

Constructing Digital Identity and Surveillance Culture in *Dave Eggers' The Circle*: A Literary Representation of Social Media in the Twenty-First Century

Shabana Perveen

shabanaqaisar122@gmail.com

Head of Language Department, Australian Education Council, Multan, Punjab, Pakistan

Sadaf Nasir

sadafnasir03@gmail.com

English Lecturer, Multan College of Nursing, MMDC, Multan, Punjab, Pakistan

Gulnaz Jehanzeb

gulnazishtiaq8@gmail.com

Research Associate / PhD Scholar, Department of English, Hazara University Mansehra, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan

Corresponding Author: Shabana Perveen shabanaqaisar122@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

*The digital world and social media have changed how people communicate, express themselves, and interact socially, and have raised new awareness of privacy and surveillance. This research analyzes how the novel *The Circle* (2013) by Dave Eggers presents digital identity and surveillance culture as a literary representation of 21st-century social media. The study explores how discourse functions at three levels: textual, discursive, and sociocultural levels in light of Norman Fairclough's (1995) three-dimensional model of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to influence the concept of identity, transparency, and power. This study uses a qualitative research design and purposive sampling to select text extracts, dialogues, and corporate slogans in the novel that discuss the problems of digital participation, self-representation, and surveillance. The analysis shows that the novel constructs digital identity through discourses of transparency, connectivity, and participation, and that for this to happen, the individual must become visible online in order to be accepted socially and validated as an individual. In addition, the results reveal ways in which surveillance is culturally normalized by redefining privacy and secrecy as moral offences via ideological and linguistic means. The present study also underscores the importance of corporate discourse in institutionalising power and reinforcing hegemonic power relations in digitally mediated environments. The research places these discourses in the wider sociocultural contexts, which challenges the emergence of surveillance capitalism and reveals the ideological aspects of the current social media culture. In conclusion, the study helps to enrich literary and discourse studies by highlighting the usefulness of Fairclough's CDA in the analysis of contemporary fiction and its response to current social and technological issues.*

Keywords: Digital identity, surveillance culture, social media, Critical Discourse Analysis, Fairclough, ideology, power, *The Circle*.

INTRODUCTION

The Digital technologies and social media platforms have dramatically changed the communication context of the 21st century, impacting social interactions but also the construction, negotiation, and performance of identities. With the development of networked communication, people can now be connected at an unprecedented level, and they are able to join virtual communities that span across geographical distances. These technological developments have also created new forms of surveillance and control, however, which have ignited critical questions on the link between digital participation, the formation of identities and power (Han, 2017; Zuboff, 2019). In modern societies, social media

platforms are not just a space for communication, but rather a discursive space where meanings of ideas are created, shared and debated (Couldry & Mejias, 2019; Noble, 2018).

As social media has become a part of daily existence, there has been the rise of a sociocultural phenomenon that has been called "surveillance culture." There is a sociocultural phenomenon that has been coined "surveillance culture" in the context of social media becoming an integral part of everyday life, where visibility, data extraction, and self-disclosure have become normalized. Digital surveillance is different from other forms of surveillance, which used a hierarchical system of observation, in that it is integrated into participatory practices that involve people sharing their personal data in order to gain social recognition and connectivity (Han, 2017; Zuboff, 2019). In this respect, identity in the digital age is becoming more and more technologized; it is a type of identity that is constantly monitored, categorized, and regulated by technology. Digital identities are therefore not determined or static, but rather discursive constructs which are formed by institutional interests, technological infrastructures, and general sociocultural ideologies (Couldry & Mejias, 2019; Noble, 2018).

The concept of "digital identity" and "surveillance" has been a significant point of discussion in the current literature. The growing intermingling of anxieties about technology and culture in 21st-century fiction reveals conflicts between the individual and the institutional. Literary texts are important sites to explore the mediation of social relations and the reproduction of ideological structures by digital technologies. This certainly is one criticism of the culture of social media as outlined by writer Dave Eggers in *The Circle* (2013), a characteristically dystopian look at a technologically saturated world in which transparency, connectivity, and participation are now the moral imperative (Davison-Vecchione, 2024; Ajeesh, 2026).

The Circle is set in a powerful tech company that is trying to merge information and social interaction into a digital platform, and investigates the implications of ubiquitous surveillance and personal experience being monetized. The novel follows the story of Mae Holland and shows how institutional discourses foster internalization of systems of monitoring which are willingly given up by individuals. As with "secrets are lies", "sharing is caring" and "privacy is theft", corporate slogans provide strong discursive devices that legitimate surveillance and redefine the public and private divide. The novel thus highlights the ideologies that are reflected in the processes of technological institutions to create subjectivity and to normalize relations of power (Abbas et al., 2025; Ali, 2025; Ajeesh, 2026).

This current research is based on Norman Fairclough's (1995) 3D model of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to analyze the digital identity and culture of surveillance in *The Circle*. Fairclough views discourse as a social practice and suggests an analysis of discourse in three interconnected ways: text, discursive practice, and social practice. The textual dimension emphasizes the language's vocabulary, metaphors, modality, and rhetorical strategies in the encoding of meaning. This dimension is able to explore the lexicological and ideological features used to ensure transparency and technological advancement in the context of *The Circle*.

The second dimension, discursive practice, is related to the production, distribution, and consumption of discourse. Fairclough believes that texts do not have a meaning unless they are situated within the institutional processes and interpretation of which they are a part. In Eggers' novel, the construction of corporate discourse, slogans, digital interactions, and the nature of media are discursive devices through which people construct their identities and internalize modes of surveillance. The analysis of these practices offers insights into the ways in which digital discourse shapes specific knowledge and social practices, especially in the novel's depiction of identity and technologically mediated identity and corporate surveillance (Paramagururaj & Subha, 2024; Khan, 2024).

Social practice is the third dimension and places discourse in the context of other political, economic, and cultural practices. Language is seen from a perspective that it can be a product of, and a product of, power and ideology. The surveillance systems that appear in *The Circle* are indicative of the current anxieties about data capitalism, corporate power, and the growing power of social media in shaping the

possibilities for individual agency (Zuboff, 2019; Couldry & Mejias, 2019). The last few years of research on the novel also focus on the concepts of surveillance, information control, privacy, and corporate power as key elements in Eggers' dystopian portrayal (Saudi, 2024; Abbas et al., 2025; Mastroianni Greco, 2025). Fairclough's framework allows for the study of digital culture in the context of wider social contexts, enabling the construction of a critical understanding of how it reinforces existing patterns of power and how it is changing the perceptions of identity, privacy, and citizenship.

In this study, based on Fairclough's three-dimensional model, the relationship between *The Circle* and the discursive construction of digital identity, and the normalization of surveillance in the social media culture of the twenty-first century will be explored. The study seeks to uncover the ideology behind digital communication by investigating the strategies, processes, and sociocultural practices within the texts, while also participating in the current discussions about the impact of technological development on the modern world.

Statement of the problem

In the 21st century, with the growing number of social media platforms, the ways people build and enact their identities have changed. At the same time, the use of digital technologies has become more and more vital and has led to practices of surveillance on an unprecedented scale, with corporate institutions collecting, monitoring and controlling personal data. Although social media offers a sense of connectivity and transparency and of participation, it also poses important questions about privacy, agency and the ideologies that underlie the normalisation of surveillance in the modern world.

The socio-cultural shifts have been reflected in the current literature, and a greater focus has been placed on the implications of digital culture and technological power. *The Circle* (2013) by Dave Eggers shows a dystopian future in which our social media, corporate media, and surveillance technologies define our identities and the public and private nature of our lives. Eggers reveals the discursive strategies that enable the widespread practice of surveillance and encourage people to become complicit in systems of surveillance.

The Circle has gained academic interest from the fields of media studies, DH and cultural studies, but there is not much research on this novel from the point of view of CDA and even less work involving Norman Fairclough's three-dimensional model of CDA. Previous research has primarily been centred on the ethics and techno-political aspects of surveillance, with little attention paid to the importance of discourse in the process of forming digital identities and reproducing ideologies. Further, there is a lack of consideration of the interplay between the novel's textual features, the discursive practices, and the broader sociocultural context in the novel's criticism of the culture of contemporary social media.

Thus, the purpose of this study is to fill this void by using the three-dimensional Critical Discourse Analysis model of Fairclough to analyze the discourse of *The Circle* that forms the digital identity and normalizes the culture of surveillance. The study attempts to discuss the relationship between language, ideology, and power in order to help to understand the representation of social media in the twenty-first century in literature.

Research Objectives

1. To examine the textual and linguistic techniques that help to create a digital identity in Dave Eggers' *The Circle*.
2. To analyze the discursive practices that are normalizing and legitimizing surveillance culture in this specific novel.
3. To examine how the discourse is related to the larger sociocultural power and ideology-producing structures in *The Circle* within the three-dimensional model of Fairclough.

Research Questions

1. What strategies in text and language are used to build up a digital identity in *The Circle*?
2. How do the discursive practices embodied in the novel help to normalise and legitimate a culture of surveillance?
3. How are discourses in *The Circle* representative and reiterative of other power and ideology in twenty-first-century social media culture?

Significance of the Study

The current research has a number of important implications. It is the first work in a fast-growing field of scholarship in digital culture that focuses on the literary description of social media, identity building, and surveillance in the 21st century. Because social networking platforms are increasingly shaping social interaction and self-representation, there has been growing interest in the academic field in the ideological implications of these platforms.

Second, the study is an extension of the study of Eggers' *The Circle*, which uses the three-dimensional model of Critical Discourse Analysis by Norman Fairclough. This research takes a different approach from previous research, which has tended to focus on sociological and technological aspects of the novel, to foreground the role of discourse in creating identities and justifying systems of surveillance. It provides a thorough examination of the language, ideology, and power dynamics in digitally mediated environments.

Third, the study will add to the field of literary and linguistic study as it shows that Critical Discourse Analysis can be applied in the study of contemporary fiction. The research features an integrated analysis of text, discourse, and socio-cultural context to demonstrate the potential of CDA as a methodological approach to the analysis of the ideological structures in literary texts.

Lastly, the results of this study can contribute to researchers in the field of literary studies, discourse studies, media studies, and digital humanities to enhance the understanding of the sociocultural impact of surveillance and identity construction in the digital era.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Based on the sociological theory of secrecy, social proximity and social distance put forward by Georg Simmel, Davison-Vecchiene (2024) explored how the themes of secrecy and surveillance are represented in the novel *The Circle* by Dave Eggers. The main aim of the research was to explore how Simmel's understanding of "the secret" can help to shed light on the novel's representation of the modern culture of surveillance and identity construction. The research used the analytical framework of the social theory of Simmel and examined the tension between individuality and digital transparency in technologically mediated societies. The results showed that secrecy is a key part of the human individual and social communication and that the loss of privacy in *The Circle* disturbs the traditional forms of subjectivity. In addition, the study illustrated how Eggers' dystopian fiction illustrates the paradox of connectedness and alienation in the connected age.

In his article, Khan (2024) focused on how surveillance through artificial intelligence has emerged and influenced identity processes in Dave Eggers' novel *The Circle*. The focus of the study was to explore the implications of the "digital panopticon" that AI technologies produce and how it breaks down individual identity, thus fostering self-regulation. The research adopted a qualitative textual approach and was inspired by Foucault's theory of panopticism and the idea of the digital panopticon. The results showed that the novel depicts the technologies of surveillance as instruments of social control that slowly erode the individual's autonomy and create a divided self. The study also stressed the

psychological effects of technological surveillance and the need to put in place ethical limits on corporate technologies.

Saudi (2024) discussed data colonialism and the interplay between surveillance, power, and information control in modern digital societies in *The Circle*. The main goal of the research was to analyze Eggers' novel and the forms of new colonialism it represents through the digital infrastructures and data extraction. The theoretical approach of data colonialism was used to explore the similarities between past colonialism and today's technological power. The results showed how personal data is being monetized by the Circle and how corporations and individuals have unequal power dynamics. The study is a conclusion that the novel is a criticism of the exploitation of personal data and a disclosure of the loss of privacy and autonomy in digital capitalism.

The concept of “reverse spectacle” used in this study was taken from the work of Paramagururaj and Subha (2024) on *The Circle*, and Foucault's work on panopticism was used as a base for this concept. The research sought to explore how surveillance is manifested in technologically sophisticated societies and understand the innovative ways in which traditional power relations are restructured. The scholars' theoretical approach was based on Foucault's concept of the panopticon, which focuses on the shift from hierarchical to participatory and technologically mediated surveillance. The results showed that the digital ecosystem of the Circle gives rise to a situation where a few institutions have the power to monitor and control the behavior of a large population like never before. The study claimed that Eggers normalizes surveillance as a social practice that has a radical impact on the conceptions of freedom and individuality.

In his article, Ajeesh (2026) sought to understand how surveillance capitalism is depicted and how it degrades the concept of personhood in the novels *The Circle* and *The Every*, authored by Dave Eggers. The study aimed to investigate the 'commodification of human experiences' and the 'reshaping of individual autonomy' in the context of contemporary digital technologies in a hyper-transparency age. Theoretical frameworks used to guide the research were surveillance capitalism, participatory culture, and data ethics. The study showed that Eggers depicts digital technologies as tools that can be used to create marketable products and to redefine the self through a comparative literary analysis. The results also indicated that the ubiquity of connection and algorithmic monitoring is detrimental to human autonomy and helps to further centralise corporate power in the twenty-first century.

The above-mentioned studies offer insightful approaches to the issues of surveillance, identity, secrecy, and digital capitalism in *The Circle* by Dave Eggers. But although they play important roles, minimal research has been done to analyze the novel in the context of Norman Fairclough's model of Critical Discourse Analysis, which has three dimensions. The current scholarship is mostly based on sociological, philosophical, and panoptic perspectives, and an analysis of the linguistic and discursive practices that enable the creation of digital identity and culture of surveillance is lacking. In light of this, the present study aims at filling the above-mentioned gap by using the framework of Fairclough to examine the discourse-ideology-power relationship in the literary representation of social media culture.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present research has a qualitative research design, which is used to explore the construction of digital identity and the surveillance culture in Dave Eggers' *The Circle* (2013). The research is based on Norman Fairclough's (1995) three-dimensional model of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) that sees discourse as a social practice that exists at three levels: text, discursive practice, and social practice. The main data analyzed in the study are the selected extracts of the text, the dialogues, the corporate slogans, and narrative passages in the novel which clearly discuss social media, social identity formation, transparency, privacy, and surveillance. The textual samples selected are those that are relevant to the research question(s) and purposes of the study, and are selected using purposive sampling. The analysis is carried out in the three dimensions of analysis of Fairclough. The study focuses on the linguistic and stylistic characteristics, such as the use of words, modality, metaphors, lexicon, and rhetorical strategies,

at the textual level in the representation of digital identity and digital surveillance. The research looks at the production, circulation, and interpretation of dominant discourses at the level of discursive practice, focusing on the institutional context of the Circle and communicative practices and patterns of interaction that "normalize" surveillance at the corporate level, and corporate slogans. At the social practice level, the study places these discourses in the social, cultural, and ideological context of the novel, exploring how it mirrors the contemporary issues of social media culture, corporate power, data commodification, and the loss of privacy in the digital era. The research will seek to expose the ideology and power dynamics of the twenty-first-century digital society in Eggers' portrayal through a textual analysis that also considers a sociocultural interpretation.

Data Analysis

The present study aims to analyse the digital identity and surveillance culture, as they are discursively constructed in the context of twenty-first-century social media in the light of the three-dimensional model of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) developed by Norman Fairclough (1995). Fairclough's conception of discourse is social, which affects it at the textual, discursive, and sociocultural levels. This analysis focuses on the relationship between these choices of language, institutional practices, and larger ideology and the novel's concepts of identity, privacy, and power. *The Circle* shows that discourse is not just a way to communicate, but also a way to create and validate social realities, through the depiction of social media technologies and corporate authority.

The theme of change of identity in the digital space is one of the main themes of the novel. The Circle is an environment that encourages a discursive conversation in which visibility, participation, and connectivity are the modes of social being. This is wrapped up in the corporation's most popular and well-known tagline: "Sharing is caring."

The slogan, at the level of the text, uses parallelism and rhyme, creating an unforgettable and convincing slogan that equates digital participation with moral goodness. The words sharing and caring are part of a semantic set of words that refer to empathy, community, and social responsibility. But, under the surface of the seemingly positive message, the slogan serves an ideological purpose by making the sharing of personal information an ethical imperative. In this linguistic trick, it becomes "normal" to be "surveilled" and to be a "good participant," while being a "bad participant" is considered "social irresponsibility".

Lexical features of transparency, participation, openness, engagement, community, and completion are crucial to the building of digital identity in the novel. As these lexical repetitions create a discursive structure in which identity is not considered as a private or autonomous entity anymore, but as a public performance that relies on technology. The Circle continually asks its staff to "participate", "share", "comment", and "engage" and makes digital visibility a necessary part of the conversation about citizenship today. This linguistic practice is representative of Fairclough's conception of how discourse is involved in the production of social identities through the control of what people can say, do, and become in the context of particular institutions.

Mae Holland's metamorphosis throughout the story is a good example of the discursive process of building the digital self. At first, Mae only sees the Circle as a groundbreaking organization that provides jobs and social possibilities. As she gets more involved in the organisation's digital world, however, she begins to feel her identity is tied to the acknowledgement and validation of others, online. Her social value is determined by the number of people who participate in her, her rank, her followers, and the interactions that she has on digital platforms. As such, identity is measurable, observable, and open for institutional review.

Another of Circle's slogans makes the ideology behind the practice of surveillance crystal clear: "Secrets are lies."

In a textual sense, the declaration has a straightforward declarative sentence structure and the copular verb “are” to create an absolute equivalence between the two concepts: secrecy and dishonesty. The slogan wipes out the privacy-deception dichotomy, transforming the concept of privacy into a moral shortcoming, not an act of personal freedom. The word “lies” is used to refer to “privacy,” which is a strongly negative word, therefore inducing readers and characters to equate privacy with antisocial behaviour. This rhetorical ploy is used to justify the threats to personal boundaries, and to make transparency seem like a universal good for society.

The slogan of the Circle is the culmination of the ideological project of the Circle: “Privacy is theft.”

The statement illustrates the power of the discourse in its ability to re-invent meanings of familiar concepts and in its impact on social values. The word “theft” brings to mind crime, immorality, and harm to society and puts the right to privacy in the realm of selfishness. The slogan is metonymically redefining personal autonomy and presenting surveillance as a civic duty. Fairclough points out that ideology works best when it puts the values which have developed in a particular place and time as “natural” and “self-evident” truths. The slogans of the corporation do the exact same thing in *The Circle* and mask the relations of power under the guise of morality and collective welfare.

The novel also gives evidence of the power of language in terms of its ideology, as seen in its modality. Based on Fairclough's work, modal expressions are said to be expressions of attitudes that speakers have towards authority, obligation, and truth. The business leaders use high modality statements throughout the story to make it seem like technological advances and full transparency are inevitable. There is an overt attempt to use assertive and authoritative language throughout the text, which inhibits criticism and opposition to surveillance technologies as solutions to social and political issues. In this act of inevitability, surveillance is depicted not as an ideology but as a pre-condition to social development.

The production and circulation of these meanings is related to Fairclough's second analytical dimension, discursive practice. Discourse in the Circle is spread at business gatherings, public presentations, on social media, through digital interfaces, and through personal communication. They are actively involved in reproducing corporate ideology through sharing of personal experience, comparing each other's performance with others, and keeping them constantly engaged with the company's digital systems. Surveillance is thus not only top-down, but also bottom-up, internal, and perpetuated in the form of communicative habits of the day.

The moment of Mae's becoming “transparent” is an important one in the story and gives an insight into how the institutional discourse affects individual subjectivity. Mae consents to be constantly monitored by cameras strapped to her body, rather than by surveillance cameras, and turns the practice of surveillance into a way of living. Her willingness to reveal herself completely illustrates the impact of corporate ideology on her concept of freedom, honesty, and social responsibility. She sees surveillance as not oppressive but as a way to become authentic and belong. This change is based on Fairclough's claim that discourse is a key factor in the creation of social subjects and in the regulation of behaviours.

The Circle discourse is also an example of Fairclough's notion of interdiscursivity, that is, the intermingling of a number of discourses in one communicative context. The corporation uses a combination of technological discourse, moral, political, economic, and democratic discourse to gain legitimacy for its growing power. The language of innovation meets the language of ethics, and the call for transparency and participation hides other relations of domination. *The Circle* has redefined values traditionally linked to democracy, social responsibility, and re-appropriated them as universal social goals.

This process is one of the processes that helped to establish corporate hegemony. Fairclough's definition of hegemonic power is that it is kept in place through the successful naturalisation of the ideology of the dominant institutions and a degree of consent from the people. *The Circle* is one where there is no strong dependence on coercion as the driving force for corporate authority, but rather persuasion and

the normalisation of surveillance practices. The people who work in and use public spaces give up their privacy, for they have adopted the idea that they must be visible if they are to be honest, engaged in public life, and committed to civic involvement. As one becomes more accustomed to institutional discourse, surveillance becomes a part of life and even desirable.

These discursive practices have a sociocultural dimension when the novel is placed in a wider frame of reference of twenty-first-century digital culture. The third analytical dimension of Fairclough's discourse theory sees discourse as a social practice that is situated in political, economic, and cultural systems. *The Circle* is a depiction of the surveillance society that is the current concern, and it is a society that is shaped by social media, algorithmic governance, data commodification, and the control of multinational technology corporations. The novel predicts many of the traits of today's digital culture, such as self-documentation, the culture of influencers, algorithmic surveillance, and the commercialization of personal experience.

In the meantime, *The Circle* processes human emotions, relationships, and behaviors into measurable numbers which can be gathered, studied, and sold. Individual experiences become valuable corporate resources and no longer exclusive to the individual. These are part of wider changes in the context of digital capitalism where personal information is a commodity. The novel is, therefore, challenging the notion that social media platforms simply provide a space for communication and revealing that they rather influence social reality, with regard to the visibility and access to information.

Furthermore, the novel's surveillance systems are very similar to those described by Michel Foucault in his book, *The Panopticon*. People change their behavior because they believe that they are always being watched. *The Circle*, however, is not a disciplinary system, as the people who use it willingly provide the information that is used to monitor them, and in return are recognized and included. Power is not exercised directly and coercively, but through self-regulation and observation via internalization. The novel thus illustrates a shift in digital technologies towards active engagement in their own surveillance.

The best example of this was Mae Holland becoming an advocate for total transparency when she went from being a normal employee. Initially, she has respect for personal boundaries and separates her personal and professional life. But her worldview is gradually changing with the corporate discourse. She goes from enthusiasm to internalization, from participation to ideology, and finally, she will embrace the ideology of total transparency of the Company. Her transformation demonstrates that identity is not only shaped by the changes of technology, but also is created through discourse, institutional practices, and relations of power.

The analysis thus shows that *The Circle* builds up digital identity by using discourses that emphasize transparency, connectedness, and public participation, but at the same time negate privacy and autonomy. On the textual level, slogans, lexical items, and modal expressions redefine the traditional notions of 'self' and 'social responsibility'. Discursive practice is reproduced in corporate communication in terms of institutional structures and in the day-to-day routines. On the social practice level, the novel attacks the formation of surveillance capitalism and uncovers the ideology of the present social media culture. The three-dimensional model thus highlights how language in *The Circle* is a potent tool that helps to construct identities, normalise surveillance and maintain relations of power in the digital age.

FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

The results of the current research show that David Eggers' *The Circle* builds digital identity and a culture of surveillance in a complicated way by combining language, ideology and institutional power. The study adopts Fairclough's (1995) critical model of discourse analysis (CDA), which is based on three dimensions of CDA, namely, discourse as a way of constructing social identities, discourse as a way of normalizing surveillance, and discourse as a way of reproducing dominant ideology in the context of the twenty-first century digital culture.

The first key finding is that the discursive construction of digital identity in *The Circle* is done with rhetoric of transparency, participation, and connectivity. The analysis of the novel's slogans, lexical selections, and communicative strategies shows that identity is not a stable and autonomous reality but a socially mediated performance that relies on the public performance of the self and on the use of technologies. "Sharing is caring" emphasizes the self-disclosure that is in line with moral responsibility, and turns digital participation into an ethical action. Thus, the novel represents the process of identity formation as one that is controlled by the discourse of institutions and not by individual agency.

The second finding shows how surveillance is normativised by language and ideology, which redefine the conventional concepts of privacy and secrecy. The slogans, "Secrets are lies" and "Privacy is theft," are rhetorical devices which undermine the legality of personal boundaries and the value of transparency as a social good. In the text, these arguments are based on categorical statements, metaphorical constructions, and evaluative language which make surveillance appear desirable and inevitable. The analysis indicates that language is a key factor in obscuring power relations and in shaping them as social values shared by the corporation.

One of the other important observations is that modality plays a part in strengthening an ideology of certainty. The discourse of *The Circle* contains several high-modal expressions which describe technological development and complete transparency as an inevitable part of social progress. Authoritative language used by corporate figures (especially Eamon Bailey) stifles opposition and other voices. In these linguistic practices, the novel shows how discourse legitimates institutional power and how it builds surveillance as a condition for social development.

The study also shows that the production and circulation of discourse in *The Circle* is not through direct coercion but through participation. The transmission of institutional ideology, in line with Fairclough's theory of discursive practice, is done in corporate meetings, digital interactions, social networks, and through employees' daily communication. The results show that surveillance is not only supported by the technology, but also by the willing participation of people who internalise and reproduce dominant discourses. In the process of becoming an advocate of total transparency, Mae Holland's transformation from a common worker to a common citizen is an illustration of the ways in which discourse can influence subjectivity and regulate social behaviour.

The study also emphasizes *The Circle's* interdiscursive corporate discourse. The firm cleverly integrates the technological, political, economic, and moral discourses in order to legitimize its growing influence. The Circle's appropriation of concepts like democracy, accountability, and social responsibility makes asymmetrical power relations invisible under the guise of innovation and progress. This interdiscursivity helps to create a "corporate hegemony" in which the institutional interests are taken for granted and considered "universal truths."

The Circle at the sociocultural level is a reflection of the greater sense of anxiety towards surveillance capitalism and the growing influence of digital technologies in the modern world. The novel is a world in which personal experience, emotions and relationships become commodities that are controlled by corporations. The text's portrayal of algorithmic monitoring, self-documentation and the performance of technologically mediated online communication reveals the ideological implications of social media culture, and raises doubts about the potential for technological progress and individual autonomy.

The results also show that there is a great connection between the surveillance system shown in the novel and the concept of panopticism of Michel Foucault. *The Circle* is not like the traditional disciplinary institutions that are based on forceful external control; however, *The Circle* is a participatory surveillance system in which people willingly allow themselves to be constantly monitored. Characters feel the need to be recognized, belong, and get social validation, which helps them to self-monitor and self-regulate. Consequently, power is not so much imposed as internalized and designed in terms of institutional norms.

The study verifies that from the three-dimensional perspective of Fairclough's discourse analysis, The Circle's discourse exists at the textual, discursive, and social levels. Structurally, slogans, lexical patterns, and modals contribute to specific conceptualizations of identity and privacy in text. The discursive practice at the institutional level is the production and flow of these meanings on digital networks. On a larger social level, the novel gestures toward and critiques broader power structures, those of technological capitalism and surveillance culture.

The arguments presented in the discussion indicate that Eggers' novel is more than just a dystopian account of the excessiveness of technology; it is an extremely critical examination of the ideology behind social media in the twenty-first century. The text shows how the digital platforms are not neutral spaces of interaction, but rather discursive spaces that are used to control behaviour, to create identities and to maintain institutional power. *The Circle* raises awareness about the language and ideology of the normalisation of surveillance, encouraging readers to think about the intersections between technology, privacy and individual freedom in today's world.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the study reveals that Critical Discourse Analysis developed by Fairclough is a good approach to the exploration of the complex interaction between language, power and ideology in *The Circle*. The novel eventually demonstrates that digital identity and surveillance culture are socially constructed, as discursive practices within the fictional world of the novel and in the social media culture of the present day have a great influence on each other.

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