



Representation of Power-Based Gender Domination in Joyce's Narrative "Eveline": An Investigative Analysis of Critical Discourse

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Publication details:

Received: January 15, 2023

Accepted: March 25, 2023

Published: March 30, 2023

Abstract

This abstract focuses on James Joyce's narrative "Eveline" and explores the theme of paternalistic power abuse through the character of a young marginalized nineteen-year-old girl. The study delves into the contrasting elements of Dublin, where individuals either pursue their dreams or sacrifice them for their families. The analysis centers on the portrayal of a father's authority in the text. Employing Fairclough's (1989) Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) approach, this research combines qualitative and quantitative methods within the framework of Fairclough's three-dimensional Model. The article serves as a valuable resource for researchers and scholars, providing guidance on text (discourse) analysis.

Keywords: Critical Discourse Analysis, Eveline, James Joyce, Patriarchal power, Power Abuse

1. Introduction

This article seeks to explore the concept of paternalistic authority in James Joyce's short story "Eveline" through the lens of CDA. "Eveline" is a part of James Joyce's collection of short stories, "Dubliners." In this narrative, Joyce employs discourse to construct the theme of paternalistic dominance, reflecting the prevailing societal norms of the patriarchal era.

The central character, Eveline, undergoes a transformative journey throughout the story, leading to a shift in her perspective towards her father. The discourse portrays Eveline's father as an abusive figure, embodying traits of violence and irrationality from her viewpoint. The story revolves around Eveline, a young woman confronted with the decision of staying in Dublin with her family or embarking on a new life with her beloved in Buenos Aires. Within this narrative, James Joyce crafts a portrayal that depicts the challenges faced by women in a male-dominated society during that period. Eveline, as a young woman in such circumstances, is deeply concerned about her societal status and the perceptions of others, which constrains her ability to take decisive action. The discourse also delves into the theme of escaping oppression and highlights the burden of familial responsibilities that Eveline carries.

Fairclough (1992) emphasizes that discourse is a social process shaped by individuals within the context of society. This discourse-based power significantly contributes to the construction of societal reality, often influenced by power dynamics and ideologies. Fairclough views discourse (text) as a phenomenon that generates meaning, necessitating a systematic study of language, structure, and communication patterns. Parker adds that discourse is a well-organized, meaningful body of language that plays a crucial role in shaping power dynamics and expressions of repression (1992).

Drawing on Wodak (2007), Khan et al. (2021) argue that social processes and discourse are mutually influential. They also underscore Fairclough's (2001) perspective, stating that discourse is vital for producing social grounds and shaping institutions, thereby influencing social structures and events within the societal framework.

Critical examination of discourse and dominance, as highlighted by Ulinuha et al. (2013) through Van Dijk's (1993) insights, reveals that this task is intricate and may not always yield a clear dichotomy of victims and villains. The concept of hegemony, consensus, acceptance, and the management of the mind further complicates the analysis of discourse and dominance. Nevertheless, the researchers argue that Van Dijk's analysis facilitates a better understanding of the subtle complexities involved in the interplay of social interaction and discourse, which jointly reproduce various forms of domination.

Van Dijk's (1993) work on authority and dominance uncovers their institutionalized and organized nature within society. Moreover, his investigation into power abuse and societal power, particularly in the context of discourse, sheds light on the nature of power relationships.

This study adopts Fairclough's (2001) CDA approach, specifically his Three-Dimensional Model, to unveil concealed meanings within the text. The model incorporates the analysis of text, socio-cultural practices, and discourse practices. By examining the process of text production, distribution, and consumption, the practice of discourse analysis considers the broader context of institutional and discourse practices in which texts are embedded, as emphasized by Fairclough (1997) and Ulinuha et al. (2013).

In conclusion, this article focuses on examining the theme of paternalistic authority in James Joyce's "Eveline" through the lens of CDA, with the aim of exploring the discursive construction of dominance and the societal norms prevailing during the patriarchal era. The analysis delves into the portrayal of Eveline's father and the challenges faced by women in a male-dominated society. The research employs Fairclough's Three-Dimensional Model of CDA to reveal hidden meanings within the text, while considering the broader context of socio-cultural and discourse practices.



2. Literature Review

Thompson (2013) examines the concept of paternalism, noting that it is often perceived as a restriction on individual or group freedoms. The discursive construction of paternalism in discourse is frequently negative, portraying certain practices as detrimental to personal freedom.

In a study of Tohary's novel "Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk," Andari, Rahayu, and Sudarwati (2015) investigate patriarchal dominance over female characters. The research centers on the suppression of Javanese women, depicting a society with a patriarchal culture where men hold dominant positions. The researchers explore the Javanese principles that impose certain conditions on women, and they construct the character of Srintil, the main female character, as cautious, willing to sacrifice, and loyal.

Similarly, Annisa (2019) explores gender-based dominance in T.S. Eliot's epic poem "The Waste Land." Drawing on R.W. Connell's theory of masculinity and Gramsci's theory of hegemony, the study highlights the discursive representation of patriarchal dominance in the poem. The actions of women and the dominance of males are portrayed as products of societal shaping rather than natural occurrences.

Estrella et al. (2019) conduct a study in the Philippines and find that males in the society often fail to support their partners in balancing family responsibilities. Women are left to shoulder numerous household duties, relying on their elder children for help after school, while their husbands contribute less. This imbalance in household responsibilities reflects gender-based distinctions and inequalities in the society's gender-based ideology.

2.1 Theoretical Framework

In this study, the researchers employ a lexical level of analysis as the theoretical framework to examine how power is linguistically constructed in the chosen story. The lexical level of analysis focuses on how discourse reflects power dynamics through the role of Lexis, carefully chosen words, and ideologically manipulated language that influence behavior.

2.2 Lexical Approach to Critical Discourse Analysis

Fairclough (1989) categorizes analytically relevant questions for the critical study of language, which prove useful for linguistic analysis in exploring both implicit and explicit aspects of texts. These questions encompass various elements related to text analysis, including:

- What experiential values do words have? What classification schemes are drawn upon? Are there words which are ideologically contested? Is there rewording or overwording? What ideologically significant meaning relations (synonymy, hyponymy, antonymy) are there between words?
- What relational values do words have? Are there euphemistic expressions? Are there markedly formal or informal words?
- What expressive values do words have?
- What metaphors are used?

By employing these questions, researchers can gain deeper insights into the power dynamics and ideological elements embedded within the analyzed discourse. (Fairclough 1989, pp. 110–111)

3. Methodology

This present study adopts Fairclough's (2001) framework of CDA as its primary methodological approach. The research design combines qualitative and quantitative elements to provide a comprehensive analysis. CDA offers a multifaceted perspective, employing diverse tools to identify political and social injustices prevalent within society (Atkin, 2002).

Fairclough (1989, 2011) identifies three essential values—description, interpretation, and explanation—that underpin the critical analysis of language use. Within this context, vocabulary plays a pivotal role in text analysis, enabling a deep exploration of how language effectively conveys a writer's ideological position.

3.1 Fairclough's 3-Dimensional Model

This study employs Fairclough's (1989, 2001) three-dimensional model as the analytical tool for investigating the selected text. The model consists of the following three interconnected levels:

Description: This stage focuses on the formal aspects of the text, encompassing a thorough examination of its linguistic features and structural components.

Interpretation: The interpretation stage delves into the dynamic interplay between text and interaction. It views the text as both a product of the process of production and a resource for the process of interpretation.

Explanation: This level addresses the complex relationship between the social environment and interaction. It considers the social factors influencing the production and interpretation processes, as well as the social consequences arising from these activities.

By employing Fairclough's three-dimensional model, the study aims to gain a comprehensive understanding of the text's linguistic intricacies, its contextual significance, and the underlying power dynamics and ideological elements that shape its meaning. The integration of qualitative and quantitative methods within the framework of CDA provides a robust approach for exploring the discursive construction of paternalistic authority in James Joyce's short story "Eveline."

4. Analysis

4.1 Lexical Level

This level emphasizes the significance of words in exerting power and conveying ideologies. During this stage, the researchers meticulously analyze the text, striving to identify the strategies employed within the text under study.

Excerpt 1

People would treat her with respect then. She would not be treated as her mother had been. Even now, though she was over nineteen, she sometimes felt herself in danger of her father's violence. She knew it was that that had given her the

palpitation. When they were growing up, he had never gone for her like he used to go for Harry and Ernest, because she was a girl but latterly, he had begun to threaten her and say what he would do to her only for her dead mother's sake. And...to protect her" (Dubliners, 2013, pp. 24-29).

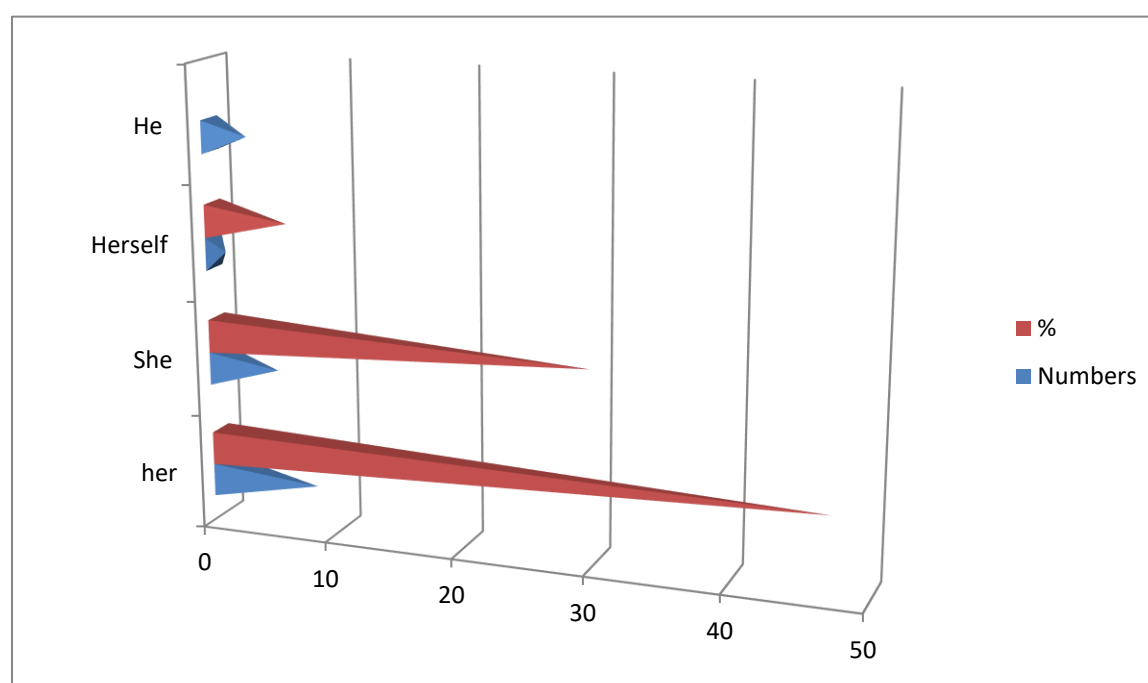
This excerpt discursively portrays the prevalence of patriarchal dominance and suppression. The female voice is depicted as being stifled and dominated by her own father, subject to abusive treatment. In the narrative, the protagonist is perceived as inferior to her male sibling merely because she is a girl.

4.2 Description on Lexical Level

The selected excerpt evokes a mood of sadness and melancholy. It is narrated in the third person, providing an objective perspective on the events. Notably, the researchers identified personification in the word "violence," as it is discursively attributed with the quality of hovering danger for the girl Eveline.

The sentences in the excerpt encompass a variety of structures, including simple declarative, negative, compound, and complex sentences. Simple sentences are punctuated with full stops, while compound and complex sentences are connected using logical connectors such as 'and,' 'because,' and commas. Adverbs like 'then,' 'now,' 'sometimes,' and 'latterly' provide contextual information, describing how, where, and when actions occur in the selected text. Additionally, a simile using the word 'like' occurs once in the extract, constructing the main difference between men and women, specifically the brothers and their sister, illustrating inequality.

In terms of grammatical elements, the researchers found a variety of nouns and pronouns in the excerpt. Concrete nouns include 'people,' 'mother,' 'father,' 'girl,' 'Harry,' and 'Ernest,' while abstract nouns such as 'respect,' 'danger,' 'violence,' and 'palpitation' are also present. The excerpt features possessive pronouns like 'her' (occurring eight times) and the third person pronoun 'she' (occurring five times). Additionally, the reflexive pronoun 'herself' is used once, and the pronoun 'he' occurs three times, contributing to the portrayal of characters and their relationships within the narrative.



Source: The Author

The researcher identified several verbs in the excerpt, including 'treat,' 'felt,' 'knew,' 'given,' 'gone,' 'go,' 'begun,' 'threaten,' 'do,' and 'protect.' These verbs play a significant role in discursively constructing the suppression of the girl's character in the story and the dominant role of the father.

The excerpt contains vocabulary with ideological weight, exemplified by words such as 'respect,' 'danger,' 'violence,' 'palpitation,' 'girl,' 'threaten,' and 'protect,' as well as the expression "what ... mother's sake." These words and phrases carry powerful connotations, contributing to the portrayal of gender dynamics and the theme of paternalistic authority.

4.3 Interpretation and Explanation

The selected excerpt provides a discursive representation of Eveline's inner psyche and emotions. She is depicted as feeling tired and sensing the danger of her father's violent and oppressive behavior. The text's producer has crafted her desires for freedom from the shackles of patriarchal suppression. Eveline yearns to escape with her beloved, Frank, associating him with the idea of freedom, a new life, and economic independence. However, her conflicting emotions arise from the deep emotional attachment and memories she has with her home and brothers.

The word "respect" discursively signifies Eveline's consciousness of self-respect and self-honor, as she seeks to leave her home to avoid enduring the same inhumane treatment her mother suffered. Witnessing her father's abuse of patriarchal power throughout her life has influenced Eveline's determination to break free from this oppressive environment.

Similarly, the word "danger" represents the dominance and hegemonic power of her father. Eveline is constantly on guard, feeling threatened by her father's violent behavior. The author skillfully constructs the abuse of patriarchal power, presenting Eveline as a helpless and powerless girl trapped within the confines of patriarchy. Her internal struggle leaves her paralyzed, torn between leaving home to be respected and valued by her lover or staying and enduring the suffering her mother experienced.

The word "violence" points to the patriarchal maltreatment and abuse of power Eveline faces. "Palpitation" signifies her sense of revolt against patriarchal power abuse, her father's violent actions triggering a rebellion within her. The word "girl" in this context underscores the ideological inequality, as Eveline is treated as inferior to her brothers and subjected to violent and brutal treatment.

Furthermore, the word "threatens" constructs fear and terror in Eveline's mind, as she is coerced to say goodbye to her home and family with no one to protect her from her father's violence. The phrase "what he ... mother's sake" further highlights her father's abuse of power, using threats against her for no wrongdoing.

Overall, the excerpt eloquently portrays the patriarchal abuse of power, with all the selected words and expressions carrying significant ideological weight, illustrating the challenges faced by Eveline in her quest for freedom and independence.

Excerpt 2

"Besides, the invariable squabble for money on Saturday nights had begun to weary her unspeakably. She always gave her entire wages-----seven shillings----- and Harry always sent up what he could but the trouble was to get any money from her father. He said she..., that she had no head..." (Dubliners, 2013).

The story under scrutiny vividly portrays Eveline's father's abusive treatment. At nineteen years old, Eveline endures violence from her father, especially after her mother's passing. Throughout the narrative, Eveline is depicted as a vulnerable young girl in constant need of protection from her father's violent behavior. The excerpt further emphasizes Eveline's powerlessness and suppression, as her father denies her the right to earn money.

In the portrayal of Eveline and her brother, a stark distinction between men and women is drawn, accentuating the gender inequality prevalent in the society of Dublin depicted in the story. This discourse effectively highlights the abuse of patriarchal power that persists in the depicted societal setting.

4.4 Description

The selected passage begins with the logical connector 'besides.' Additionally, other connectors such as 'and' and 'but' are used in the second and last sentences, respectively. In the second sentence, hyphens are employed to complement and provide detailed narration. Overall, the excerpt consists of three sentences: the first being a simple declarative sentence, the second a complex sentence with coordinating and subordinate clauses connected by 'and' and 'but,' respectively. The third sentence is also complex, featuring coordinating and subordinate clauses.

The expressions "began to weary her unspeakably" and "that she had no head" carry significant ideological weight, conveying deeper meaning within the text.

4.5 Interpretation and Explanation

The text's producer discursively portrays Eveline's family as conservative and traditional, while Eveline's father is depicted as acting in a whimsical manner. The story depicts female characters as helpless and lacking respect within the family. Eveline, being a girl, is often subjected to abuse by her father and brothers due to patriarchal norms prevailing in the society depicted in the narrative.

The expression "began to weary her unspeakably" constructs the inner danger and fear within Eveline's psyche, highlighting the impact of patriarchal violence and suppression on her mental state. However, societal conventions prevent her from expressing her fears and dangers openly, forcing her to remain silent and endure the various forms of violence faced by women in this society.

Similarly, the expression "that she had no head" signifies how men treat women in this society, where women are constructed as having no decision-making power or authority over money and other household responsibilities. The selected excerpt clearly portrays the male dominance prevalent within Eveline's family, which is presented as a representative example of Dublin society. James Joyce skillfully illustrates the male-dominated social conventions and life of Dublin during his time through this narrative.

5. Conclusion

The short story "Eveline" adeptly discourses the societal pressures that women often find challenging to confront. The text's producer skillfully portrays how society frequently imposes biased opinions on women's choices and actions. Moreover, societal norms perpetuate the belief that women should be submissive and subordinate to their family, father, and husband. In this context, the present study delves into these complex issues through the lens of Fairclough's approach to CDA.

Funding: This study was not funded in any shape or form by any party.

Conflict of Interest: The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

Bio-note:

Gulranga Haider is a highly accomplished individual with a strong academic background and significant contributions to the field of education. She is an alumna of the US Scholarship program (SUSI) in 2016, where she had the opportunity to enhance her understanding of global issues and develop her leadership skills. In 2017, Gulranga Haider participated in the EIMUN Nepal conference, further expanding her horizons and engaging in meaningful discussions on international relations and diplomacy. Currently, Gulranga Haider is pursuing her doctoral degree in English, specializing in Linguistics, at the esteemed Qurtuba University of Science and Technology in Peshawar, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK), Pakistan. Her research focuses on exploring various aspects of language and its impact on communication and society.

Muhammad Ramzan is an accomplished educator and dedicated professional in the field of education. With a strong passion for teaching and a commitment to academic excellence, he currently serves as a teacher in the Elementary and Secondary Education Department in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK), Pakistan. His academic journey has been marked by his pursuit of knowledge and a thirst for intellectual growth. He holds the prestigious title of a PhD scholar in English from the esteemed Qurtuba University of Science and Information Technology in Peshawar, Pakistan. His doctoral research focuses on enhancing English language acquisition and pedagogy in the Pakistani educational system.

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