

Power, Ideology, and Discursive Practices in Contemporary Fiction: A Critical Discourse Analysis of American Dirt

Farid Ahmad

ahmadfarid008@gmail.com

M.Phil. English, Northern University, Nowshera, Pakistan

Altaf Hussain

38143@students.riphah.edu.pk

BS English Literature and Linguistics, Riphah International University, Chakdara, Pakistan

Ilyas Khan

BS English Literature and Linguistics, Government Degree College, Gulabdar, Dir Lower, Pakistan

Corresponding Author: Farid Ahmad ahmadfarid008@gmail.com

Received: 06-11-2025

Revised: 24-11-2025

Accepted: 10-12-2025

Published: 26-12-2025

ABSTRACT

This study explores the construction of power, ideology, and discursive practices in contemporary fiction through a Critical Discourse Analysis of Jeanine Cummins' American Dirt. Employing a qualitative research design, the study is grounded in Fairclough's three-dimensional model of Critical Discourse Analysis and supported by van Dijk's socio-cognitive perspective. Purposively selected textual extracts are analyzed to examine how linguistic features such as agency assignment, lexical choices, narrative voice, and silence function as social practices. The analysis reveals that power is discursively produced through asymmetrical representations in which institutions and violent actors are foregrounded as dominant agents, while migrants are linguistically positioned as passive and marginalized. Ideological meanings related to migration, authority, and gender are embedded through representational strategies that emphasize fear, vulnerability, and maternal sacrifice. The study concludes that American Dirt operates as a discursive site that both questions and reproduces dominant ideological frameworks, highlighting the significant role of language in shaping contemporary literary representations of power and migration.

Keywords: Critical Discourse Analysis, power, ideology, contemporary fiction, American Dirt, migration discourse

INTRODUCTION

Language is not merely a neutral conduit for communication; it plays a constitutive role in shaping and reproducing social reality. In contemporary social theory, language is understood as a form of social practice that reflects and refracts power relations embedded within societal structures (Fairclough, 2010; van Dijk, 2019). Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) specifically foregrounds the connections between language, power, and ideology, providing scholars with tools to investigate how discourse enacts, legitimizes, or contests forms of domination and inequality in texts and social practices (van Dijk, 2019; Yang, 2023). Instead of treating language as an isolated system of signs, CDA situates linguistic choices within broader socio-political contexts, unveiling how power is constructed through discourse and reproduced across societal domains (Fairclough, 2010; van Dijk, 2019).

CDA has been applied across a wide range of disciplines—including politics, media, and education—to explore how discourse reinforces or challenges power asymmetries (Guo, 2019; Yang, 2023). For instance,

CDA scholars examine how political elites use specific lexical choices to legitimize policy decisions, or how media narratives frame certain social groups in ways that sustain normative assumptions (Guo, 2019; Yang, 2023). This approach is equally applicable to literary texts, where narrative structures, dialogic interactions, and stylistic patterns reveal implicit ideological commitments and power formations that shape readers' interpretations. Unlike traditional literary criticism that privileges thematic or aesthetic analysis, a CDA lens interrogates how textually encoded language functions as an ideological mode of representation, intersecting with social hierarchies and cultural norms.

In contemporary fiction, narratives often engage with pressing global issues—migration, identity, violence, and cultural conflict—that are inseparable from questions of power and ideology. Jeanine Cummins' *American Dirt* (2020) exemplifies this trend. The novel narrates the perilous journey of Lydia Quixano Pérez, a woman fleeing cartel violence in Mexico with her young son, toward the United States. Along the way, the narrative grapples with institutional neglect, systemic violence, and the fraught politics of border crossing, making it an apt text for CDA inquiry (Sappe, 2025). Upon publication, *American Dirt* became a commercial bestseller and a focal point of intense public and academic debate concerning representation, authorship, and cultural authority. Critics have questioned the authenticity of its portrayal of migrant experiences and examined how the narrative's discursive strategies may reproduce or challenge dominant ideological frames about migration and ethnicity (Sappe, 2025; Sempek, 2020).

The controversy surrounding *American Dirt* highlights the fundamental role of language in shaping social meanings and ideological positions. Some scholars argue that the novel's success reflects a discursive commodification of trauma that appeals to readers' empathy while obscuring deeper socio-political complexities (Marini, 2020). Others contend that its narrative choices risk reinforcing stereotypical images of migrants and oversimplifying the multifaceted realities of displacement (Sappe, 2025). These debates underscore how literary discourse is implicated in broader cultural conversations about power and inequality, making *American Dirt* a compelling subject for CDA. Rather than viewing literature as separate from real-world discourses, this study positions literary texts as active participants in the construction of social knowledge and ideologies.

The significance of this study lies in its application of CDA to a contemporary, widely read novel that engages with critical socio-political issues. By analyzing *American Dirt* through a discourse-analytic lens, this research contributes to a deeper understanding of how textual language practices embody and negotiate power relations and ideological commitments in contemporary fiction. This approach extends beyond surface-level interpretation to reveal how narrative choices—lexical selection, syntactic construction, narrative vantage, and dialogic interaction—function ideologically to shape readers' perceptions of migration, violence, and cultural identity. In doing so, the study bridges the gap between literary studies and social linguistics, offering insights into how literary discourse participates in the reproduction or disruption of social power structures.

Moreover, this research addresses a gap in the current scholarship on *American Dirt*, which has primarily focused on reception and controversy. While existing analyses have documented public debates and ethical questions about cultural representation (Sappe, 2025; Sempek, 2020), fewer studies have systematically examined the novel's linguistic and discursive practices through the rigorous theoretical framework provided by CDA. Examining these practices can reveal how underlying ideologies of belonging, otherness, and power are encoded in the narrative and how they resonate with or challenge dominant cultural discourses.

One central research question guiding this study is: How are power, ideology, and discursive practices constructed through language in Jeanine Cummins' *American Dirt*? This question foregrounds the CDA

premise that discourse is not a passive reflection of social reality but an active process in which power and ideology are negotiated through language. By focusing on discursive constructions in the text, the research aims to uncover the often-subtle mechanisms by which ideological positions are embedded and perpetuated within literary narrative structures.

A key research objective aligned with this question is to analyze the linguistic and discursive strategies in *American Dirt* that contribute to the construction of power relations and ideological representations in the narrative. This objective involves identifying specific textual features—such as metaphors, pronoun use, agency assignment, thematic patterns, and narrative framing—that signal ideological orientations and power relations. By doing so, this study situates the novel within the broader socio-political discourse on migration and identity, demonstrating how literary texts both reflect and influence cultural understandings of pressing social issues.

In summary, this study adopts Critical Discourse Analysis as a methodological framework to interrogate how language functions as a site of power and ideology in *American Dirt*. By situating the novel within the nexus of discourse, power, and ideology, the research contributes to interdisciplinary scholarship at the intersection of literature and linguistics. It also provides a critical lens through which to apprehend the discursive strategies through which contemporary fiction engages with, reflects, and potentially reshapes social perceptions of migration and power.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) has emerged as a powerful analytical approach for studying how language constructs, sustains, and challenges power relations and ideological formations in texts. CDA scholars conceive language not merely as a medium of expression but as a form of social practice deeply implicated in social structures of power and domination (van Dijk, 2015). Operating at the intersection of linguistics, social theory, and discourse studies, CDA investigates how texts reflect—and in some cases reproduce—historical, cultural, and political inequalities (Fairclough, 2013; van Dijk, 2015). The foundational motivation behind CDA is to uncover hidden ideological assumptions encoded within linguistic structures and to show how discourse participates in upholding or contesting power dynamics in society (van Dijk, 2015; Tenorio, 2025). Although originally developed in the analysis of political and media texts, CDA has increasingly been adapted to the study of literary discourse.

In the field of literature, researchers have applied CDA to explore how texts represent social identities, power relations, and ideological stances through linguistic choices. Ananda et al. (2023) conducted a critical discourse analysis of Amy Tan's *The Joy Luck Club*, focusing on how transitivity and modality patterns reflect ideological frameworks within the novel's narrative structure. Their research demonstrated that linguistic features—such as choice of process types and modality—served as markers of characters' social positioning and implied power dynamics in the text, illustrating how CDA can uncover subtler layers of ideological meaning in fiction (Ananda et al., 2023). Similarly, Hussein (2025) applied CDA to *The War That Saved My Life*, a contemporary novel, analyzing selected passages to examine how language constructs and enforces social hierarchies and power relations among characters. The study foregrounded how narrative discourse and dialogic interactions operate within broader socio-cultural contexts, reinforcing the notion that literary texts are fertile ground for CDA (Hussein, 2025).

Beyond specific novels, CDA has been employed to analyze literary discourse in various forms. MA Hossain's (2022) research on literary texts from educational textbooks illustrated how CDA could be applied to poetry, short stories, and other literary genres to reveal embedded ideologies, social messages, and moral constructs. Although this study was based on school literary material, it highlights the versatility

of CDA as a methodological framework capable of addressing both canonical and classroom texts (Hossain, 2022). These applications demonstrate that CDA is not confined to political speeches or media narratives but can be effectively extended to literature to expose underlying ideological assumptions and power structures.

The application of CDA to literary texts often involves theorizing how language mediates social experience, identity, and authority. van Dijk (2015) emphasized that CDA's primary objective is to examine how social power, dominance, and inequality are enacted and reproduced through text and talk within social and political contexts — a notion readily transferable to literary narratives, where characters, narrators, and narrative structures communicate values, ideologies, and normative assumptions. van Dijk's framework has been widely used in literary studies to examine how dominant cultural discourses shape representations of gender, class, and ethnicity within fiction. For example, Rasheed (2023) applied CDA to analyze Pakistani novels such as *Home Boy* and *The Blind Man's Garden*, demonstrating how ideological frameworks and power relations are linguistically constructed in post-9/11 literary narratives. By analyzing lexical choices and narrative strategies, Rasheed's study revealed how literary language legitimizes certain social identities while marginalizing others (Rasheed, 2023).

While much of the existing literature demonstrates the utility of CDA in studying novels, CDA scholars have also applied the framework to individual characters and power dynamics within canonical literature. A recent study by researchers examining Jane Austen's *Emma* utilized Fairclough's three-dimensional model to analyze character language as an expression of social hierarchy and gendered power systems. The analysis revealed how speech patterns and narrative positioning contribute to the construction of class and authority within the text, illustrating how CDA can dissect even classic literature for embedded power relations (Bright Journal, 2025). Such studies reinforce CDA's capacity to illuminate nuanced forms of linguistic power and ideological meaning within narrative fiction across different historical periods.

The literature also indicates that CDA's relevance extends to short stories and postcolonial narratives, which often grapple with themes of identity, marginalization, and cultural conflict. Although fewer studies explicitly focus on short stories, the analytical principles remain consistent: examining how lexical, syntactic, and narrative structures communicate normative frameworks and social power relations (Stamou, 2018). Research in this domain suggests that combining CDA with concepts from language ideology enhances understanding of how cultural narratives influence readers' perceptions of social groups and norms, particularly in contexts of diversity and migration (Stamou, 2018). This integration is particularly relevant for analyzing contemporary works like *American Dirt*, where migration, identity, and social power constitute core thematic concerns.

Across these applications, scholars consistently highlight CDA's potential for revealing how literature participates in broader discourses about society and culture. By examining discourse as social practice, CDA allows researchers to interrogate not only what a text says but how it says it and with what ideological implications. This aligns with the claim that even literary fiction is a site where power relations are constructed and contested through language (Al-Zubaidi, 2022). Al-Zubaidi's study on *A Thousand Splendid Suns* demonstrated how CDA can unveil power hierarchies and cultural norms embedded in narrative structures, showing how linguistic devices reflect and reinforce gender, class, and political power dynamics within the text (Al-Zubaidi, 2022).

Despite the increasing application of CDA to literary studies, there remains a relative scarcity of research that examines contemporary, globally influential novels through this lens. Most existing studies focus on canonical literature or specific regional narratives, leaving a gap for analysis of recent popular works that engage with complex socio-political issues such as migration and cultural identity. Applying CDA to texts

like *American Dirt* therefore not only contributes to a growing body of literature using discourse analysis in literary contexts but also addresses the need for scholarship that examines how contemporary fiction constructs and communicates power and ideology in an increasingly globalized world. By situating *American Dirt* within this CDA framework, researchers can uncover how linguistic practices reflect broader social narratives about migration, agency, and cultural power.

In conclusion, the literature underscores Critical Discourse Analysis as a robust interdisciplinary approach for unpacking the ideological and power-laden features of literary discourse. Prior research has applied CDA to novels, educational texts, and specific literary characters, demonstrating its versatility and analytical depth. However, the prominence of recent global narratives in public discourse suggests a research opportunity to extend CDA to contemporary fiction like *American Dirt*, where language not only tells a story but also participates in circulating social meanings and ideological commitments. This literature review thereby grounds the current study in a well-established methodological tradition while highlighting its contribution to ongoing scholarly discussions.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Approach and Design

The present study adopts a qualitative research approach, as it seeks to explore meanings, interpretations, and ideological implications embedded in literary discourse rather than to quantify linguistic features. Qualitative research is particularly appropriate for discourse-oriented studies because it enables in-depth analysis of language as social practice and allows researchers to uncover implicit power relations and ideological positions embedded in texts (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The research design is descriptive and interpretive, focusing on how language functions within a literary narrative to construct power and ideology.

This study is grounded in Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), which provides both a theoretical and methodological foundation for examining the relationship between language, power, and ideology. CDA is concerned with analyzing discourse structures that enact, legitimize, or resist social dominance and inequality (van Dijk, 2019). Since *American Dirt* engages with socio-political themes such as migration, violence, and authority, CDA is an appropriate framework for investigating how these themes are discursively constructed through language.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of this study is primarily based on Norman Fairclough's three-dimensional model of Critical Discourse Analysis, complemented by insights from van Dijk's socio-cognitive approach. Fairclough's model conceptualizes discourse analysis at three interrelated levels:

1. Textual analysis (linguistic features of the text),
2. Discursive practice (production, distribution, and consumption of the text), and
3. Social practice (the broader socio-cultural and ideological context) (Fairclough, 2013).

At the textual level, the study examines linguistic features such as lexical choices, modality, transitivity, pronouns, narrative voice, and agency. At the level of discursive practice, attention is given to how the narrative structure and representational strategies shape readers' understanding of migration and power

relations. At the social practice level, the analysis situates the novel within contemporary socio-political discourses surrounding migration, border politics, and cultural authority.

Van Dijk's socio-cognitive perspective further informs the study by emphasizing the role of ideology as a shared system of beliefs that mediates between discourse and social structures (van Dijk, 2019). This perspective is particularly useful for examining how *American Dirt* constructs ideological representations of migrants, institutions, and power through narrative discourse.

Data Selection and Corpus

The primary data for this study consist of selected textual extracts from Jeanine Cummins' novel *American Dirt* (2020). The novel is chosen due to its contemporary relevance, global readership, and engagement with migration-related power dynamics. Rather than analyzing the entire text, the study employs purposeful sampling, selecting passages that are thematically and discursively significant to power, ideology, and authority. These include narrative descriptions, character dialogues, and scenes involving institutional control, violence, or border crossing.

Purposeful sampling allows the researcher to focus on data that are most relevant to the research objectives while maintaining analytical depth (Patton, 2015). The selected excerpts are analyzed qualitatively to identify discursive patterns that contribute to ideological meaning-making within the text.

Method of Data Analysis

Data analysis is conducted using Critical Discourse Analysis procedures, following Fairclough's three-dimensional framework. The analysis begins with close textual reading, during which linguistic features are identified and categorized. Particular attention is paid to:

- Lexicalization and evaluative language
- Modality and expressions of certainty or obligation
- Transitivity patterns and agency assignment
- Pronoun use and in-group/out-group representation
- Narrative framing and voice

These features are then interpreted in relation to discursive practices, such as how migrant identities are constructed, how authority is legitimized, and how power relations are normalized or contested within the narrative. Finally, the findings are contextualized within broader social and ideological frameworks related to migration discourse, cultural power, and representation.

The analysis is interpretive rather than mechanical, emphasizing how linguistic choices function ideologically rather than merely identifying their frequency. This aligns with CDA's critical orientation toward uncovering implicit power relations in discourse (Fairclough, 2013; van Dijk, 2019).

Validity and Reliability

In qualitative research, validity is achieved through theoretical coherence, transparency of analysis, and consistency in interpretation rather than statistical measurement. To enhance analytical validity, the study

relies on established CDA theories and applies analytical categories systematically across the selected data. Reliability is maintained by clearly outlining the analytical procedures and grounding interpretations in textual evidence, ensuring that the analysis is logically traceable and academically defensible.

Ethical Considerations

This study is based entirely on published literary material and does not involve human participants. Therefore, no ethical risks related to consent or confidentiality arise. Proper academic citation practices are followed throughout the research to acknowledge original sources and avoid plagiarism.

Summary

In summary, this study employs a qualitative, CDA-based methodology grounded in Fairclough's three-dimensional model and van Dijk's socio-cognitive theory to examine how power, ideology, and discursive practices operate in *American Dirt*. Through purposive data selection and systematic discourse analysis, the methodology enables an in-depth exploration of how contemporary fiction participates in broader ideological discourses about migration and power.

DATA ANALYSIS

Discursive Construction of Power and Fear

One of the dominant discursive strategies in *American Dirt* is the construction of power through fear and threat. Early in the novel, cartel authority is established linguistically through expressions of inevitability and dominance. Lydia reflects on the omnipresence of violence, noting how danger becomes normalized within daily life. Fear is communicated through evaluative language and metaphors that associate power with omnipotence and inescapability.

For instance, the narrative suggests that violence "waits patiently" for its victims (Cummins, 2020). The personification of violence assigns agency to an abstract force, reinforcing the ideological notion that power is uncontrollable and omnipresent. Through transitivity choices, the text often positions violent forces as active agents, while victims are rendered passive, reinforcing unequal power relations. This linguistic pattern aligns with CDA observations that agency assignment reflects ideological positioning (Fairclough, 2013).

Institutional Power and Discursive Authority

Institutional power, particularly at borders and checkpoints, is constructed through authoritative discourse and asymmetrical interactions. Border officials are represented through commands, imperatives, and bureaucratic language that contrasts sharply with the silence or hesitation of migrants.

In one scene, officials issue brief commands such as "papers" or "move along" (Cummins, 2020). These short, imperative utterances demonstrate discursive control, where language functions to assert authority without explanation or justification. The absence of politeness markers reflects power asymmetry, positioning institutional voices as dominant and unquestionable.

From a CDA perspective, such discourse normalizes institutional authority and marginalizes migrant voices by limiting their discursive space. Fairclough (2013) argues that dominance is often enacted through

routine, normalized language practices, which is evident in the portrayal of bureaucratic discourse in the novel.

Ideology of Migration and Otherness

The novel also constructs ideology through representational strategies that frame migrants as vulnerable, displaced, and constantly surveilled. Migrant identities are frequently described using lexical items associated with exhaustion, invisibility, and fragility. Lydia and her son are often referred to in collective terms, emphasizing anonymity and loss of individuality.

At one point, migrants are described as “faces blurred by hunger and fear” (Cummins, 2020). This metaphor foregrounds suffering while simultaneously homogenizing migrant experiences. From a CDA standpoint, such representation can function ideologically by eliciting empathy while also reinforcing a singular narrative of victimhood. van Dijk (2019) notes that ideological discourse often simplifies complex social identities to align with dominant narratives.

This discursive framing reflects broader societal ideologies where migrants are perceived primarily through the lens of suffering rather than agency. While the novel attempts to humanize migration, its language sometimes reinforces dominant ideological frames by limiting the range of migrant representation.

Gendered Power and Maternal Discourse

Gendered power relations are discursively constructed through Lydia’s role as a mother and protector. Maternal identity is foregrounded through emotive language and internal monologue, emphasizing sacrifice and responsibility. Lydia’s voice is often introspective, reflecting internalized fear and resilience.

She repeatedly frames survival as a maternal obligation, suggesting that “everything becomes about the child” (Cummins, 2020). This discursive construction aligns with ideological representations of motherhood as self-sacrifice. From a CDA perspective, such discourse reflects culturally dominant gender ideologies that associate women with caregiving and emotional labour.

While Lydia demonstrates agency through decision-making, her linguistic portrayal remains tied to emotional vulnerability. This duality reflects what Fairclough (2013) describes as ideological tension within discourse, where empowerment and constraint coexist.

Silence as a Discursive Practice

Silence functions as a powerful discursive practice in *American Dirt*. Moments of withheld speech, suppressed dialogue, and internalized thought reflect powerlessness and fear. Characters often choose silence as a survival strategy, indicating how discourse is regulated by power.

In several scenes, Lydia “does not speak” despite injustice or threat (Cummins, 2020). This absence of speech is itself meaningful, signalling domination through fear. CDA recognizes silence as a form of discourse that reflects power relations, particularly in contexts of coercion and surveillance (van Dijk, 2019).

Silence in the novel reinforces the ideological reality that marginalized groups often lack discursive agency. The inability to speak freely underscores unequal access to power and institutional voice.

Discursive Normalization of Violence

Violence in the novel is frequently described through normalized and routine language. Repetition of violent references without emotive escalation suggests desensitization, reflecting how prolonged exposure to violence reshapes discourse.

Phrases suggesting that violence has become “ordinary” or “expected” (Cummins, 2020) indicate ideological normalization. CDA interprets such linguistic normalization as a mechanism through which oppressive realities are rendered acceptable or inevitable (Fairclough, 2013).

By presenting violence as routine, the discourse reflects broader ideological structures in which systemic violence against marginalized populations is normalized within social narratives.

Summary of Discursive Patterns

Overall, the CDA of *American Dirt* reveals consistent discursive patterns that construct power and ideology. Power is enacted through agency assignment, imperatives, silence, and institutional language. Ideology is embedded in representations of migrants, gender roles, and normalized violence. Discursive practices in the novel reflect and reproduce broader social narratives surrounding migration, authority, and vulnerability.

Through Fairclough’s framework, it becomes evident that *American Dirt* is not merely a narrative of migration but a discursive site where power relations are linguistically negotiated and ideologically framed. The novel’s language both challenges and reinforces dominant ideologies, illustrating the complex role of contemporary fiction in shaping social discourse.

FINDINGS

The Critical Discourse Analysis of *American Dirt* demonstrates that language functions as a central mechanism through which power and ideology are constructed and circulated within the narrative. One major finding is that power is discursively enacted through unequal agency distribution, where institutions, violent actors, and abstract forces are frequently positioned as active agents, while migrants are linguistically represented as passive, vulnerable, and reactive. This pattern reinforces hierarchical power relations and presents domination as normalized and inevitable.

Another key finding concerns institutional discourse, particularly in scenes involving borders, checkpoints, and authority figures. The study finds that institutional power is asserted through imperatives, minimal responses, and bureaucratic language that restricts dialogue and silences migrant voices. Such discursive practices legitimize authority while marginalizing those subjected to it, reflecting how power operates through routine linguistic control.

The analysis further reveals that ideology related to migration is constructed through representational strategies emphasizing fear, suffering, and displacement. Migrants are often described collectively, which

evokes empathy but simultaneously reduces individuality and agency. This discursive framing aligns with dominant ideological narratives that portray migrants primarily as victims, thereby limiting alternative representations of resilience or resistance.

Gendered discourse also emerges as a significant finding. Maternal identity is foregrounded through emotive and sacrificial language, reinforcing dominant gender ideologies that associate women with caregiving and emotional labour. While the protagonist exhibits agency through survival strategies, her representation remains discursively constrained by traditional gender expectations.

Finally, the study finds that silence operates as a powerful discursive practice. The suppression or absence of speech in moments of threat signifies domination and fear, illustrating that power is exercised not only through language but also through its restriction. Overall, the findings indicate that *American Dirt* both challenges and reproduces dominant power structures through complex discursive practices.

CONCLUSION

This study set out to examine how power, ideology, and discursive practices are constructed in Jeanine Cummins' *American Dirt* using Critical Discourse Analysis. Drawing on Fairclough's three-dimensional model and van Dijk's socio-cognitive approach, the analysis demonstrates that literary discourse operates as a site where social power relations and ideological meanings are actively negotiated.

The findings confirm that language in *American Dirt* is not neutral but ideologically charged, shaping readers' understanding of migration, authority, and identity. Through specific linguistic choices—such as agency assignment, institutional imperatives, representational patterns, and strategic silences—the novel constructs power relations that mirror broader socio-political discourses surrounding migration and marginalization. While the narrative seeks to humanize migrant experiences, it simultaneously risks reinforcing dominant ideological frames by limiting discursive agency.

By applying CDA to contemporary fiction, this study contributes to interdisciplinary scholarship bridging linguistics and literary studies. It demonstrates that literary texts are not merely aesthetic artifacts but active participants in social discourse, capable of shaping ideological perceptions and cultural narratives.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, several recommendations are proposed. First, future research may extend CDA to other contemporary novels, short stories, or dramas that address migration, identity, and power, allowing for comparative analysis across genres and cultural contexts. Second, researchers may integrate CDA with reader-response or reception studies to examine how discursive constructions influence audience interpretation and public discourse. Third, further studies could focus on counter-discursive strategies in literature to explore how marginalized voices resist dominant ideological narratives through language. Finally, educators and curriculum designers are encouraged to incorporate CDA-based literary analysis into academic programs to foster critical awareness of how language shapes power and ideology in both fictional and real-world contexts.

REFERENCES

Abbas, H. (2025). Exploring the Stylistic Features of Reporting Clauses in The Alchemist by Paulo Coelho. *Research Journal for Social Affairs*, 3(3), 373-379.

Abbas, H., & Iqbal, S. (2025). Transnational Identity Formation in Contemporary Migrant Fiction: A Study of Mohsin Hamid's *Exit West*. *The Critical Review of Social Sciences Studies*, 3(3), 513-525.

Abbas, H., & Meraj, A. (2025). Integrating AI-Generated Materials in EFL: Institutional Dynamics, Teacher Productivity, and Shifts in Instructional Practices in Dir Lower, Pakistan. *Research Journal for Social Affairs*, 3(6), 907-923.

Abbas, H., & Meraj, A. (2025). Research Journal for Social Affairs.

Abbas, H., & Tariq, L. The Dynamics of Hysteria and Power in Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*: A Sociological Perspective.

Abbas, H., Abbas, A., Iqbal, A., & Khalil, P. Z. (2023). Echoes of Haunted Memories and Nightmares: Understanding Trauma in Gurnah's Afterlives. *University of Chitral Journal of Linguistics and Literature*, 7(II), 99-105.

Abbas, H., Ahmad, D., Hasham, A., & Rehman, S. H. AI-POWERED LINGUISTICS: THE DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION OF LANGUAGE AND TEXT ANALYSIS.

Abbas, H., Amin, Z., & Ahmad, R. (2023). Colonial Imprints on Nature: Ecocritical Explorations in Abdulrazak Gurnah's Afterlives. *Pakistan Journal of Society, Education and Language (PJSEL)*, 10(1), 450-459.

Abbas, H., Bibi, S., & Khan, Z. (2025). Gender and Cultural Bias in Danielle Steel's *Silent Honour*: A Postcolonial Feminism and Ethnocentrism Perspective. *Review Journal of Social Psychology & Social Works*, 3(1), 534-546.

Abbas, H., Bibi, S., & Muhammad, L. (2025). Finding the Self Within: Feminist Perspectives on Home and Identity in *Little Fires Everywhere*. *ACADEMIA International Journal for Social Sciences*, 4(3), 1329-1339.

Abbas, H., Khan, A., & Saim, M. (2025). Thresholds of Transformation: A Symbolic Exploration of War, Identity, and Space in Mohsin Hamid's *Of Windows and Doors*. *Review Journal of Social Psychology & Social Works*, 3(2), 96-107.

Abbas, H., Ullah, I., & Ullah, W. (2025). Displacement and Urban Alienation: An Ecocritical Reading of the Reluctant Fundamentalist. *ACADEMIA International Journal for Social Sciences*, 4(1), 677-688.

Al-Zubaidi, R. T. A. (2022). *Critical discourse analysis: Power exercise and resistance in Khaled Hosseini's A Thousand Splendid Suns*. *Journal of Language and Literature Studies*, 18(Special Issue 2), 1023-1033.

Ananda, H. A., Kuncara, S. D., & Sartika Dewi, J. I. (2023). *A critical discourse analysis of ideology represented in Amy Tan's The Joy Luck Club novel*. *Journal of Basic and Social Studies and Beyond*.

Bibi, S., Ahmad, R., & Abbas, H. Challenging Societal Boundaries: A Critical Study of Female Self-Actualization in *Amber Reeves' A Lady and Her Husband*.

Bouzkri, M. Critical Discourse Analysis as a Research Tool. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0159630970180302>

Bright Journal. (2025). *Emma's character and the language power in the novel Emma: A critical discourse analysis*. Bright Journal of Language Studies.

Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2018). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.

Cummins, J. (2020). *American Dirt*. Flatiron Books.

Fairclough, N. (2013). *Critical discourse analysis: The critical study of language* (2nd ed.). Routledge.

Hossain, M. A. (2022). *Critical discourse analysis of literary texts from NCTB English for Today textbooks: A qualitative study*. Scholars Journal of Arts, Humanities & Social Sciences.

Hussein, L. D. D. H. (2025). *Critical discourse analysis of selected passages from the novel The War That Saved My Life*. Journal of Linguistic and Literary Research.

Khan, S., Ahmad, R., & Abbas, H. (2024). An Analytical Study of The Deforming Tendencies in The English Translation of Manto's Toba Tek Singh by Khalid Hasan. *International Research Journal of Management and Social Sciences*, 5(1), 802-811.

Marini, A. M. (2020). Slightly Browner Than Me: A Critical Discourse Analysis of American Dirt. *Pop McC*, 5.

Patton, M. Q. (2015). *Qualitative research & evaluation methods* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.

Rasheed, S. (2023). *A critical discourse analysis of selected Pakistani novels*. Journal of Arts & Humanities and Social Sciences.

Sappe, M. (2025). *MRG Book Review Series: What American Dirt chooses to bury*. Migration Research Group.

Sempek, R. (2020). *American Dirt: Book review and controversy analysis*. Office for Intellectual Freedom Blog.

Stamou, A. G. (2018). *Synthesizing critical discourse analysis with language ideology perspectives*. Discourse & Society.

van Dijk, T. A. (2015). *Critical discourse analysis*. In *Handbook of Discourse Analysis*.

van Dijk, T. A. (2019). *Critical discourse studies: A sociocognitive approach*.

van Dijk, T. A. (2019). *Discourse and power* (2nd ed.). Palgrave Macmillan.

Yang, Y. (2023). *Ideology in Critical Discourse Study: A review of literature*. Journal of the University of Ruhuna.

Zaib, K., Anwar, M., & Abbas, H. (2021). The Role Of Mother Tongue In Learning English At The Intermediate Level.