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**NARRATING GENDER THROUGH LANGUAGE: A CRITICAL  
DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF FEMALE REPRESENTATION IN TARIQ  
RAHMAN'S SHORT STORIES**



Aiman Haider<sup>\*1</sup>, Hareem Khattak<sup>2</sup>, Sidra Shah<sup>3</sup>

<sup>\*1</sup>*MPhil in English, Department of English Abdul Wali Khan University, Mardan, Pakistan*

<sup>2</sup>*MPhil Scholar Department of English, Northern University, Nowshera, Pakistan.*

<sup>3</sup>*BS English, Department of English, Abdul Wali Khan University, Mardan, Pakistan; PST, Elementary and Secondary Education Department, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan.*

<sup>\*1</sup>[aimanhaider33@gmail.com](mailto:aimanhaider33@gmail.com),<sup>2</sup>[hareemkhattak22@gmail.com](mailto:hareemkhattak22@gmail.com),  
<sup>3</sup>[sidrashah228@gmail.com](mailto:sidrashah228@gmail.com)

## Abstract

*This study critically examines the linguistic representation of female characters in the selected short stories by Tariq Rahman through the three-dimensional model of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) by Norman Fairclough. The qualitative analysis of the chosen textual extracts shows that the female characters are mostly presented in discourses of invisibility, relational identity, emotional excess, and unpaid labor, reflecting all issues of deep-rooted patriarchal ideologies of the Pakistani society. The use of lexicon, transitivity and narrative silences often marginalize the agency of women and naturalize their domestic and moral roles. It is also shown that there are moments of discursive resistance especially when egalitarian gender relations are linguistically constructed. This study adds to the interdisciplinary literary research and proves the usefulness of the discourse analysis in revealing the gendered ideologies in the literary works by extending the CDA to the Pakistani English short fiction.*

### Keywords

*Critical Discourse Analysis; Feminist CDA; Pakistani English Literature; Female Representation; Gender and Ideology; Short Stories; Fairclough's Three-Dimensional Model*

## Introduction

The literature has been known to be a powerful medium to construct, negotiate and transmit social realities. Literary works are not a simple reflection of society but are also involved in the creation of ideologies, cultural conventions and power dynamics in the form of language, narrative, and representation. Some of the most long-lived and influential of these ideologies are gender-related ones. According to the feminist literary critics, the depiction of women in literature has always been viewed as an expression of highly ingrained patriarchal beliefs wherein women are placed in subordinate positions that are normalized as being normal (Showalter, 1979; Tyson, 2006). A major part of this process is played by language. With the interdisciplinary turn in literary studies, the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) has become an effective framework in the analysis of the linguistic decisions of literary texts in reproducing or challenging the prevailing social order. CDA perceives language as a kind of social practice which is shaped by, as well as shapes, social realities (Fairclough, 1995).

The Pakistani English literature has taken a special place in the postcolonial literary studies. Being written on the border of the colonial history, the values of the indigenous culture and the world literature, it is a rich source of information about the negotiation of gender ideologies through language. Although the themes of identity, nationalism, and class have been the subject of critical concern in Pakistani literature written in English, relatively little attention has been directed towards language construction of gender in short fiction. The short stories provide a rich and concentrated narrative form where ideological meanings are usually enclosed in fine lexical decisions, narrative silences, and positioning of characters. Short stories, unlike novels, are very dependent on implication and economy of words and are therefore particularly appropriate to discourse-oriented analysis. Tariq Rahman is a prominent writer in the Pakistani English literature whose short stories explore the issues of social

inequality, class structure, colonialism and moral hypocrisy. Despite the fact that Rahman is a well-known scholar working on the issue of language, identity, and power, the critical appreciation of his fictional works has been relatively little, especially on a discourse-analytic and feminist approach. His short stories present normal everyday social interactions in which women are portrayed in the role of caregivers, workers, moral regulators and silent facilitators of social order, which require careful systematic linguistic investigation

The available studies on the Pakistani setting have mainly used CDA on non-literary texts like newspaper discourse, television drama, textbook, and classroom interactions. These works have consistently uncovered the trends of female marginalization, stereotyping, and restricted agency in discourse. Literature is also underrepresented in the CDA research in Pakistan, regardless of its ideological importance. In this study, the gap is filled by using the three-dimensional model of CDA to English short stories by Tariq Rahman. The study examines the linguistic representation of female characters and how such representations mirror wider patriarchal patterns in the Pakistani society by paying attention to Just a Child, Work, and Salvation. The reason why short stories were chosen is because of their compactness of narration and discursive density. The short fiction offers a perfect location of CDA since it gives a chance to analyze the text closely while still engaging with the broader social ideologies. Moreover, the combination of CDA and feminist literary criticism enhances the analytical value of the study as linguistic results are placed in the framework of gender theory.

### **Research Questions**

1. How are female characters linguistically represented in selected Pakistani English short stories by Tariq Rahman?
2. What discursive strategies are used to construct women's roles, identities, and agency in these stories?
3. How do these representations reflect or challenge prevailing patriarchal ideologies in Pakistani society?

### **Research Objective**

To critically examine the linguistic representation of female characters in selected Pakistani English short stories by Tariq Rahman using Fairclough's three-dimensional model of Critical Discourse Analysis.

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

The concept of literature has long been understood as a powerful site of constructing and distributing social meanings, especially gender, power, and identity ones. The feminist literary criticism has undergone the argument that literary texts are not only reflections but also agents of gender ideologies in terms of narrative structures, characterization and linguistic choices (Showalter, 1979; Tyson, 2006). In this respect, language plays a very important role as a medium in which the literary representations of women are created, naturalized or challenged. As the trend of the interdisciplinary shift in the study of literature has been growing, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) has been identified as a productive methodological approach to the study of literary texts. Existing in contrast to conventional stylistics, CDA places textual analysis in the context of larger socio-historical and ideological frameworks, which allows the scholars to examine the ways in which fictional texts reproduce or challenge the established power relations (Fairclough, 1992). The model of textual analysis, discursive practice and social practice, three-dimensional model given by Fairclough has been influential in carrying discourse analysis into the literature discipline where it can be used to systematically analyze narrative language as well as its underlying ideological consequences. In this paradigm, Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis (FCDA) continues to reinforce literary inquiry by foreshadowing gender as a central category of analysis.

The Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) has become a well-known theoretical and

methodological approach for examining the ways in which language constructs and maintains the relations of power and ideologies in the society. The CDA models, in particular, 3-dimensional model by Fairclough, is structured to reveal the interaction among text, discourse practice and social practice to determine how linguistic decisions are formed by and contribute to a larger structure of socio-cultural arrangement. This theory has been implemented in media, education and socio-political spheres all over the world to explore the issues of representation and inequality (Fairclough, 1992; van Dijk, 1993). Among the wider CDA tradition, Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis (FCDA) has become an important strand which foregrounds gender and power relations in an explicit way. Lazar (2007) argues that FCDA analyses the multifaceted mechanisms of power and ideology in speech in maintaining hierarchically gendered social structures and also applies the rigor of CDA to feminist issues of inequality and emancipation. FCDA puts particular focus on the way gendered assumptions are reproduced in language but also on the way they can be challenged by critically engaging (Lazar, 2007).

The Pakistani academic community has recently been using CDA to examine the construction and representation of gender in discourse in different domains. One line of research focuses on media discourse and gender representation. As an example, Yaseen, Asghar, and Sardar (2023) applied the CDA model by van Dijk to examine how gender is represented in newspaper headlines of an English newspaper and concluded that language forms are typically used to create negative and unequal portraits of women, which perpetuate gender inequalities in society. Critical Discourse Analysis of headlines in Dawn newspaper by Barkah and Javid (2025) revealed that the Pakistani media considers working women in both aspects, as a weak subject with the responsibility of the absence of paid care and less support of the institution and as a subject of society and economic life. The analysis of Pakistani classrooms by Jumani, Jumani, and Safdar (2025) demonstrated how gendered discourses in the education interactions create unequal power dynamics, which tend to exclude the participation of girls in the language practices. In a similar manner, Shaheen and Batool (2022) applied Fairclough model to present the textbook discourses that overlook feminine roles, which depict women as submissive and limited to domestic spheres. Other researchers explore popular culture and role norms, including the research on gender role reversal in television serials such as Bakhtawar where CDA demonstrates the opposition of society to women playing non-traditional roles and the continuation of male-dominated ideology in the discourse. Also, Ashraf, Zahid, and Amjad (2023) used the three-dimensional model developed by Fairclough to examine the language of tomboy characters in Pakistani dramas and came to the conclusion that such characters are typically not taken into consideration by society and are seen as less feminine and less competent, which is also a manifestation of strong patriarchal values. These works indicate that CDA is already applied in Pakistan in the process of unpacking gender ideology in the media, classroom relations, textbooks, and popular culture, which can reveal repetitive patterns of female subordination, the support of stereotypes, and the lack of agency in discursive practices.

The present study addresses this gap by using the three-dimensional model of Fairclough and, in some cases, Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis (FCDA) to some short stories written by Tariq Rahman. Although CDA has been effectively used in the media, education and socio-discourse researches in Pakistan, the application of this methodology to the analysis of the literary texts will bring fresh ideas on how female characters and gender relations are linguistically produced and ideologically negotiated in fiction. The application of a feminist perspective, based on the FCDA by Lazar, will assist in the shift in describing the linguistic patterns to questioning the way in which narrative discourse reinforces or challenges the concepts of patriarchy within a literary register. This aligns with the earlier global literature which recommends the use of FCDA in the discovery of deep rooted gender assumptions and opposition to unequal power relations in discourse. Placing Just a Child, Work, and Salvation in the context of this new CDA literature in Pakistan, the present study is relevant to not only

the study of gender discourse but also the study of Pakistani literature, which has a methodological and thematic gap with theoretically rigorous analysis.

### **METHODOLOGY**

The research design of this study is the qualitative research grounded in Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), which will examine the linguistic representation of female characters in the short stories of Tariq Rahman which are written in Pakistani English. CDA is particularly suitable for this research as it explores the role of language as a social practice and the ways in which power relations, ideologies, and social inequalities are constructed and reproduced by using discourse (Fairclough, 1995; van Dijk, 2001).

The data for this study consist of three English short stories by Tariq Rahman, which have been selected and their text extract is taken:

1. Just a Child
2. Work
3. Salvation

These stories were selected purposively because of their direct involvement with female experiences and gendered social realities. Just a Child predicts girlhood, innocence, and vulnerability in socially controlled spaces; Work reflects on the role of women in labor, the relations of classes, and their marginalization through economic means; and Salvation is about morality, judgment of ethics, and female agency. Instead of considering the entire texts, the analysis of the study is directed at particular lines and passages where female characters are described, speak or spoken about. This is because this method of purposive sampling will provide in-depth qualitative analysis, but it will remain analytical focus (Creswell, 2014).

The data were analyzed using Fairclough's three-dimensional model of Critical Discourse Analysis. The analysis of text explored lexical options, transitivity, modality, and use of pronouns to determine the way that female characters are linguistically situated regarding agency, labor, and moral authority. The discursive practice analysis was done on the basis of narrative perspective, the speech distribution as well as the silences to evaluate the mediation of the voices of women in the stories. Lastly, these findings were put into context in terms of Pakistani socio-cultural frameworks, especially the patriarchal framework, gendered division of work, moral regulation, to understand how literary discourse reproduces or challenges dominant gender ideologies (Fairclough, 1995; Lazar, 2007).

### **Theoretical Framework**

The conceptualization of the discourse as a process of interaction between text, discursive practices, and social practices is presented in the three-dimensional model by Fairclough (1995, 2010). All dimensions have a different analytical role in this study:

#### **Textual Analysis**

The level is concerned with the linguistic aspect of the text, such as vocabulary, grammar, modality, transitivity, and stylistic decisions. In this study textual analysis is used to analyze how female characters are defined, placed, and evaluated based on the use of language as adjectives, verbs, pronouns, and metaphors.

#### **Contextual Analysis**

It is a dimension that analyses the production, distribution, and interpretation of texts. The study uses narrative voice, character dialogue, focalization and pattern of speech to show the voices that are given prominence or sidelined. This tier plays a significant role in comprehending how meanings of the roles and agency of women are created in the stories.

#### **Sociopolitical Analysis**

At this level, discourse is linked to the larger context of socio-cultural and ideological

contexts. The representation of women is interpreted in relation to aspects of patriarchy, gender, and the class systems as well as cultural demands that dominate in the Pakistani society. This dimension will help the study to answer how literary discourse represents or challenges dominant gender ideologies.

### **DATA ANALYSIS**

Extract 1: "*The women slaved from the break of the grey dawn till the wolves howled at midnight. The dishes were always to be washed and children were ill.*" Salvation by Tariq Rahman.

#### **Textual Analysis**

The lexical representation of female labor as tiring, inexhaustible, and dehumanizing is done explicitly by the verb "slaved". The duration of the work of women is emphasized with the help of the temporal span "from the break of the grey dawn till the wolves howled at midnight" which is an exaggeration. The passive form of the sentence "children were ill" removes agency both on the part of the illness and the care, making the naturalization of the role of women in the suffering without the effort or choice.

#### **Contextual Analysis**

Women work is introduced as a background reality, and not a story action. Their torment is clarified in a group form, and no voices, names and opinions are mentioned. This increases their invisibility and it makes their exploitation a routine of life in the rural set-up.

#### **Sociopolitical Analysis**

This is a show of patriarchal agrarian ideology where women labor of the household and care is vital but uncompensated and unrecognized. Women are portrayed as suffering, which is natural and even necessary, and which strengthens the gender demands of patience and self-sacrifice.

Extract 2: "*His coughing wife was told to hurry up...*" Salvation by Tariq Rahman.

#### **Textual Analysis**

The wife can be characterized only by physical weakness "coughing" and marital relation. The passive voice of telling weakens her, whereas the imperative form of "hurry up" urges and supports subordination and urgency regardless of her health condition.

#### **Contextual Analysis**

Her appearance is productive and non-verbal. She does not speak or resist. The story is centered on the aspiration of the priest and the suffering of the wife is seen as a non-moral issue.

#### **Sociopolitical Analysis**

This is a reflection of the patriarchal religious families when the health and work of women is subservient to male spiritual or spiritual power and social position.

Extract 3: "*He threw plates at her ladyship...*" "*She slapped her maid...*" Salvation by Tariq Rahman

#### **Textual Analysis**

Gender levels of action are hierarchical as seen in the parallel acts of violence. The violence of the baron is directed to his wife, and to the lady to another woman (maid). Violence therefore trickles down the gender and class divide.

#### **Contextual Analysis**

These actions are depicted in the story as the results of male frustration and not as moral transgressions, which downplay responsibility. The woman aggression is portrayed to be emotional and petty whereas the violence by men is violent but temporary.

#### **Sociopolitical Analysis**

This is an indication of institutionalized domestic violence in patriarchal families, where

women are abused as well as reproduce the oppression of lower ranks.

Extract 4: “*The women nagged and nagged and had sharp, venomous tongues.*” Salvation by Tariq Rahman

**Textual Analysis**

The word “nagged and nagged” is repeated and creates the speech of women as overboard and annoying. The expression of the metaphor “venomous tongues” implies femaleness to be toxic and morally corrupt.

**Contextual Analysis**

Domestic misery is discursively placed on women and their speech whereas the male violence has been previously described as reactive. Such imbalance promotes the stereotypes of misogyny.

**Sociopolitical Analysis**

This generates patriarchal discourse in that the blame of household discord is shifted to the women, whereas structural poverty and male aggression are hidden.

Extract 5: “*But you and Tom will have to do the dishes then,*” said Mabel teasingly. Salvation by Tariq Rahman

**Textual Analysis**

The inclusive coordination “you and Tom” distributes the domestic labor equally. The mocking attitude makes shared responsibility normal.

**Contextual Analysis**

This conversation is unlike other families where it is egalitarian gender relations. Hierarchy is substituted with humor and allows mutual respect.

**Sociopolitical Analysis**

This is a challenge to mainstream patriarchal ideas, as the idea of domestic equality is shown as the basis of happiness and moral salvation.

Extract 6: “Old women could hardly dissemble their consternation. ‘How dreadful,’ I heard one of them shrieking...” Just a Child by Tariq Rahman

**Textual Analysis**

The words “could hardly dissemble their consternation” attribute emotional extravagance to old ladies by the modal restriction could hardly, which implies emotional incontinence. This representation is also enhanced by the verb “shrieking”, which lexicalizes female speech as loud, irrational, and hysterical. These types of lexical choices correspond to stereotypical images of older women as emotionally unstable and invasive spectators.

**Contextual Analysis**

The narrator places these women on the background, whose role is restricted to responding and not acting. They are indirectly reported and have no more power, which makes their disenfranchisement in the story structure stronger. The ironic tone of the narrator alienates him to them, prompting the readers to sympathize with his mild mockery.

**Sociopolitical Analysis**

This portrayal is a manifestation of patriarchal age-gender ideology, according to which old women are often depicted as excessively emotional, morally critical and socially inappropriate. Elderly women in the context of South Asia tend to be the embodiment of conservative moral monitoring, which is implicitly criticized in this context with exaggeration and irony.

Extract 7: “An unusually stiff, mask-faced young lady, wearing the stern air of a governess followed dragging a reluctant young child.” Just a Child by Tariq Rahman

**Textual Analysis**

The adjectival grouping of “stiff, mask-faced, stern” creates the governess as emotionally

inflexible and bossy. She is shown as someone who controls and not cares since the verb used is “dragging” which suggests coercion and force. The individuality is eliminated as her identity is diminished to her role.

**Contextual Analysis**

The authority of the governess is presented as a borrowed and functional one based on colonial educational organization but not an agency of her own. She is strict, yet has no narrative voice, which emphasizes her low status in gender and colonial hierarchies.

**Sociopolitical Analysis**

Anglo-Indian governess is a representation of colonial patriarchy where women are the ones who instill discipline in the domestic setting but they are powerless in the social context. This two-fold marginalization (as woman and colonial intermediary) is historically gendered labor.

Extract 8: *“His sister—for so she seemed to be — got him down.”* Just a Child by Tariq Rahman

**Textual Analysis**

The sister is described in a relational way since he does not give her name, voice or description. The phrase "got him down" places her in a corrective and caretaking position, lacking in emotional depth and autonomy.

**Contextual Analysis**

She is brief and utilitarian. She is there to bring order and is gone, and this supports the invisibility of the narrative of women.

**Sociopolitical Analysis**

This resembles normalized female domestic labor in which women take care of children silently and effectively without any notice or narrative value.

Extract 9: *“Just then the old woman looked at him disapprovingly. The poor child wilted under that glance.”* Just a Child by Tariq Rahman

**Textual Analysis**

The metaphorical use of wilted creates the female disapproval as an emotional suffocation. The authority of the woman works on the non-verbal surveillance enhancing the moral discipline.

**Contextual Analysis**

Women authority is silent but effective unlike male authority, which is verbal and institutional.

**Sociopolitical Analysis**

This is an indication of the way women in male dominated societies tend to patrol the norms within the society and end up being enforcers, as opposed to being contestants to the prevailing ideologies.

Extract 10: *“Two girls were also having cokes. I stole a look. One was pretty. But it was dangerous to stare at them...”* Work by Tariq Rahman

**Textual Analysis**

The fact that the verb phrase “stole a look”, puts the presence of women in the male gaze, which creates women as an object of sight but not as social beings. The use of the adjective “pretty” diminishes female identity to a physical appearance and the fact that no additional description (voice, action, agency etc.) is provided supports their objectification. The modal assessment of the fact that it is “dangerous to stare” suggests that it is morally anxious, that women are temptations and not the independent individuals they are.

### **Contextual Analysis**

The narrator is the one who dictates the way of seeing things: women are given temporary and visual access to the narrative. They do not affect the plot because of their silence and rapid disappearance. The internal monologue makes the male surveillance standard and at the same time, it positions women as objects of social restraint: they are visible but not interacted with.

### **Sociopolitical Analysis**

This is a manifestation of patriarchal conventions of the South Asian society public-space, in which the appearance of women is controlled and deciphered by the male desire and moral standards. The freedom of women in the streets is recognized but limited and solidifies gender divisions of visibility and respectability.

Extract 11: *"What are you doing now?" asked my wife."*

*"Yes, put the air conditioner on. One needs peace and quiet for work..."* Work by Tariq Rahman

### **Textual Analysis**

The role of the wife is restricted to household investigation and support. Her speech is short and functional, and it does not contain evaluative power. The commandment to turn on the air conditioner gives her a service position, which supports gendered domestic work.

### **Contextual Analysis**

Despite talking, she is talking in favor of the productivity of the male narrator. Her identity is social (wife) and not personal and her work, emotional and physical is taken for granted.

### **Sociopolitical Analysis**

This is an indication of a patriarchal family structure where women empower men to work both intellectually and economically, but their work is not paid and unrecognized.

Extract 12: *"I had wasted two hours."*

*"After lunch, I told everyone at home that I would work."* Work by Tariq Rahman

### **Textual Analysis**

The time and work framing by the narrator give precedence to paid intellectual work over any other type of work. Time at home, which is mostly upheld by women, is erased from the discourse of work.

### **Contextual Analysis**

The definition of work is used in such a way that it leaves out economic and social value to domestic and emotional labor- traditionally feminine.

### **Sociopolitical Analysis**

This reaffirms the ideology of capitalist-patriarchy in which the unpaid labor of women supports the productivity of males but is discursively silent.

## **DISCUSSION**

The results of the Salvation indicate that the labor of women is always linguistically made out to be exhaustive, continuous and unproblematic. The lexical options that include the word "slaved" and the temporal framing that takes a long time, "from the break of the grey dawn till the wolves howled at midnight" prefigure the concept of physical perseverance and, at the

same time, silence the concept of recognition and agency. This corresponds with the argument of Fairclough (1995) that ideological meanings are frequently entrenched in seemingly descriptive language and that the unequal social relations are naturalized. These results are consistent with previous CDA studies in Pakistani settings that have established the discursively marginality of women in terms of their labor. Similar results are obtained by Shaheen and Batool (2022), who discovered that in Pakistan, the role of women is constructed in the textbook discourse as a domestic, invisible, and unvalued aspect. Nevertheless, though their research is devoted to educational discourse, their findings are applied to literary fiction, proving that short stories are also involved in the ideological normalization of unpaid work of women. This invisibility, in terms of feminist literary approach, is what Showalter (1979) refers to as the marginalization of the lived experiences of women within the framework of patriarchal narrative approaches. Their narrative lack of identity is supported by the lack of female names and the group representation of women as a homogenous laboring group. In this way, the paper proves that literary discourse, similar to institutional discourse, reproduces gendered hierarchies through the linguistic decisions.

In Just a Child and Work, one of the most recurring definitions of the female characters are the relational identity of wife, sister, maid or old woman as opposed to an independent person. The latter tendency is notably noticeable when the women are barely or not speaking and when their actions are represented in passive form (e.g. was told to hurry up). These results are in line with the claim put forward by Lazar (2007), patriarchal discourse tends to make women socially supportive and discursively marginal. The fact that speech has been given to female characters in the stories under analysis in very limited amounts is also reflected in the Pakistani media studies, where the voices of women are also limited. Nevertheless, the current research shows that this discursive marginalization cannot be limited to media or institutional texts but also exists in literary narration. Notably, the silence of women in these stories is not indifferent. Silence itself is as Fairclough (2010) puts it, itself a discursive strategy. The brief appearance of the sister who "got him down" is one of the examples of how caretaking work of women is narratively essential but discursively downplayed. This adds to the results of Imran et al. (2024) that the literary narratives of South Asia tend to depend on the emotional and domestic work of women and deny them a central role in the narrative. Just a Child depicts a repetitive discourse of emotional overindulgence and moral invasiveness in the way elderly women are depicted. Older women are built up as emotional overpowering and socially constraining agents through such lexical means as shrieking, consternation, metaphors like wilted under that glance, etc. Such representations resonate with the feminist observations of CDA where older women are often represented as moral police and not as wise and decisive (Lazar, 2007). This observation reiterates the wider feminist literary analysis that determines age as an overlapping line of marginalization among women (Tyson, 2006). The undermining of the moral voice of the grandmother, the generalization of grandmothers as wrong, is the effect of what Mills (1995) refers to as evaluative asymmetry, in which the authority of the female voice is degraded through the irony of narration. In Pakistani socio-cultural settings, old women tend to become a representation of moral control in the domesticity. According to the results of the study, the literary discourse reproduces the given stereotype and at the same time downplaying it, supporting the patriarchal assumptions about the moral superiority of whom the moral authority is right.

The discussion of violent relations in Salvation shows that the gendered oppression is hierarchical. Male violence against women is also presented as a reactionary or circumstantial, but female aggression especially towards their subordinates is painted to be emotional or vengeful. This discursive imbalance is in line with the findings of Ashraf et al. (2023), who state that Pakistani discourse is more prone to justification of male aggression and pathologization of female anger. The cascading effect of violence, husband to wife, wife to maid, depicts how patriarchal power is replicated in-house among the women. Lazar (2007)

claims that women within the patriarchal systems tend to be placed as victims and perpetrators of dominant ideology, which is also obvious in the extracts under analysis. The literary manifestation is therefore an extension of social practice at large where gender oppression coexists with the hierarchy of classes.

## **CONCLUSION**

This paper proposed to critically analyze the linguistic representation of female characters in the chosen Pakistani English short stories by Tariq Rahman Just a Child, Work, and Salvation, in terms of the three-dimensional model of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) developed by Norman Fairclough. The research was based on the feminist literary critical thinking and Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis (FCDA) and was meant to explore how women are constructed through language in literary narratives, their roles, identities, and agency, and how their constructions mirror or challenge ideologies of patriarchy common in Pakistani society. Although it provides, it is small with a qualitative scope, which limits the study. Future studies can add to this framework additional literature on Pakistani English fiction, comparative studies with Urdu literature, or corpus-based CDA methods to increase extrapolation. In conclusion, the paper confirms that gender ideology is very much dependent on literary language in order to understand the representation of women in South Asian literary discourse. Pakistani English short stories are involved in the construction of femininity, labor, silence and agency through the use of minor linguistic decisions and plot frameworks. Through a critical treatment of these discourses, the current research highlights the role of CDA as a useful methodological tool between linguistics and literary analysis and as a potent means of uncovering and confronting gendered inequalities inherent in fiction.

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