FAIRCLOUGH'S THREE-DIMENSIONAL MODEL: CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF BLAKE'S *"AH SUN-FLOWER!"*

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ABSTRACT

Discourse is language in use, or language used for communicative purposes. It relates to social structures, practices, and social change. In Critical Discourse Analyses (CDA), the link between discourse and society/context is mediated. There is a dialectical relationship between discourse and ideology. Ideology is a system of ideas especially social, political or religious views shared by a social group or movement. This study is qualitative in nature, rooted in critical discourse analysis, especially, Fairclough's three-dimensional model- 'Description' (lexical, graphological, grammatical, and phonological level) and 'Interpretation' of Blake's "Ah Sun-flower!" which lead towards 'Explanation' that explores the relation of this poem with social structures of authority and unequal power relations of Blake contemporary society. The authoritative, repressive and patriarchal ideology of the 18th century has been explored from this poem. The concept of the Golden Age of this poem is linked with CDA's dream of problem-free society; 'Youth' and 'Virgin' have been analyzed in the context of the institution of the love of 18th century.

INTRODUCTION

The beauty of literature lies in the fact that the readers interpret it in the perspective of the social, political, and religious condition of the period in which it is produced. The idea that literature reflects society is at least as old as Plato's concept of imitation (Albrecht, 1954). If language plays a significant role in every creative activity, it is used as a tool and weapon in critical discourse analysis. Language is more than just a means of communication with others. The language we use, both reflects and shapes the kind of world we create around us (Sarfo & Krampa, 2012). The

present study analyzes discourse of literary writing *"Ah Sun-flower!"* by William Blake. The aim of this research is to bring the analysis of romantic poetry under the umbrella of critical discourse analysis and to examine Blake's above-mentioned poem in the frame of reference to Fairclough's three-dimensional model- description, interpretation, and explanation. The present study deals with the following questions:

1. How do the levels of 'description' (lexical, graphological, grammatical and phonological level) and 'interpretation' of Blake's *"Ah Sun-flower!"* lead towards explanation?

2. How do discourses of *"Ah Sun-flower!"* reflect authoritative ideology, social structures and unequal power relations of Blake's contemporary England?

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK
Definitions of Discourse

Discourse has been defined by different critics in different ways in the nineteen seventies and eighties. Discourse is "all forms of spoken interaction, formal and informal, and written texts of all kinds" (Potter & Wetherell, 1987, p.7). It is "any regulated system of statements" (Henriques, et al., 1984, p.105). As per Marin, "Discourse analysis involves two preliminary steps, turning our objects into texts and locating those texts in discourses, in which material is interpreted and thus, put into a linguistic form. It is right, then, to adopt the formulation that discourses are 'linguistic sets of a higher order than the sentence (while often reducible to a sentence), and carried out or actualized in or while using texts" (Marin, 1983, p.162). According to Billig, et al. (1988), in discourse, we should "attend to 'hidden meanings': 'discourse can contain its negations, and these are part of its implicit, rather than explicit meanings" (Billig et al., 1988, p.23). Discourse is about objects (Parker, 1990). Discourses are the sets of meanings which constitute objects, and a discourse, then, is indeed a "representational practice" (Woolgar, 1988, p.93). According to post-structuralist writer Foucault, discourses are "practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak" (Foucault, 1972, p.49).

Fairclough's concept of discourse is referred to as social practice; discourse as "a part of social change" (2015, p.37), as "discourse has an effect on social structures, as well as being determined by them, and so contributes to social continuity and social change" (2015: 51). According to Van Dijk (1997),

discourse is a form of spoken language, what is said in public speeches or refers to the ideas of a certain school of thought, for example, the discourse of contemporary philosophers. To Van Dijk (1997, p.2), "discourse analysts… want to include some other essential components such as who uses the language, how, why and when". For him, discourse is part of complex social events which contains three main dimensions, language use; the communication of believes (cognition); and interaction in social situations (1997, p.2). He believes in the socio-cognitive approach of discourse.

Historical Background of CDA

Van Dijk (1993), provides the historical background of critical study of language, discourse, and communication, depending on the disciplines, orientation, paradigm or school involved. These lines of development are traced back to Aristotle, to the philosophers of the enlightenment, to Marx and more recently to the members of the Frankfurt School (Adorno, Benjamin, and others), and to Jürgen Habermas (Van Dijk, 1993). Another line of influence and development is going back to Gramsci and his followers in France and United Kingdom including Stuart Hall and other members of the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (Van Dijk, 1993; Corcoran, 1989; Hall, 1981). Likewise, first in France, later also in the UK and the USA, the influence of the work of Althusser (1971); Foucault (1980); and Pêcheux (1982), among others (Van Dijk, 1993) can be traced.

Principles of Critical Discourse Analysis

According to Fairclough and Wodak (1997, p.271-80), there are eight principles of Critical Discourse Analysis.

1. CDA addresses social problems. It focuses not only on language and language use, but also on morphological characteristics of the social-cultural process. It makes the explicit power relationships which are often hidden.

2. Power relations are discursive. CDA explains how social relations of power is exercised and negotiated in and through discourse.

3. Discourse constitutes society and culture. Every case of language use makes its contribution to produce and transform society and culture, consisting of relations of the power.

4. Discourse does ideological work.

5. Discourse is historical.

6. The link between text and society is mediated.

7. Discourse analysis is interpretative and explanatory.

8. Discourse is a form of social action.

Ruth Wodak's Principles of CDA

Wodak (2002, p. 14), presents ten principles of CDA.

1. This approach is interdisciplinary.

2. The approach is problem-oriented rather than focused on specific linguistic items.

3. The theories, as well as methodologies, are eclectic.

4. The study always incorporates fieldwork and ethnography to explore object under investigation.

5. The approach is abductive.

6. Multiple genres and multiple public spaces are studied.

7. The historical context is always analyzed and integrated into the interpretation of discourse and texts.

8. This entails some eclecticism as well as pragmatism. Although, many apply Systemic Functional Grammar.

9. Grand theories might serve as a foundation; in the specific analysis, Middle-Range Theories serve the better aims.

10. The aim of the practice and application.

Fairclough's Three-dimensional Model

There is a relationship between texts, interactions, and contexts in Fairclough's three-dimensional model, which is discussed below.

1. The description is the stage which is concerned with the formal properties of the text.
2. Interpretation is concerned with the relationship between text and interaction – with seeing the text as a product of a process of

production, and as a resource in the process of interpretation.

3. The explanation is concerned with the relationship between interaction and social context – with the social determinants of the processes of production and interpretation, and their social effects (Fairclough, 2015, 58-59).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Critical discourse analysis of William Blake's poetry is often overlooked and may be deemed unimportant because only a few researches have accomplished this purpose. CDA has been established over the past two decades as an area of academic activity in which scholars and students from many different disciplines are involved, and it is proposing new route-maps for innovation (Wodak & Chilton, 2005). It analyzes discourse with its dialectical relationship with social structures, practices and power relations. During the current and the past decades, several researches have accomplished the CDA in the realm of poetry i.e. critical discourse analysis of Marsiya-e-Hussain (Rizwan, Saeed, & Fayyaz, 2013), poetic discourse analysis of syntactic parallelism in Biblical Hebrew verse (Ayars, 2013), discourse analysis of the interpersonal meaning of in Wordsworth's poem "An Evening Walk" through tenor and mood (Sari, 2014), and discourse analysis of lyric poetry (Harris, 1989). During the past few years, researchers have attempted to study William Blake's poems under the umbrella of CDA (Khan, 2014; Nayar, 2014), but the present study will attempt to carry CDA, employing Fairclough's three-dimensional model, of William Blake's poem *"Ah Sun-flower!"* that has not yet been accomplished.

Khan (2014), analyzed the language of Blake's poem "The sick rose" in the context of CDA. He used Fairclough's concept of "meanings" produced through "interpretation." His findings show Blake's inclusive perception of the woman in his time and society through most prominent words 'rose,' 'worm,' 'dark secret love' and dominance of personal pronoun 'thou' and 'thy.' Khan (2014), analyzed Blake's "The sick rose" in the frame of reference to discourse and spotted the hidden meaning of the poem in front of the readers through CDA. The study exposes the good and evil deeds of Blake's contemporary society from this poem. Nayar (2014), studied Blake's poem "London" from the perspective of surveillance but did not study under the umbrella of CDA or unequal power relations, while the present study intends to do so.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study is qualitative in nature. Critical discourse analysis is the methodology of this study and Fairclough's three-dimensional model has been used as the research model. Data have been collected from published books, articles, and theses. In the first step of the procedure of analysis, Blake's poem "*Ah Sun-flower"* was analyzed on the first level of Fairclough's three-dimensional model, i.e. description. The text of this poem was examined on the lexical, graphological, grammatical and phonological level. In the second step 'interpretation,' literary and linguistic properties are interpreted and in the third step 'explanation,' properties of 'description' and 'interpretation' were linked with social structures, power relations and ideology of Blake's period, for seeking the results of this study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Description

Mood. As the very word 'Ah' shows, this poem is written in a sad mood. Poet's mood is melancholic due to the monotony of restriction.

Symbols. Sun-flower, sun, snow, sweet golden clime

Personification. Sun-flower, Sun, Youth, Virgin

The description on Lexical Level: Nouns in the first stanza

Abstract Nouns	Concrete Nouns
Time	Sun-flower
Steps	Sun
Clime	Travelers
Journey	

Number of Abstract Nouns: 4

Number of Concrete Nouns: 3

Graphological Level

1. There is a division of stanzas. Two stanzas are seen.

2. The poem is written as a whole. It contains lyrical tone.

3. Usual capitalization is seen but no apostrophe on *travelers* in 'travelers journey.'

4. Use of punctuation is seen, i.e. full stop, comma, colon, exclamation mark, and hyphen.

Grammatical Level

Use of Hyphen. The poet employs hyphen between Sun and flower in 'Sun-flower.'

Use of Colon. The poet uses colon two times in the poem and both times uses in the second line of the stanza.

Use of Full stop. The poet uses two full stops and both times he uses in the last line of the stanza.

Lexical Relation: Hyponymy and Hypernymy, Homonymy, Antonymy, Synonymy

Hypernymy. Journey

Hyponymy. Travelers, Sun-flower (traveler), weary, steps, Sun and 'golden clime' (destination).

Homonymy: Sun (Son)

Antonymy: Relational Antonyms

The region 'sweet golden clime' is opposite to the region 'where the Youth pined away' and 'the pale Virgin shrouded in snow.'

Synonymy: Blake uses synonyms of 'desire,' aspire and 'wish.'

The description of Phonological Level (Sounds)
1. The poem contains eight lines, in two quatrains.
2. Repetition of /s/ in "*s*teps of the *S*un:/ *S*eeking after that *s*weet."
3. The rhyme scheme is abab, cdcd.
4. Rhyming words are 'time,' 'clime,' 'Sun,' 'done,' 'desire,' 'aspire,' 'snow,' 'go.'

Interpretation

Interpretation of Personification on Semantic Level. Sun-flower is symbol of the weariness of "mechanics of the natural cycles, wishes to follow the sun" and "the Sun-flower must live a merely vegetative existence, being bound into nature, but the lovers trap themselves in the limitations of the natural world by refusing the generative aspects of their state" (Bloom, 1971, p. 46). 'Is done' is used for completion of something. Here, the poet uses it for completion of travelers' journey in sweet golden clime.

'Sweet golden clime' gives the meaning to the golden age.

'Snow' is the symbol of coldness. In this poem, it shows the death of beloved's passion.

'Youth pined away with desire' shows the death of the lover due to unfulfilled love.

Interpretation of Lexical Level. Lexical words are those that have independent meaning [such as a Noun (N), verb (V), adjective (A), adverb (Adv), or preposition (P)]. In the first stanza, some abstract nouns are more than concrete nouns. Sun-flower wishes to go to the sweet golden clime that is abstract or imaginary clime. To present the imaginary clime, Blake uses more abstract nouns in the first stanza.

Interpretation of Lexical Relations: Hyponymy and Hypernymy, Homonymy, Antonymy, Synonymy

Hyponymy and Hypernymy. Hyponymy and hypernymy refer to a relationship between a general term and the more specific terms that fall under the category of a general term. For example, the colors *red*, *green*, *blue and yellow* are hyponyms. They fall under the general term of *color*, which is the hypernym.

Sun-flower (traveler) has wearied counting the steps of the Sun, and he (sun-flower) wishes to go to the golden clime where travelers' journey is done. There are lexical relations between hyponyms (travelers, sun-flower (traveler), steps, Sun, 'golden clime' (destination) and hypernym (journey).

Homonymy. Homonymy refers to the relationship between words that are spelled or pronounced the same way but hold different meanings. In this poem, homonymy of Sun/ son is found. Sun-flower is under the authority of the Sun which means 'Youth' (son) is under the authority of his father.

Relational Antonyms

The region 'sweet golden clime' is opposite to the region 'where the Youth pined away' and 'the pale Virgin shrouded in snow.' Sun-flower (traveler) wants to go to 'sweet golden clime' because travelers' journey is completed, and it is the region of sweetness or happiness. The existing region is opposite to the 'sweet golden clime' because it is the region of restriction and death.

Synonymy

Using three synonyms of desire shows the speaker's intense wish to go to the 'golden clime.'

Interpretation of Phonological Level (Sounds)

Repetition of /s/ in the words 'steps', 'seeking' and 'sweet' shows the speaker's intense desire for 'golden clime' because these words are used for the 'golden clime.'

Interpretation of Grammatical Level

Interpretation of Use of Hyphen. The hyphen in 'Sun-flower' grammatically unites. In the same way, Sun and Sun-flower are connected with each other: Sun-flower "countest the steps of the Sun."

Use of Colon. The poet's use of colon both times at the end of the second line of the stanza is interpretable. Both times the poet uses a colon at the end of stanza in order to explain the golden clime.

Use of Full Stop. The poet uses full stop two times in the poem. Each full stop shows completion of the journey: in the first stanza, travelers' journey is done, and in the second stanza, the Sun-flower wishes to go to the golden clime.

Explanation
The Relationship between Transitory Social Events and Durable Social Structures

To explain 'explanation,' Fairclough writes, "it is the relationship between transitory social events and more durable social structures" (2015, p.59). In Blake's poem *"Ah Sun-flower!"*, youth's 'pined away with desire' and Virgin's 'shrouded in snow' are social events because the lover and beloved exist in the society and their decay and death is the outcome of durable social structures of the society, i.e. structure of the religion (authority of priest who imposes restriction on the lovers), structure of the family (authority of father). In this way, there is a dialectical relationship between transitory social events and durable social structures of society.

Ideology and Power Relations of Blake's Contemporary England

Authority of the Church has played a significant role in the formation of oppressive ideology and power relations. History is red with the blood of masses shed by Catholic Church, and history of England is red with the oppression of the Church of England. During the years of oppression, the masses were kept in ignorance, and the priest held sway over every aspect of life. Hunt (1995, p.160), states that "Christians were burned at stake by Roman Catholics by hundreds of thousands." Baron DePonnat, the French statesman stated in 1940, "Roman Catholicism was born in blood, has

wallowed in blood, and has quenched its thirst in blood, and it is in letters of blood that its true history is written" (DePonnat, 2016).

Protestantism established in England very shortly after Luther's initial protest in 1517. The priest holds authority in the Church of England too. Thus, his authority turns into oppression. Blake depicts the picture of the tyranny of law and religion in *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*: "Prisons are built with stones of Law, brothels with bricks of Religion" (Blake, 1906, p.15).

Blake writes on the graveness of the priest in the same book: "As the caterpillar chooses the fairest leaves to lay her eggs on, so the priest lays his curse on the fairest joys" (p.80). Blake does not refuse the existence of God, but he was against the corruption and oppression of the Church of England. He recognized an extremely unique and heretical belief that Christ, the Son, represented all that is good and spiritual, while the Father, God, was a symbol of absolute power, terror, and tyranny, but the priest represents evil. In Blake's contemporary society, it was not uncommon for the church to utilize vicious child labor, retain donated money and show little interest in the actual helping of the poor and needy. As a promoter of social justice and an extremely humane man, Blake was strongly opposed to the Christian church, In the poem "The Chimney Sweeper" (experience), the parents of the little chimney sweeper "And are gone to praise God & his Priest & King/ Who make up our heaven of misery" (Blake, 2008, pp. 21-22).

In the poem "A Little Boy Lost," priest's hatred for the little boy is reflected. The priest then stands upon the altar and holds the boy up as a "fiend": "Lo what a fiend is here!" said he." According to Blake, where the English church resides is to destroy the real vision and true spirituality. Because of having no faith in the priesthood, Blake believes that it is the task of the Poet to open the eyes of the people. In "There is No Natural Religion" (1906), he states that "If it were not for the Poetic or Prophetic character, the Philosophic & Experimental would soon be the ratio of all things & stand still, unable to do other than repeat the same dull round over again" (Blake, 1906).

The social structure of Blake's contemporary society was of oppression, injustice, and violation of fundamental rights. The period before Blake's birth and after his death was an epoch of upheaval in social, political,

philosophical and economic spheres of life. Problems produced by the industrial revolution were one of them. It made the cities overpopulated. It became the cause of oppression and poverty. Blake abhorred that darker period of history. Basic rights were violated in that period. Consequently, Blake's a large number of poems reflect these social grievances. such as "London" conveys the bleakness and barrenness of the city.

Blake, the being seer, exposes the ugly face of the ideology of his contemporary England. Ideology of that period was reflected in the system of patriarchy, oppression of the church, and industrial revolution. Hazarika (2012, p.352), draws a realistic picture of women of England of the 18th and 19th century; he states that, "the idea of the superiority of men and their ownership of women is eloquently and supported by a glance at English laws involving women. They were ignorant of politics and such important worldly matters. In addition to financial pressures, the severe restrictions, laws, and customs of the eighteenth and nineteenth century England, which were placed on the women made them look at marriage as a means of stability and made women even more dependent on men". The same unequal power relationship between patriarchy and lovers is reflected in Blake's *"Ah Sun-flower!"*. In this poem, 'Youth pined away with desire' and 'Virgin shrouded in snow' reflect repression of sexuality, the authority of parents, chains of patriarchy, and the priest. According to Crossref Guide (2016), "Society makes its fears, guilt, and shame into rules and laws, which are then enshrined in social institutions such as the authority of parents, the Church and the State or Monarchy."
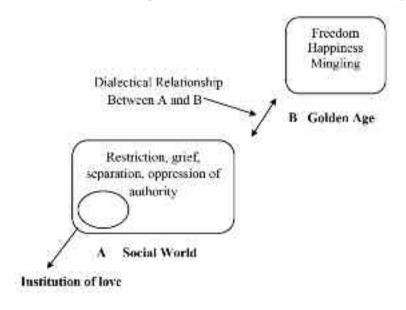
In CDA, discourse is a historical phenomenon and a link between text and the society is found. In the same way, in discourse of *"Ah Sun-flower!"* social context of Blake's contemporary England is reflected. Discourse does ideological work. The authoritative and repressive ideology of the 18th century England is reflected in the discourse of this poem. As if discourse analysis is interpretive and explanatory, in the same way, this poem has been interpreted and explained in the social context of Blake's contemporary society. In this poem, the repressive social context of the 18th century is reflected through the pining away of Youth and Virgin's shrouded in snow.

Changing Existing Reality through Golden Age
The main agenda of critical discourse analysis (CDA) is not the only critique, interpret, and explain the existing reality but also to change it

positively. According to Fairclough, "interpretation, evaluation, critique, and explanation are not unique to critical analysis, but in the ways in which discourse is interpreted, evaluated, critiqued and explained in CDA are distinctive" (2015, p.9). "To change existing reality for the better" (Fairclough, 2015, p.47), makes CDA different from other critical analyses. In this poem, Sun-flower/ passengers/ loves' desire to go to the sweet golden clime, is in fact, loves' desire to change existing world into the Golden Age. Bartlett states that Golden Age is divided into five ages of man. First is the golden age, then the Silver Age, the Bronze Age, the Age of Heroes (including the Trojan War), and finally, the current the Iron Age (Bartlett, 2006). The concept of the Golden Age was further refined by Virgil in his *Metamorphosis* into the four metal ages (golden, silver, bronze, and iron). It was the great period of peace, prosperity, and happiness. Virgil writes on freedom, enjoyment, and absence of effort and desire in the golden age: "All things more freely, no man bidding, bore" (Virgil & Georgics, 1937, p.128). There was no tyranny of the priest and law in the golden age; "Needless was written the law, where none opprest: The law of Man was written in his breast" (Virgil & Georgics,1937). There are no desires, paleness of restriction and effort, no pine for missing beloved, and no death of Virgin in her suppression of sexuality in the golden age that are found in existing world reflecting in Blake's *"Ah Sun-flower!"*

Dialectical Relationship between Social World and Golden Age

There is a dialectical relationship between A and B because the existence of B is the outcome of A; A still exists due to B.

The Institution of Love. The institution of love is also another social institution like other institutions. In CDA, different social institutions like school, hospital, jail, etc. are analyzed. Fairclough writes that school being a social institution involves its distinctive structure because it contains a set of situations where discourse occurs (class, assembly, playtime, staff meeting, etc.); a set of social roles in which people participate in discourse (headteacher, teacher, pupil, etc.); a set of approved purposes for discourse-learning and teaching, examining, maintaining social control. (Fairclough, 2015) In the same way, the institution of love (that is seen in Blake's *"Ah Sun-flower!"*) is a social institution because it also exists in society and has a distinctive structure.

i. **Set of Situations in Institution of Love**
    Like other social institutions, the institution of love also has a set of situations where the discourse of love occurs. The discourse of love differs in different social situations, i.e. separation, reunion, happiness, in front of the elders, and among the friend's, love is discussed in open and frank way.

ii. **Different Social Participants**
    Different social participants have included in the institution of love, i.e. different boys play the role of lovers, girls' role of beloveds, the social role of the priest (who is against the lovers that are reflected in the context of *"Ah Sun-flower!"*) and social role of parents.

iii. **Set of Purposes**
     Purposes of this institution of society mean lovers are to lead a life of freedom and happiness.

All the roles mentioned above of love are reflected in the poem *"Ah Sun-flower."* In this poem, the situation of separation, pine, longings, and death of the lovers is seen. Two social participants Youth (lover) and Virgin (beloved) is vividly seen in the poem, but the priest and parents are in the background. The purpose of lovers' leading a jubilant life is seen in the desire of going to the 'sweet golden clime'/ Golden Age. The lovers' wish to 'Arise from their graves and aspire,' to the golden clime 'Where the traveler's journey is done.'

CONCLUSION

To conclude, employing Fairclough's three-dimensional model, Critical Discourse Analysis of William Blake's *"Ah Sun-flower!"* has been accomplished. Findings of this study, i.e. analyzing this poem on the level of description (lexical, graphological, phonological and grammatical level); interpretation (of lexical, graphological, phonological and grammatical level); and explanation (of description and interpretation). Ideology and power relations of Blake's contemporary England were explored from this poem through pining away of the Youth and Virgin's, shrouded in snow. Changing existing reality is the agenda of both CDA and the romantic poets like Blake. In this poem, search for 'sweet golden clime' or golden age is the dream of CDA as well as of Blake.

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