

GENDER APARTHEID UNVEILED: A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF MALALA YOUSAFZAI'S SPEECH AT THE 21ST NELSON MANDELA ANNUAL LECTURE (2023)

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ABSTRACT:

In this research, Malala Yousafzai's speech at the 21st Nelson Mandela Annual Lecture (2023) will be analysed in accordance with the principles of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). In the said speech, Malala frames the concept of 'Gender Apartheid', in order to shed light on the systemic oppression and violence inflicted by oppressive regime of the Taliban on Afghan women. She visibly draws parallels between the gender-based oppression and South Africa's historical and racial apartheid. She puts forward an argument that gender inequality should be actualized as an intersectional issue that is embedded globally in social and political spheres rather than a merely local issue. This research analyses how Malala presents, defends, and reinforces her ideological stance and advocates for fairness through her strategic lexical choices and rhetorical devices, and this motive of analysis is achieved by using Fairclough's Three-Dimensional framework that comprises of Description, Interpretation, and Explanation. The key findings of this research entail her adept use of religious and legal discourse to reinforce her stance that gender-based oppression is a human rights violation as well as a distortion of Islamic principles. Through terminologies like 'Gender Apartheid', 'crimes against humanity' and 'codification', Malala highlights the necessity of global accountability and legal processes to fight against gender-based oppression. Furthermore, she simultaneously points out Islamic values of compassion and fairness in order to debunk the false interpretation and ideological narrative of the Taliban, and aligns her arguments with the universal, ethical, and faith-based principles. Moreover, this research also studies the interplay of power and language. By highlighting the formal aspects of her speech, this study highlights Malala's use of voice, declarative statements, and intertextual references to the Anti-Apartheid movements in South Africa, exploring the intersectionality of systemic oppression. The linguistic strategies appointed in her speech amplify her arguments as well as her call for global solidarity and collective resistance against hegemonic structures and oppressive regimes. The study concludes that Malala's discourse explores the intersectionality of systemic oppression and challenges the patriarchal and oppressive ideologies by advocating for the codification of gender apartheid as a globally recognized crime under the international law in order to transform societal, local, and legal frameworks to guarantee the protection of women rights worldwide.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

The principles of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) contribute to the foundation of this study by offering a framework for a thorough analysis of the intersection of the concepts of power and ideology with language. By putting emphasis on language as a tool of social practice, Fairclough (1989, 1995) focuses on CDA's theoretical and methodological approaches, he put forward his three-dimensional mode, including text analysis, discursive practices, and socio-political contexts, which aids in investigating how concepts of dominance, inequality, and hegemony are constructed, reproduced, and resisted. These principles have been applied to a number of studies similar to the works of Van Dijk (1993).

The intersection of *gender and power* is often discussed in discourse studies, mainly due to the role of language in propelling ideas and how systemic gender inequality is perpetuated through language. Mills (2003) reveals the role of discourse in normalizing patriarchal ideologies, as well as similarly, Butler (1990) highlights the role of language in constructing gender identity within sociopolitical institutions. These studies provide a foundation to understand Malala Yousafzai's stance on intersectionality of oppression and her articulation of 'Gender Apartheid'. Her concept draws on earlier feminist and legal scholarship, therefore, the concepts of legal theorists like Mackinnon (2000) can be studied as well, that frame systemic gender oppression as structural violence similar to a racial apartheid. This notion is further supported by works of Merry (2006) who sheds light on the translation of concepts related human rights into localized context and therefore, examines the global dimensions of violation of women rights. Malala's suggestion for the codification of 'Gender Apartheid' as an international law aligns with this scholarship.

The use of *Religious Discourse to condemn Gender Inequality* is also studied, in modern times, many credible voices and speakers have extensively analysed and studied the principles of Islam to justify the importance of women rights. Wadud (1999) and Barlas (2002) investigate how Islamic principles can be interpreted to promote gender equality while countering the patriarchal interpretations that justify systemic oppression of women. These works resonate with Malala's stance of invocation of Islamic values to refute the claims of Taliban. This approach further aligns with a study on a broader level conducted by Esack (1997) on the role of religion in social justice.

The *Historical Parallel* between the gender-based oppression that prevails in Afghanistan and the decades of racial apartheid in South Africa forms a significant component of Malala's speech. A number of studies have been conducted on the apartheid, notable names include Mandela (1994) and Tutu (1999), who documented the systemic nature of racial discrimination and inspired global solidarity that led to the long-awaited dismantling of the apartheid. By drawing these parallels, with the help of Crenshaw (1989), who emphasized on the overlapping systems of oppression (Intersectionality), Malala places gender-based oppression among a larger historical narrative of injustice and unfairness as well as collective resistance.

The Role of Language in Resistance Movements is another aspect that requires scholarly inquiry. Chilton (2004) highlights the role of rhetorical strategies in challenging power structures and encourage/mobilize collective resistance. Moreover, Martin (2000), explored the use of linguistic tools in prompting solidarity and social transformation and change. In her speech, Malala employs similar technique through her strong lexical choices, metaphors, and intertextual references to provoke action and denounce hegemonic ideologies that prevail under oppressive regimes.

INTRODUCTION:

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is one of the most influential and recent schools of Discourse Analysis that emerged from 'Critical Linguistics' in the later years of the 1980s. Though CDA is an application of Discourse Analysis, the former analyses the text or other kinds of communication with respect to its social and political contexts. It adopts methods that are an amalgamation of Discourse Studies and Social Sciences, therefore, it focuses on the concepts of power and ideology, and aims to understand how dominance, inequality, and concepts like hegemony are not only exercised but reproduced and resisted in social contexts. It serves as a critical attitude in studying the discrimination and hierarchy that exists socially. A number of experts and practitioners have studied social practices in order to draw interpretations regarding status and power that lay beneath the lexical choices. In the words of Fairclough (1989, p. 26) in CDA, language is employed as discourse and social practice in order to decipher texts, their means of production as well as their interpretation.

As CDA explores multiple dimensions and aspects of social and political contexts, it also sheds light on global issues related to dominance, oppression, inequality, injustice, and power. Therefore, by interrelating these concepts, it reveals the interconnectedness of various kinds of global issues and exposes the nature of problems like, racial segregation, gender inequality, ethnic conflicts, and so on. Thus, CDA allows us to understand the nature and intersectionality of these issues. In Johannesburg, Nelson Mandela Foundation arranged the 21st instalment of Nelson Mandela Annual Lecture on 5th December, 2023, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Malala Yousafzai was appointed as the speaker who proficiently combined legal and religious discourse in order to draw parallels between the systemic oppression of Afghan women in the name of religion and the racial segregation/apartheid that took place in South Africa: *“We must be able to hold space for suffering whatever it is happening in the world. Our first imperative is to call the regime in Afghanistan what it really is. It is a gender apartheid.”*, along-with mentioning the narrative of the plight of children of Gaza. Therefore, CDA aims to help identify and actualize such issues by exploring how effective language can be in representing an author or speaker’s ideologies and standpoint, and to study the relationship between power and language. Thus, this particular lecture of Malala Yousafzai was selected to be used for Critical Discourse Analysis in this paper.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES:

- a. To identify the lexical choices made by Malala Yousafzai during her speech that reveal the intersectionality and systemic nature of oppression through legal and religious discourse.
- b. To explore how Malala Yousafzai’s speech was produced to reflect her ideological stance regarding the intersectionality of gender inequality and apartheid within immediate and broader social and political contexts.
- c. To explain the ideological stance of intersectionality of oppression adopted by Malala Yousafzai in her speech at The 21st Nelson Mandela Annual Lecture.

QUESTIONS:

- a. Which lexical choices have been appointed by Malala Yousafzai during her speech to reveal the intersectionality and systemic nature of oppression through legal and religious discourse?
- b. How was Malala Yousafzai’s speech produced to reflect her ideological stance regarding the intersectionality of gender inequality and apartheid within immediate and broader social and political contexts?
- c. In what way, the ideological stance of intersectionality of oppression adopted by Malala Yousafzai in her speech at The 21st Nelson Mandela Annual Lecture is explained?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

In order to perform the Critical Discourse Analysis of Malala Yousafzai’s speech at the 21st Nelson Mandela Annual Lecture (2023), which falls under the category of qualitative research, the researchers have applied the three stages in the framework of CDA that were introduced by Fairclough in order to analyse the said speech. Fairclough (1989, p. 26) proposed three stages; these included Description, Interpretation, and Explanation. Description involves linguistic and formal description of the text, Interpretation seeks to examine the correlation between the discursive practice and the text, whereas, Explanation of the text describes the relation between the social and discursive processes. Therefore, the said speech will be analysed in three dimensions: Textual Analysis, Discursive practice, and Social Practice.

ANALYSIS:

DESCRIPTION:

Description or the textual analysis of this speech shall focus on identifying linguistic and formal properties of the text in order to highlight the ideologically contested words. It explores how Malala employs features like the mode, expressive modality, rhetorical strategies, grammatical features, and textual structures to unveil 'Gender Apartheid' and promote her ideological stance on the intersectionality of oppression. The prevailing use of legal and religious discourse cements her ideology into the minds of the readers/listeners.

Lexical Choices:

Legal Discourse:

In her speech, Malala Yousafzai employs legal terminology to frame the arguments that support her ideological stance. She introduces Gender Apartheid as a legal concept by relating gender oppression with the South African racial apartheid, implying that the plight of Afghan woman inflicted by the patriarchal society is no less than the legalised racial segregation faced by South Africans for decades.

- *"Gender Apartheid"*: Malala appoints this term that draws parallels between the state of Afghan women and the racial segregation of South Africans from the apartheid of 1948 to 1994. she argues that the oppression and violence against Afghan women is not a product of circumstance, mere prejudice nor moral discrimination that exists on a social level but rather systemic and enforced by the state itself, similar to the discrimination faced by South Africans which was promoted by the law. Therefore, she highlights the intersectionality and interconnectedness of these issues.
- *"Codify"*: Malala further emphasizes her point by shedding light on the seriousness of these issues by relating it with the South African Apartheid suggesting that systemic oppression against Afghan women should not only be identified but rather codified through a legal process into a globally accepted law in order to protect the women of Afghanistan.
- *"Treaty" and "International Law"*: Malala believes in the codification of systemic oppression into a particular legal framework to ensure security of Afghan women. Her speech preaches the idea that such oppression should be globally condemned just how UN passed 'Resolution 1761' to reverse the legalised Apartheid policies in South Africa, consequently providing them security against the racism that prevailed around them.
- *"Crimes against humanity"*: In her speech, Malala blatantly calls the systemic oppression against women as one of the crimes against humanity, thus, promoting it as a recognized category under international criminal law, moreover, she emphasizes the notion that feminism cannot be separated from humanism, therefore, suffering because of one's gender is no less nor insignificant than the plight of those who suffered because of their race.
- *"Legal concept"*: In her speech, Malala repeatedly emphasizes the fact that Apartheid is not just a theory or description but rather a legal concept, which adds to its significance and seriousness, Therefore, Gender Apartheid should be given equal attention and significance.
- *"Criminalized" and "Accountability"*: Furthermore, Malala appoints these terms as legal mechanisms that should be employed to address and punish the violations committed by those who transgress human rights; women rights and black rights.

- **Action-Oriented Language:** *“Hold the Taliban to account”*: Through these lexical choices, Malala advocates for justice through legal means rather than mere conventional condemnation, believing that the Taliban should face legal consequences of their actions that spread systemic oppression against Afghan women.
- *“Legally complicit”*: In her speech, Malala further expands on the culpability and condones punishment for those who support or aid the Taliban, she explains that punishing the perpetrator is not enough unless the supporters are held accountable as well.
- *“Protect the oppressed”*: Malala preaches the idea that international law should be framed and acquired as a tool for safeguarding rights of Afghan women similar to how laws are framed to protect people of coloured race.
- **Historical references and context:** *“Apartheid” and “Anti-apartheid” campaign*: Through her words, Malala draws focus on the South African history, the segregation and events that transpired during 1948 to 1994, the legalisation of laws and policies that added to the oppression of the South Africans, and their struggle of decades. Her speech aimed to contextualize and justify the fight against systemic oppression against women, claiming that the power imbalance and oppression in Afghanistan, driven by patriarchal control, is not much different than the oppression of South Africans that was caused by racial discrimination and hegemony.

Religious Discourse:

Along-with Legal Discourse, Malala has employed Religious Discourse as well. By opening her speech with *‘In the name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful’*, she frames her advocacy within a spiritual context by invoking Islamic principles in order to represent and address the particular community she belongs to and seeks support from. Furthermore, she debunks the Taliban’s false religious claims by asserting the true values of Islam and requests the scholars to support her.

- **Islamic Invocation:** *“BismillahirRahmanirRahim”*: By using an opening rooted in the Islamic tradition, she asserts her identity as a Muslim. This invocation serves as a call for the Muslim community to support her, as well as brings her the privilege to challenge the systemic oppression that is taking place in the name of the false interpretation of the religion she follows.
- *‘Islam does not condone’*: Through her lexical choices, she confidently challenges the values Taliban preachers are promoting in the name of religion and by rejecting their interpretation, she asserts an alignment between the true Islamic principles and universal human rights.
- **Faith-Based Justice Language:** *“False vision”*: Through her vocabulary, Malala debunks and denounces the interpretation of religion that is being followed and enforced by the Taliban.
- *“Excuse” and “Not True”*: Malala condemns and rejects all kinds of religious justifications for gender discrimination, for she believes that Islam values all sentient beings and it has no such commandments that condone female oppression.
- *“Compassion” and “Justice”*: In face of biased interpretation of Islam by the Taliban, Malala recalls the true and core Islamic values of compassion and justice in order to justify her argument to reject their interpretation that promotes systemic oppression against women.
- **Community and Authority:** *“Muslim Scholars” and “Religious Leaders”*: Malala mentions credible Islamic sources and addresses Islamic voices urging them to

denounce, counter, and oppose the Taliban claims as well as requests their active participation in her fight against oppression as a global responsibility.

- **Referring to the Palestinian Issue:** Amongst the talk of religion and other global crisis, Malala explicitly mentions the ‘*Unjust bombardment of Gaza*’ and how ‘*a child is killed. Every. Ten. Minutes.*’ This represents her religious association but also her ideological stance regarding the intersectionality of oppression.

Grammatical Features:

- **Modes of the Sentences:**

Declarative mode of speech is prevalent in this lecture; Malala appoints such mode to convey authority and ensure clarity regarding the intersectionality of oppression as well as the systemic nature of female oppression. For instance, she directly calls out Taliban for ‘not being interested in truth but rather interested in maintaining power’. This suggests her unwavering resolve and adherence to her belief that such systemic oppression has no justification. Interrogative and Imperative mode of sentences can also be seen; she questions to provoke thought and engage her audience as well as makes direct commands for urgent action against the oppression. She once uses an exclamatory sentence to emphasize her point and for the sake of an emotional impact.

Mode of sentence	Times Appeared
Declarative sentences	129
Interrogative sentences	4
Imperative sentences	3
Exclamatory sentences	1

- **The Use of Voice:**

In order to ensure the impact of the speech and cement the significance of her ideological stance regarding the condemnation of all kinds of oppression, Malala chose to appoint *Active Voice*. Passive Voice is used less frequently; therefore, the estimated ratio entails 75% Active voice to 25% Passive voice. The ratio reflects Malala’s aim to emphasize on agency and direct action.

- **The Use of Personal Pronoun:**

In the speech, Malala uses first-person pronouns i.e. ‘I’ and ‘We’, for a number of reasons. The former is used to represent her subjective viewpoint, personal ideas, and history while the latter is used to not only aid her in representing her community but to address and engage her listeners/readers for global unity against systemic oppression, to plant a sense of unity in the minds of her audience and promote the idea that spirit of humanism is present in every individual, thus, in order to fight against any sort of oppression, one must follow universal ideology that is to stand united against the forces of injustice.

- **Modality:**

Through her use of strong modal verbs, Malala argues that all forms of oppression, that lead to global crisis, are systemic, unjustifiable, and intentional. The following modal verbs are prevalent in her speech:

Modal Verbs	Times Appeared
Must	6
Will	8
should	3

This proves her preference for stronger modal verbs like ‘must’ and ‘will’ to emphasize urgency, necessity, and seriousness of the matter.

◦ **Connectors:**

To support her argument regarding the systemic nature and intersectionality of oppression, Malala employs various connectors in order to bring attention to the parallels between different kinds of systemic injustice and to highlight their interconnectedness.

Connector	Purpose
And	Connects multiple forms of oppression.
Yet	Indicates ongoing crisis despite historical progress after the Apartheid
Because	Links systemic oppression to global complicity.
Similarly	Explicitly compares Apartheid in South Africa to gender oppression in Afghanistan.
As	Analogies to represent historical continuity and intersectionality.
First, Second, Finally	Justifies and strengthens her argument by addressing interconnected oppressions.
Indeed	Confirms the deliberate aspects of systemic oppression.

Rhetorical Devices:

◦ **Metaphor:**

In her speech, Malala uses a handful of metaphors to support her argument and emphasize on the urgency and seriousness of the issue of systemic oppression faced by Afghan women. For instance, her choice of using: *'The Taliban have made girlhood illegal'* she draws parallels between the laws that oppressed Afghan women and the laws implemented during Apartheid to racially discriminate and segregate people of South Africa. Furthermore, she mentions that how *'So much of humanity is wounded'*, This represents the interconnectedness of all global issues, arguing that oppression in one community reflects the plight faced by the other.

◦ **Multitude of narratives:**

Malala brings in stories and struggles of victims who have faced oppression, from story of *Hanifa's* secret teaching to *Zarqa* in exile, as well as the suffering of Palestinian children in the ongoing violence and destruction in Gaza.

INTERPRETATION:

The interpretation of this speech shall holistically analyse it as a Discursive practice, focusing on its production, distribution, and consumption, therefore, it shall include an analysis of the process through which Malala encodes her ideological stance on the intersectionality of systemic oppression and presents her arguments in front of a well-informed audience that is willingly attending the 21st Nelson Mandela Annual Lecture and decodes her standpoint in accordance with their beliefs, knowledge, and previous experience.

◦ **What's going on?**

On the advent of the 21st Nelson Mandela Lecture in Johannesburg, South Africa, on 5th December, 2023, a speech is delivered on the intersectionality of oppression by linking gender oppression in Afghanistan driven out of false interpretation of Islamic Laws with the Apartheid and racial segregation that prevailed in South Africa from 1948 to 1994. The purpose is to call for global action against the Taliban and their violence against Afghan women as well as a strive for a better world with the help of collective effort and global unity.

◦ **Who is involved?**

In this speech, the subject position belongs to the speaker; Malala Yousafzai, a Pakistani female education and women rights activist, who is also the youngest Nobel Laureate, UN Messenger of Peace, and survivor of an attack caused by her resistance against the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP).

On the occasion of the 21st Nelson Mandela Annual Lecture, she delivers a lecture regarding Gender Apartheid to her audience including Graca Machel, a Mozambican politician and activist for women and children's rights, and Professor Njabulo Ndebele, the Chairman of Nelson Mandela Foundation.

◦ ***In what relation?***

Malala Yousafzai is the main speaker in this Annual Lecture who opens the speech by greeting Graca Machel, an activist like herself, and Professor Njabulo Ndebele, thus, there is no social distance between them, but the rest of her audience is general public because she speaks on a global level in order to attain global unity against systemic oppression. Her speech carrying an impactful message is not only meant for the present audience in close proximity but also meant to be spread beyond the confinements of the hall, as she addresses her online audience and those who are listening from all around the world. Therefore, there seems to be a social and physical distance, but her prevailing use of pronoun 'We' also indicates her affinity to equate her position to her audience and act as a single unit against injustice.

◦ ***What is the role of language?***

In this speech, language has been used as a tool and instrument to unveil gender apartheid, intersectionality of oppression, and amplify the message of justice, resilience, and collective/global responsibility. Her language frames her argument legally and religiously as well as inspires action by encouraging unity. It is directive, persuasive, expressive, and strategic.

EXPLANATION:

The last step in this communicative event of CDA is the explanation of the relationship between the discourse and social processes, which Fairclough (1995b) refers to as the social and cultural happenings that surround the text, thus, this section will explore the broader social structures and ideologies that influence and are being influenced by Malala's speech.

In terms of *Power and Ideology*, Malala critiques power structures. She argues against the Taliban's patriarchal control and frames their actions as violation of human rights and Islamic principles. She challenges their power by calling it systemic oppression rather than governance. Moreover, she negates and rejects their ideology that seems to be based on false interpretation of Islamic Laws. Furthermore, she connects this systemic oppression with the historical racial apartheid, therefore, she frames systemic oppression as an ongoing struggle despite resistance and calls for solidarity, and demands for collective action.

In terms of *Dominant Ideologies*, Malala confidently de-constructs the Taliban narrative that is widespread and yet false, she exposes the misuse of religion and argues that systemic oppression and violence against Afghan women not unacceptable and not justifiable in any context. Her claims are backed up by credible voices of Muslim community and thus, she encourages both the religious and secular audiences to reclaim the narrative surrounding Islam and women rights.

In terms of *Global context*, Malala emphasizes the fact that human rights is an umbrella term and women rights fall under the category of human rights. She situates the struggles and plight of Afghan women within the broader global crisis i.e. the plight of Palestinians and the racial discrimination faced by South Africans, consequently, framing and justifying her argument that Gender Apartheid should be legally recognized as well as an institutionalization of a new international standard for the freedom, protection, and deliverance of oppressed women of Afghanistan should be done.

In terms of *Hegemony and Resistance*, Malala explicitly challenges the hegemonic power of the Taliban, deconstructing their ideology and promoting her stance that there is no justification of systemic oppression of Afghan women, therefore, she calls for unity, solidarity, and collective resistance on a global level against the tyranny of the Taliban through legal, religious, and grassroots movements.

To emphasize her stance on intersectionality, Malala creates an *Intertextual foundation* by

drawing historical and cultural parallels through referencing South Africa's Anti-Apartheid Struggle and Islamic Principles. She explores the interconnectedness of racial discrimination and gender oppression in order to amplify the urgency and seriousness of the issue.

At the societal level, Malala suggests the *Transformation of Social Structures* by the legal codification of Gender Apartheid as a crime against humanity so that international law can be reshaped in order to ensure that oppression driven by misogyny is globally recognized, condemned, and penalized.

DISCUSSION:

The analysis of Malala Yousafzai's speech at the 21st Nelson Mandela Annual Lecture reveals a significant interplay of concepts like power and ideology with language. By employing a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) of this speech, this research highlights how Malala construes her argument regarding the intersectionality of oppression and the systemic nature of violence through her innovative framing of 'Gender Apartheid'. Furthermore, this study explains how Malala has employed language as a tool through means of legal and religious discourse to communicate her ideological stance, thus, this discussion explores the meaning and implications of her rhetorical strategies, ideological positioning, and other socio-political contexts that contribute to her discourse.

- *Legal and Ideological conceptualization of Gender Apartheid:*

Malala significantly contributes to the discourse on systemic oppression by innovating the term 'Gender Apartheid'. By doing so, she equates the plight and suffering of Afghan women with South Africa's historical and racial apartheid, this reframing of gender-based oppression as a global issue allows her to demand collective action and legal recognition. Her approach can be seen in alignment with the theory regarding the intersectionality of oppression by Crenshaw (1989), which places gender inequality among the larger framework of violations of human rights. Moreover, in her speech, Malala chose words like 'codify', 'treaty', and 'international law', this signals her strategic effort for a change on a global level. By requesting a codification, she expands the boundaries of anti-apartheid movements, arguing that gender-based oppression should be condemned and intervened as much as racial apartheid.

- *Countering Hegemony through Religious Discourse:*

Through her use of Islamic invocation, Malala challenges the Taliban's narrative and employs Religious Discourse as a tool of resistance. By opening her speech with 'Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim' and clarifying that 'Islam does not condone' systemic gender oppression, she adopts faith-based arguments and justifications to promote protection of women and counters the unjust and hegemonic use of religion by Taliban and other oppressive regimes. Through her speech, she makes an appeal to the credible voices of Islamic community and Muslim scholars to denounce the Taliban's actions through true Islamic values and principles. Her strategic use of religious discourse to support her argument resonates with the works by Wadud (1999) and Barlas (2002), that draw attention to the reinterpretation of Islamic Teachings to actualize and promote fairness and gender equality. Her speech communicates the message of resisting patriarchal control and advocating for social justice.

- *Intersectionality of Oppression:*

Malala's speech draws parallels between various forms of oppression and highlights the interconnectedness of systemic oppression and violence. To prove the universality of human suffering and injustice, she puts forward analogies of the South African Apartheid history and the plight of Palestinian children. This intertextuality aids her in strengthening her argument for global solidarity because it situates gender-based oppression among other violations of human rights within a broader context. Her speech correlates gender -based discrimination and racial apartheid,

therefore, her stance aligns with the intersectional framework proposed by Crenshaw (1989) that emphasized the idea that violence driven out of racial, gender, or religious prejudice is all interrelated thus, should be addressed collectively.

◦ *Strategic Use of Language as a Tool:*

As a hallmark of her rhetoric prowess, Malala employs strategic use of language, through her powerful declarative statements, active voice, and modal verbs like ‘must’ and ‘will’, she puts emphasis on the urgency and necessity of action. Her prevalent use of personal pronoun ‘We’ brings inclusivity and encourages collective stand and action against the oppressive regimes. Her use of metaphors amplifies the emotional resonance and her intertextual references to South African apartheid contextualize the systemic nature of gender-based oppression. Therefore, such strategies enhance the persuasive power of her speech and exemplify the role of language in challenging and denouncing hegemonic ideologies as well as inspiring action.

◦ *Power, Resistance, and Transformation:*

Malala’s speech critiques the oppressive regimes and power structures involved in systemic oppression, her particular focus being on the Taliban’s patriarchal control over Afghan women. She frames the former’s actions as crimes against humanity hence, delegitimizes their authority, and calls for global resistance. This notion of collective resistance suggested by Malala aligns with the theories of hegemony and counter-hegemony proposed by Gramsci (1971). At a societal level, Malala advocates for a transformative change through grassroot movements and legal frameworks, she also pushes for the institutionalization of steps and measures to ensure protection of women rights on a global level by recognizing and framing ‘Gender Apartheid’ under international law.

CONCLUSION:

By employing the principles of CDA, this research has explored some of the dimensions of Malala’s speech at the 21st Nelson Mandela Annual Lecture that took place in Johannesburg on December 5th, 2023. Through her discourse, she emphasizes on the idea that gender-based oppression should be dealt among global issues like the historical and racial apartheid that prevailed in South Africa and the present humanitarian crisis that is being faced by Palestinians. She frames ‘Gender Apartheid’ as a systemic and intersectional form of oppression and violence. Her speech highlights the power of language to challenge and denounce hegemonic ideologies, advocate for social justice, and encourage collective resistance and action.

Malala strategically employs religious, legal, and rhetorical frameworks to critique systemic oppression and advocate its codification as a crime against international law through a compelling narrative. Her choice to denounce patriarchal claims and interpretations through the truthful invocation of Islamic principles demonstrates the potential of religious discourse as a tool for resistance. Moreover, her emphasis on the interconnectedness of systemic oppression in different contexts and global solidarity reinforces the idea that addressing one context entails uprooting inequality in all contexts.

The analysis of her speech also reveals that Malala strengthens her argument and ideological stance through her lexical choices, use of metaphors, and intertextual references. These strategies challenge the notion that gender-based oppression as a local issue and claims it to be a global human rights crisis. Furthermore, she sheds light on the universality of injustice and oppression by drawing parallels between racial and gender oppression and seeks unified condemnation and resistance.

This study highlights the critical role of language and discourse in deciphering

and constructing social and political realities. Malala's speech testifies for the transformative power of language in her fight against oppression, encouraging change, and inspiring global action. The findings of this qualitative study contribute to the broader understanding of how discourse is used to address pressing global issues, their interconnectedness, and systemic nature, as well as advocate for a fairer and more equitable world.

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