

## **Reflection of the discourse of Algebra and power in the novel Al-Tabour by Basma Abdel Aziz based on the Norman Fairclough's approach**

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### **Introduction**

The current concept of discourse has its roots in various fields such as linguistics, philosophy, literary criticism, history, psychology, and sociology. Many linguists have discussed the term discourse and its meaning. According to the definitions provided, discourse is a particular way of talking about and understanding the world—or one aspect of it (Jørgensen, 2019: 18). Later, in the second half of the nineteenth century, discourse analysis gradually gained a significant position in linguistic studies in the West. This approach was first recognized through the works of Kenneth L. Pike and his colleagues, who considered discourse analysis a fundamental tool for the development of anthropology. In this method, understanding the meaning and nature of language is directly inferred from its social context and usage. This perspective analyzes language in connection with non-linguistic factors and emphasizes the interaction between linguistic elements and social situations.

Subsequently, another approach emerged under the leadership of Zellig Harris, which developed based on descriptive linguistic methods. Harris, by presenting a model for analyzing spoken and written discourses, sought to uncover the underlying structures beyond the text. This approach, using precise analytical tools, aimed to explain the cohesive linguistic structures at levels beyond the sentence (Okasha, 2005: 40). Discourse analysis, as an effective tool, enables the examination and understanding of various aspects of individual and collective thought. This examination is a path toward uncovering particular perspectives and, on a broader scale, revealing specific ideologies and worldviews (Aghagolzadeh, 2013: 58).

### **Methodology**

This study, using a descriptive-analytical method and based on Norman Fairclough's approach, examines the structure and content of the novel *The Queue* (al-Ṭābūr). Accordingly, there exists a reciprocal and interdependent relationship between discourse and a set of social actions that give structure, order, and coherence to a discourse. These characteristics of Fairclough's critical discourse analysis can be explored in literary works, especially

novels. One such literary work is *The Queue*, a novel by Basma Abdel Aziz an Egyptian psychiatrist, writer, and visual artist.

### **Results and Discussion**

This literary work also portrays, through the depiction of a long queue of people, a symbol of the unfulfilled promises made by the revolutionaries of Egypt's 2011 uprising promises that kept people waiting without bringing any real change to their lives. In this line, individuals with legitimate demands are standing, yet none of them achieve any result. These images strongly resonate with the social realities of post-revolutionary Egypt.

On the other hand, characters such as Ines, Ihab, Umm Mabrouk, and Hamoud each represent different segments of society with distinct concerns, all of whom participated in the revolution but were later suppressed or marginalized by the new Egyptian regime. According to the author, the spark for this narrative structure choosing characters from various social strata—was ignited when patients from different backgrounds, each with unique problems, came to consult the psychiatrist, Abdelaziz.

### **Conclusion**

In her work, Basma Abdel Aziz skillfully utilizes the elements of description, interpretation, and explanation to reflect the linguistic and ideological structures of contemporary Egyptian society. At the descriptive level, the author makes striking use of passive constructions; this reflects the narrator's lack of full control over certain events and the ambiguous, anxiety-ridden atmosphere that pervades the text. Additionally, the frequent use of synonymy helps convey the author's inner concepts, while the use of contrast and antithesis serves to depict character dualities. To reflect the dialogues between individuals involved in these events, she employs colloquial and conversational language, which appears intended to foster greater accessibility and familiarity for the general public demonstrating her linguistic strategies.

At the interpretive level, Abdel Aziz employs language within its situational context to mirror Egypt's social and political issues. Here, narrative technique is clearly evident throughout the novel. Her influence from George Orwell's 1984 and Franz Kafka's *The Trial* is particularly notable, deepening the narrative's complexity and intensity.

At the explanatory level, the author, through implicit references and textual clues, seeks to depict the events of Egypt's 2011 revolution and analyze the pressures exerted by the power structure on individuals. In *The Queue*, direct and indirect discourse are used intelligently to portray the mechanisms of power and coercion in a society dominated by

authoritarianism. In the direct discourse often voiced by beneficiaries, the media, or official statements from “The Gate” the author deliberately employs an imperative, rigid, and unquestionable language that mirrors a bureaucratic and naturalistic society. This style of speech carries clear implications of obedience, subjugation, and coercion, laying bare the mechanisms of mental and behavioral control imposed on the populace.

In contrast, the indirect discourse reflected mostly in character narratives, internal monologues, and everyday dialogues reveals a crisis of identity, existential anxiety, and an inability to confront the dominant system. Through this, the author subtly points to the hidden layers of repression and fear. Thus, the tension between direct and indirect discourse in *The Queue* serves as a reflection of two levels of discourse on coercion and power: the overt level of official authority, and the hidden, internalized level of personal obedience or resistance.