



**Norman Fairclough's Model as a Research Tool in the Critical Discourse  
Analysis of Poem 'If You Want to Know Me'**

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**KEYWORDS**

**Postcolonialism**  
**Cultural identity**  
**Abrogation**  
**Critical Discourse**  
**Analysis**  
**Ideology**

**ABSTRACT**

Noemia De Sousa, an African poetess, in her poem, if You Want to Know Me. She explores the postcolonial themes of revolution, cultural identity and abrogation of the English language. The present study covers most of the aspects of the cruel treatment of White Men over Africans. The qualitative research approach is used as it is a systematically predefined set of procedures to answer the research questions. Norman Fairclough's model of Critical Discourse Analysis has been used to reveal the power misused by the colonizers and the resistance of power by the colonized in postcolonial Literature, the main aim of CDA is to analyze the enactment and resistance of power in the given text. With the help of Fairclough's model, the Postcolonial context of the poetess, ideology and power relations have been explored in the text. Fairclough's approach to discourse analysis focuses on the language of the text as well as concerned with what happens in a particular text. These two concerns are made through the way in which texts are analyzed in CDA. The study reveals the cultural identity crisis and white hegemony and suffering of Africans as key features in colonial discourse. Language is just a tool to deconstruct the prejudice against Africans which is used by the poetess to protest against the colonizers in this poem.

## 1. Introduction

Billig (2003) indicates that the area of applied Linguistics was originally known as Critical Language Studies in terms of a method and an analytical technique. Dijk (1997) prefers it to critical discourse studies which were the blend of theory, analysis as well as application. Critical Discourse Analysis hence deals with application with a critical insight of text in light of linguistic or other theories. It makes text and analyzes language as social behavior. It is a way in which language is used to describe and reflect upon social realities.

Bloor (2016) defines discourse as a sample of language that can be written as well as verbal. So discourse stands for the whole communicative event. This discourse can be written or spoken which is used to reflect on social reality. (Widdowson, 2007) views discourse as the pragmatic process of discussing the meaning and the cohesion of the text is related to the coherence of discourse. According to Fairclough & Wodak (1997) discourse is the use of language that can be verbal and nonverbal and has its roots in social processes and actions. (Foucault, 2002) defines discourse in terms of practices that form the objects of which they speak.

Leeuwen (2009) states that discourse is not a simple phenomenon of communication rather it involves social cognitions and historical perspectives of a particular text. This explains the process and importance of discourse in society and also highlights the importance of language.

Discourse analysis takes up the form of critical discourse analysis in the last three decades whose critical impulse finds its roots in the Frankfurt School, especially Habermas. And the scope of CDA is not limited to language; rather it draws the attention of scholars and critics to detect the process of reproduction of power, its analysis and resistance to power abuse in social and political text and talk. For (Fairclough, 1995) CDA is concerned with the analysis of social injustice, inequality and unequal distribution of power. Fairclough & Wodak (1997) explain the term CDA which focuses on exploring the hidden ideologies and power relations in a given text and the relationship between discourse and social structure.

This paper aims to analyze *If You Want to Know Me* as the postcolonial discourse using Norman Fairclough's three-dimensional model of Critical Discourse Analysis. Louise & Marinne (2002) state that the Fairclough model of CDA focuses on linguistic features of the text, processing related to the production and consumption of text and wider social practice to which the communicative event belongs to. The approach of (Fairclough, 1997) to CDA assumes to explore the relationship among discourse practices, discourse analysis and text and how these social practices are ideologically shaped to express the relationships of power and hegemony. Colonial rule is one target topic in this domain. The power relation, ideology and critical view are central to this model

Abrahamsen (2007) Colonialism is apparently defined in terms of formal setting and getting control over and occupying people's land and goods but inwardly it refers to power relations related to that place. CDA focuses on looking at the ideology behind an action. In colonial rule for the establishment of colonies Europeans entered under-developed countries like Asia and Africa and dominated a lot of geographical areas. They established their order based on settler supremacy.

Anand (2007) defines colonial discourse as a discourse that is basically created by the Europeans in order to establish the identity of the colonized peoples as 'the other', immature, uncivilized and backward. Colonial discourse is a system of statements that can be made about colonies and colonial peoples, about colonizing power and the relationship between the two. Though the colonial discourse was generated within the society of the colonizers yet it affected the

colonized to the extent through which they began to see themselves. (Ashcroft,2002) indicates that Europeans who considered themselves the most civilized nation justified their position in the colonized land as the utmost need of the non-Europeans to rescue their culture society and race from utter destruction. This way of creating a narrative through words was adapted by the colonized people to write about their truths. Their expression is a form of resilience and protest, it also provides a catharsis for them.

Young (2016) presented a view on the postcolonial, which specifies a transformed historical situation and the cultural formations that have arisen in response to changes in political circumstances in the former colonial powers. Thieme (2003) defines Postcolonialism as a term which describes a degree to show resistance against cultural domination which points towards the existence of a particular historical legacy and has become a popular term to indicate any type of resistance especially against class distinction, racism and gender inequality. The postcolonial theory explores how colonial ideology, strategies of representation and racial prejudices are coded into literary texts. Without Colonialism, there would be no Postcolonialism. Orientalism focuses on decisions affecting the lives of the colonized, implemented by the colonial power in pursuit of benefits defined by the imperial power. Post-colonial is used as a tool in which language is used to make a difference (Said, 1978).

Noemia De Sousa, a poetess and newspaper editor was born in Mozambique. She was one of the first African poets to gain a wide literary audience. She was of mixed Portuguese and Bantu descent. She wrote in Portuguese. In her poem, *If You Want to Know Me*, she shows her desire to understand the soul of Africa and how it has been damaged but will stand strong over time. The poem explores the Postcolonial ideas of cultural identity, revolution and the importance of educating people about the political and social changes of the colonized countries making it an important example of Post-colonial Literature. Themes of suffering and liberation as a central part of post-colonial discourse will be explored in this study. This paper aims to explore the tensions produced by a colonial ideology and cultural superiority.

## 1.2 Objectives of the Study:

- To explore colonial discourse, sufferings of Africans during and after colonization
- To have an assurance in the glorification of Africa by using Fairclough's model of CDA.

## 1.3 Research Questions:

**RQ1:** How does the poem *If You Want to Know Me* highlight the cruel treatment of the colonizers with the colonized ones?

**RQ2:** How does the poem *If You Want to Know Me* show resistance towards colonial discourse?

## 1.4 Limitations of the Study

Postcolonialism has been introduced in almost all genres of literature like novels, short stories, essays, dramas and poetry by postcolonial writers such as Edward Said, Salman Rushdie, Ben Okri, Derek Walcott, Chinua Achebe and Arundhati Roy but the researcher has limited the research to Noemia De Sousa's poem *If You Want To Know Me*.

## **2. Literature Review**

Daniel Eklund (2010) in his research paper has analyzed the role of media to depict the contemporary image of Africa. For this purpose, he has selected three International Magazines: Time magazine, Africa Confidential and the Economist to observe how postcolonial discourse can be seen in these magazines to describe African conflict in the 2007 elections using CDA. The researcher (Zahoor,2015) edited her review on the dropping Atomic Bomb at Nagasaki in August 1947 to the incident of World Trade Center 9-11-2010. She has discussed emotional, psychological, social and political changes caused by traumatic displacement and damage that has been done to the poor by using Fairclough's model of CDA.

Uggla (2011) finds out that the tourism discourse produced at the Gambian beach relies on colonial discourse and stereotypical images of others and selves that are produced and reproduced within the discourse of beach by applying the three-dimensional framework of (Fairclough,1992). Cary & Mutua (2010) explained the discursive relationship in a social structure by combining postcolonial theory and discourse analysis of personal narratives. They travel to different countries such as the United States, Australia and Kenya as a way to bring postcolonial theory and narratives together by using the analytical framework of Foucault. They discuss the work and speculation of two scholars, Kenyan and Australian who belong to two different colonized areas.

The vast majority of researchers are concentrating their efforts on the application of a single facet of SFL, whereas the remaining studies are attempting to apply Fairclough's Model to a variety of different kinds of discourses. In this study, an attempt is made to investigate the literary genre of poetry, which, according to the majority of researchers, is not accorded a great deal of importance. The problem of gender discrimination is also examined in this paper from the perspective of critical discourse analysis, in particular through the lens of Fairclough's three-dimensional model. Therefore, it will establish a great contribution to CDA in the sense that it provides the analysis of a poem and digs out its hidden ideology with the assistance of Fairclough's Model as a reliable model for discourse analysis. Conceivably no one used this model to conduct research on this poem. Therefore, this study will help future researchers in determining how poetess has demonstrated resistance to colonial discourse.

## **3. Research Methodology and Theoretical Framework**

Qualitative research is based on methods of data generation which are flexible rather than well-structured and rigid and are sensitive to the social settings in which data is produced. According to Denzin & Lincoln (2008), qualitative research is effective in learning about a population's culture, norms, opinions, and attitudes. The research design of this study is descriptive qualitative. Maanen (1983) states that qualitative refers to the meaning, definition, analogy, model or metaphor characterizing something. The process of qualitative research will form a pattern that can be used for a long time. It focuses on specific situations or people, and its emphasis is on words rather than numbers. The Researcher intends to do the research from the viewpoint of Critical Discourse Analysis so the framework (Fairclough three-dimensional model) for completing

research also comes from the area of CDA. The most developed theory and method for research in the communication field is Norman Fairclough's three-dimensional method for a Critical Discourse Analysis. Fairclough model is a problem-oriented analytical tool for the systematic analysis of political discourse, created by adapting the theories and methods of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). It has three dimensions that are text analysis, discourse analysis and social analysis.

## **4. Data Analysis**

### **4.1 Description or Text Analysis**

Text analysis is the first stage in Fairclough's three-dimensional model of critical discourse analysis. He uses Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar to analyze a particular text. SFL is an approach to language developed mainly by M.K.A Halliday in the U.K. during the 1960s and then in Australia. Halliday (1985) states that SFL is an approach to linguistics that considers language as a social semiotic system.

Halliday (1985) defines SFL as the study of the relationship between language and its functions in a social setting. SFL treats grammar not only in terms of classes of units but also as a meaning-making resource. This approach is used throughout the world, especially in language, education and discourse analysis. SFL focuses on the ideational, interpersonal and textual functions of the text which are known as Meta functions of language.

#### **4.1.1 Ideational Function (Field)**

The ideational function is what is being talked about in a text. The ideational function is Halliday's term for a linguistic function referring to the context or idea expressed in an utterance. In the poem *If You Want to Know Me* Noemia De Sousa talked about slavery, cultural identity, violence and hope. It has its main focus on highlighting the effects of colonization from the perspective of colonized. There is also a discussion on liberation as she highlights the post-colonial revolutionary reaction of the colonized.

#### **4.1.2 Interpersonal Function (Tenor)**

It is a linguistic function in which language expresses a relation between speaker and listener. Interpersonal refers to the grammatical choices that enable speakers to enact their complex and diverse interpersonal relations. The poetess is addressing the natives of Mozambique and is speaking on the behalf of the soul of Africa. In the title of the poem *If You Want to Know Me*, the pronoun "Me" does not stand for the poetess herself but for the Africans. She has given a representation to the entire colonized nation. She is the voice of the oppressed which is a minority of black people subjected to slavery and colonization. Her pride in her ethnicity as African creates her powerful narrative. As she stated African from head to toe, her representation becomes more evident.

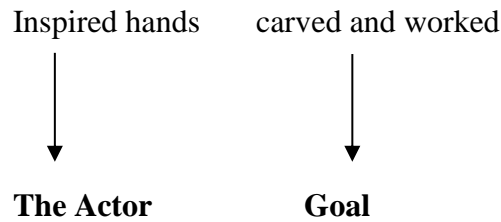
#### **4.1.3 Textual Function (Mode)**

Textual Meta functions are grammatical resources to organize experiential and interpersonal meaning into a linear and coherent whole. It is related to the construction of the text: How it's held together and the way the text is organized as a piece of writing or speech. The medium of the text *If You Want to Know Me* is in written form (poetry).

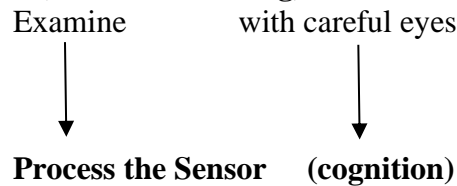
#### 4.1.4 Transitivity

Transitivity is a method of classifying verbs and clauses with reference to the relationship of the verb to the other structural element. In Notes on Transitivity and Theme in English Halliday describes transitivity as a set of options related to cognitive context, the linguistic representation of extra-linguistic experience, whether a phenomenon of the external world or of feelings, thoughts and perceptions. In other words, transitivity is used to show how syntax determines what perspective and event shall be described. Transitivity deals with different processes such as:

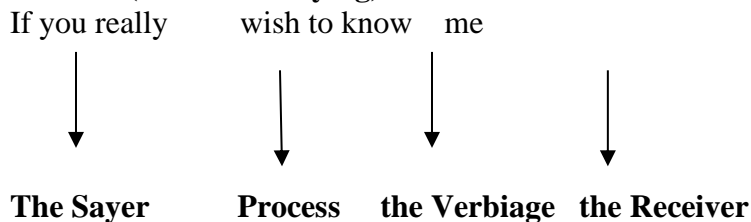
##### Material Process (Process of doing)



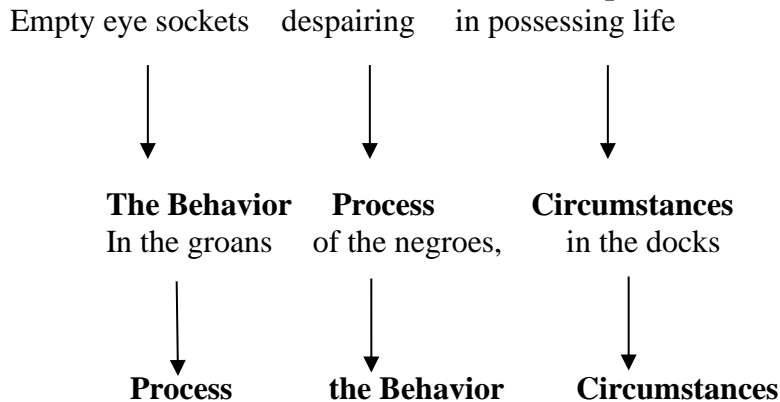
##### Mental Process (Process of sensing)



##### Verbal Process (Process of saying)



##### Behavioral Process (between Material and Mental process)



## **4.2 Interpretation (Discourse Practice)**

The second stage of Fairclough's model comes between description and interpretation. It is further divided into three stages: production, distribution and interpretation of the text.

### **4.2.1 Text Production**

Text Production focuses on the ways the text has been produced and the circumstances which have given birth to a particular text. The Africans were highly exploited and savaged by the ambitious 'White men'. Despite independence, they could never forget their colonial past. The basic ideology behind their discourse was to depict the harsh realities they experienced during the colonial period. The African poets used poetry as a medium through which they conveyed to the world not only their despair, wish and pain but also the nation's history as it move from liberty to slavery, from slavery to revolution, from revolution to independence and independence to reconstruction.

Noemia de Sousa was from Mozambique which was colonized around 1498 by the Portuguese and the original language of the poem *If You Want to Know Me* was Portuguese. She was part of the colonized country and her explicit revolutionary themes such as cultural identity and glorification of Africa show her displeasure towards the dilution of her African culture. In the poem, *If You Want to Know Me*, the title signifies that Africans had no identity and they had been struggling to establish their own identity.

### **Textual References**

If you want to know me  
Examine with careful eyes  
Ah, she is who I am  
Empty eye sockets despairing in possessing life  
If you want to understand me  
Come and bend over my African soul

### **4.2.2 Distribution**

In discourse practice, the stage focuses on the distribution of the selected text to promote as well as extend the intertextual chain. In order to maintain an intertextual chain Noemia de Sousa has provided the poem *If You Want to Know Me* as a contribution to Africa that is ever-defining. The colonization, slavery, violence, abuse and every single experience that she has ever gone through are, 'what gives her identity'.

### **Textual Reference**

Body tattooed with visible and invisible scars  
By the hard whips of slavery.  
At the end of the poem, she gives references to the revolutionary undertone and states that Africa is hopeful of revolution. She didn't write it to get sympathy rather her tone screamed of protest and hope for rising from the ashes. She refers to herself as a shell in the flesh which shows how she thinks of herself as a strong creature open to enduring whatever comes her way without breaking.is hopeful of revolution.

In which the revolt of Africa congealed  
Its cry swelled with hope...

#### **4.2.3 Interpretation**

The effect of the poem *If You Want to Know Me* may vary from individual to individual, culture to culture and country to country. For colonized ones, particularly Africans the thematic intensity is much more than other the colonizer's audience as African people suffered from slavery, hunger, loss of identity and racism. The poem is a source of inspiration for marginalized countries to have faith in freedom and be stronger nations. While the poem lets the non-target audience know about the brutal and inhumane treatment of the colonizers of the indigenous people.

#### **4.2.4 Explanation (Socio-cultural practice)**

The explanation is the third and last stage of Fairclough's model in CDA which comes after description and interpretation. This stage attempts to focus on social and cultural practices responsible for producing a particular text. In the eighteenth century, there came an Industrial Revolution in Europe and to provide themselves with the raw material they began to colonize non-European countries. They organized things in binary opposition such as Black and White, Self and Other. They generated colonial discourse in which they let the colonized observe the colonizers as superior, civilized, rational, progressive and democratic. While non-European countries such as Africa and Asia were described as inferior on the basis of culture and colour, uncivilized, irrational and backward. As the writing was completely under European control therefore they never depicted the sufferings of the colonized. After gaining independence from colonizers, the suppressed started writing their own text known as postcolonial literature. They got an opportunity to abolish the colonial discourse and preserve their own culture, traditions, identity and their self-respect. They depicted the colonizers in the same way as they were portrayed by the West as immoral, brutal and sensual. So in this poem writer has talked about that narrative from point of view of colonized. The sufferings of black Africans at the hands of white people. It is a protest against the hegemonic white colonization. As the writer is herself African her words create an impact with the essence of her own experience and reality in it. She has written about colonized people's side writing about her vague insight of the future having empty sockets as a metaphor in the first stanza. She has openly used words like wounds, scars and torture which create a connection to the reality of her people.

### **5. Conclusion**

To sum up it can be said that Noemia de Sousa's poem *If You Want to Know Me* abolishes the Eurocentric assumptions created by the Europeans during their rule over them. Identity crises and cultural clashes are the striking features in most of the post-colonial texts. They used the power of language to deconstruct the prejudiced and one-sided worn-out attitudes of the Europeans as in the interpersonal function of language the grammatical choices reveal it. The thematic choices made by the writer are of displacement, identity crisis and clash which reveal the insignificant life Africans are compelled to live. According to this poem's study, the interpersonal function is colonization, slavery, white hegemony and cultural identity. The poetess as a Black African has narrated her words creating a connection between socio-cultural practices in colonized Africa and the text itself. Fairclough's model revealed hidden ideologies and power relations between colonizers and colonized. The researcher has applied this model to the postcolonial text *If You Want to Know Me* which is an important contribution to the field of CDA. The stages of



Fairclough's model such as Description, Interpretation and Explanation provide a complete background for understanding a particular text not only in terms of linguistic analysis but also in social and cultural practices. It has been revealed in the study that not just sufferings are discussed rather in the Lexical choices of I and me for the entire African, she has focused on liberation.

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## **Appendix**

If you want to know me  
Examine with careful eyes  
Ah, she is who I am  
Empty eye sockets despairing in possessing life  
If you want to understand me  
Come and bend over my African soul  
Body tattooed with visible and invisible scars  
By the hard whips of slavery.  
In which the revolt of Africa congealed  
Its cry swollen with hope...