4.4. Gender visibility

Gender visibility is an important reason in the present study since it performs hidden societal, political, and religious concepts and demands. Thus the investigator looks for the representation of males and females in terms of nouns, and proper nouns pronouns to display the visibility of two genders in the two textbooks. The repetition of gender occurrence is displayed in figure1.

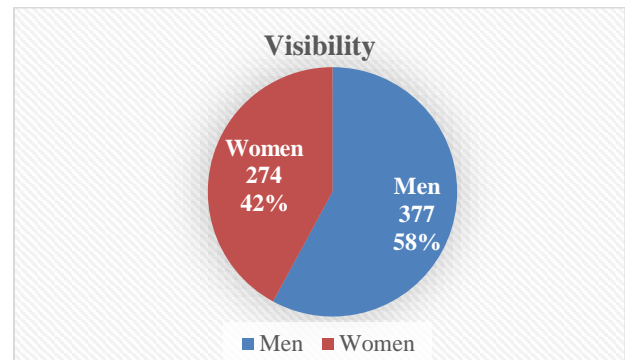


Figure 1: Visibility of Men and Women

Figure 1 one showed the men’s characters displayed 377 while women’s characters are displayed 274 times. This showed that both were represented somehow differently.

V. DISCUSSION

In this part, the data are analyzed in connection to social context and practice based on the second and third levels of Fairclough (1995).

At first, a deep point of view at the pictorial representation of men and women showed to some

extent the dominance of male pictures on females. The position males are 59 times whereas females position is 25 times only. Although the distinction between male and female pictorial representation is big, it expresses some unequal systems of belief in cultural, social, and religious concepts. This kind of pictorial representation of male and female could be interpreted as gender equality which conforms to societal stereotypes of the dominance of the male. It is important to be said that pictorial representation is displayed in 9% of all pictures. Such equal position of both genders is considered positive tendency to create better against gender bias and distinction which perform as a stereotypes habitant in communities.

Another aspect of the study is the domestic and social roles of men and women. The data showed imbalance and unequal representation of both genders in terms of jobs and community roles such as teacher, student, doctor, engineer, cook, salesman, nurse, and pilot. Consequently, males and females are depicted as having imbalances in the education stage and knowledge. They do not occupy literate social ideological and cultural beliefs and practices in the community.

There is also discrimination between men and women in mental and cognitive ability. They do not equally get the occupation that requires intelligence, efficient actions, inkling, and competence. The data displayed that there is somehow an imbalance in the representation of females and males according to some activities and roles. Females do cooking, washing, and cleaning more than males. This depicts stereotypes of the social image of females that they prefer to spend their time in amusement. This representation reflects the indoor activities of females while men are busier with outside work such as gardening, shepherding, playing, and praying than females. It is a stereotypical picture that women are physically weaker than men. The result confirms other investigations such as Jannati (2015) and Ahmad and Shah (2019).

Although the data showed that the book material is biased in favor of men in certain roles and activities, women also occupy some better job such as doctor, nurse, and teaching which show there is a positive outlook toward the future.

From the CDA point of view, the deep analysis of the selected data showed, in public hidden ideological tendency or discrimination in favor of males over females in proper social practice. This conclusion profoundly conforms to anti-feminist belief in the book because of the deep bias that exists in the text and context. Moreover, this study decodes the form of enacting power connections between men and women. Both women and men are displayed unequally regarding social position, visibility, and social role. In other words, women and men don't have the same power in the community. They do not have the same opportunity in choosing jobs and positions in society. Thus this paper

recommends book writers and designers responsible to take care of this aspect.

To conclude the study, the gender representation that is shown in the text of grade seven within the context of the Education Ministry of Afghanistan society similarly reflects the gender picture in our community. This book mirrors the state of gender in Afghanistan culture they don't have the same opportunity as men.

VI. CONCLUSION

The present paper is a CDA attempt which is conducted to discover the gender representation performed and enacted in the content of grade seven of the English language in Afghanistan curriculum at the school level. The researcher chose Fairclough's three-dimensional model as an analytical model. With regard to the attempt at males' and females' domestic and social roles, the visibility of females and males, females and male activities, women and men's pictorial and semantic roles, the result depicted that men and women were shown in generally unequal in terms of social position, and dominance. Despite this, there was the existence of feminism and anti-feminism in the studied books. However, the data showed the role of stereotypical roles and activities connected with males and females in this book. All in all, gender representation in the Afghanistan textbook taught in grade seven is a great witness of this situation. This investigation recommends researching the representation of gender in school textbooks taught in every corner of our beautiful country.

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