

Probing Macro and Microstructures in Aafia Siddiqui's Speech "Women's right in Islam": A Critical Discourse Analysis for the Use of Ideology and Power Dynamics

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Abstract

This study reviews Aafia Siddiqui's speech on "Women's rights in Islam" watched by millions of viewers on YouTube at Houston in 1991. It reveals some key issues of dominance, ideology, manipulation, authority, and power. This study uses the framework of critical discourse analysis (CDA) by Van Dijk (1980) to investigate the macro and microstructures in speech and the hidden motives behind these discourse structures. The qualitative data for this study consist of the transcribed speech, given in English containing 2610 words. The macro propositions in the speech reveal findings of the study that summarize global, regional, and national issues revolving around the rights and status of women in society. The themes are identified as rights of women, obligations of men, Islam _the best provider for men and women, duties of an ideal Muslim woman, comparison between the western non-Muslim women and Muslim women, un-Islamic practices, the history of woman in Islam, failures of Muslims in the modern world, and a dire need for revolution in spreading Islam. The microstructures, including pronouns, presupposition, conjunction, lexis, rhetorical questions, references, number game, and modality help the speaker to present her ideological beliefs and social identity in the wake of various issues.

Keywords: Critical discourse analysis, macrostructures, microstructures, social identity, ideologies, sociopolitical beliefs

Introduction

The term "discourse" refers to many genres connected with sociopolitical contexts. It highlights many political and social identities associated with a wider range of social domains. The speakers, using these discourses, are identified as authors or actors in the form of politicians or social issue speakers (Van Dijk, 1998). Most of the politicians share the same ideological views. Discourse empowers speakers to bring forward the ideologies to shape the social and political beliefs of the audiences that ultimately alter their actions (ibid). Context in CDA plays a crucial role because it identifies the political or social discourse. Participants involved in the discourse

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intend to bring out the political implications, assumptions, beliefs, ideologies, time, setting, space, circumstances, communicative events, intentions, goals, and functions (ibid). In political domain, the discourse is primarily the focus because it unpacks how the politicians interact and communicate discursively. Discourse can include different communicative events and is selected on the ideology behind these occasions, which functions in overall meaning of a context (Van Dijk, 1997).

In investigating social discourses, a speech given by Dr. Aafia Siddiqui, as a renowned scholar and vocalist of Islamic values, on “*Women’s rights in Islam*” is examined by using Van Dijk’s framework of CDA for analyzing macrostructures and microstructures in the speech (Annisa, 2018; Komaruddin, 2014; Nugraha, 2014; Pratiwi & Refnaldi, 2018). The reason of selecting this speech is to explore the ideologies behind Dr. Aafia Siddiqui’s address to the social issue of women’s status in society through discursive practices. There have been many analytical researches on political speeches of Imran Khan and other political leaders. The same approach of analyzing macrostructures and microstructures is used (Afzal, Hameed, Jabeen, 2022) on the speech of Imran Khan delivered in 2019. There is no work available regarding the speech of Dr. Aafia Siddiqui in the domain of CDA. The qualitative data for this study consists of 2610 words of the transcribed speech of Dr. Aafia Siddiqui. The van Dijk’s (1998) framework is used for this study that aims to analyze macro and microstructures embedded in the speech. It is limited to the context of social gathering at Houston, a city in Texas, USA not with a wide range. This study focusses on the following research questions:

- i. What are the macrostructures of Dr. Aafia Siddiqui’s speech at Houston in 1991?
- ii. How do microstructures function in the speech?
- iii. To what extent do macrostructures and microstructures complement each other to display the ideologies and power dynamics in the speech?

Literature Review

Many researchers have worked on political speeches by using CDA tools (Fouzia et al., 2021; Khajavi & Rasti, 2020; Sartika, 2021; & Wang, 2020). CDA not only focuses on the linguistic elements but society, context, ideology, and control also play an important role. It as a whole combines elements to make a certain context influencing the creation of the text (Wodak, 1996). CDA analyzes language as a tool of manipulation with a focus on social problems (van Dijk, 2006; Wodak & Meyer, 2009). The discursive practices, texts and events based on the sociopolitical and socio-cultural ideologies give power and domination (Fairclough, 2013; Kress, 1990). CDA provides an insight on the wrongs done in sociopolitical scenarios by pointing out such biasness and manipulation to find out solutions. It reflects the ideological power and dominance by exposing prejudices in the language use (Wodak, 1990; Wodak & Meyer, 2006). The analyses of political speeches are questioned because the analyses are based on the textual

representation only however there are facial expressions, tones and gestures behind giving a speech (kress & van leeuwen, 2006). Having many modes of analysis can make the process dubious by including modes like tone, facial expressions, and body language (Carreon & Svetanant, 2017).

Social addresses are usually based on discourse and ideologies. Ideological aspects are presented through discourse either in text or talk. Therefore, the main concepts of CDA namely power, ideology and discourse are interlinked. Political ideologies or social ideologies belong to the group of people who are ideologically conscious of the effect they create about their interest (Van Dijk, 2006c). People expressing their political or social ideologies show characteristics of manipulation, conflict of interests, allegations, conspiracies against opponents, social grouping, and power dynamics. The speaker through discourse can shape the audience's sociopolitical beliefs and actions in the society. In this regard, language is proved to be a powerful tool for employing control, dominance, persuasion, manipulation, and power (Matric, 2012). A speech in political context is considered a stance by the leader of the political party about a problem at hand (van Dijk, 1997). Considering every word of a political speech, it serves the function of ideologies, presuppositions and implications (van Dijk, 2006b). Given the background of political speeches, many researchers take political speeches of different political leaders for focus and different perspectives. On different occasions, political speeches have been delivered and researchers have taken these speeches for analysis by using van Dijk's framework for macro and microstructures examination. Macrostructures include the global meaning while organizing the micro information in the discourse.

Macrostructure analysis is used for many properties of language and discourse's examination. Many researchers make thematic analysis of the discourse that includes the global meaning and abstracts into a summarized discourse. On the other hand, microstructures represent the phrases, clauses, sentences and the structures joining these sentences. These microstructures are actually and directly expressed features in the discourse (van Dijk, 1980).

The past studies that support the use of this framework are, Pratiwi and Refanldi (2018) used van Dijk's framework for the analysis of the macrostructures of the speeches given by Indonesian president Jokowi. This study helps the readers to have a wider knowledge about the global meanings and themes embedded in the speech. Annisa (2018) took the speech of turkey's president Tayyip Erdogan for the analysis of topics (macrostructures) and microstructures (presupposition, conjunction, pronouns etc.). This study helps the citizen of the country to have an impact of the speech as inclusive and it effectively delivers messages by urging the citizens to strive for the betterment of the country's future. Nugraha (2014) analyzes Hillary Clinton's speech and examines the micro and macro structures in the speech and she also takes ideological structures in focus. Hillary Clinton's speech contains many minor and major themes (macrostructures) and other conjunctions, presupposition, lexicon in the form of microstructures.

Komaruddin (2014) analyzes the speech of Hillary Clinton about women and feminism. At macrostructure level, her speech has the main idea of practicing feminism more radically. At microstructure level, she delivers her speech emphatically by the use of more inclusive language.

In the research domain of Pakistan, there is no work of CDA on the probed speech taken in this study due to some current controversial things going on with respect to Dr. Aafia Siddiqui. Although there are a few studies on the Imran Khan's speeches within the context of Pakistani research. Imran Khan's political speech in 2019 UNGA is taken up by few of the researchers to investigate different speech properties by using different frameworks. Ahmed et al. (2020) examined the speech acts by using Austin and Searle's framework of speech acts theory to find out the element of Islamophobia in Khan's speech. Mushtaq et al. (2021) investigate the transition process in Khan's speech by using ideational metafunction of Halliday's systemic functional linguistics (SFL). Naeem Afzal, Anas Hameed, Ismat Jabeen (2022) use the same van Dijk's macro and microstructure analysis on Imran Khan's 2019 UNGA speech. With the citation of past studies, it is evident that this speech has not been in the premises of research works. The purpose of this study is also to trace the ideological conspiracy behind the current status of Dr. Aafia Siddiqui's imprisonment. This study uses van Dijk's framework of macro and microstructure analysis to present a holistic view of the selected speech about the ideological and manipulative agenda behind the words.

Theoretical Framework

Macrostructures account for the global meaning, themes, gist, notion or topics of coherence (van Dijk, 1980). It is clear that macrostructures make the connections between coherent global themes, meanings, topics and references more apparent and detailed (ibid). The link of macrostructures and semantics is obvious and prominent because when it comes to global themes and meanings it actually deals with the meanings of the fragments of a larger text and not about the words in isolation (van Dijk, 1985, p. 75). Macrostructures derive these large global or higher level meanings from the lower fragments of meanings. This makes the comprehension of difficult meanings easy and it also derives new meanings (van Dijk, 1980 p. 15). There are three ways to make the use of macrostructures at best: firstly select, then generalize, and at the end construct the main themes or topics. Macrostructures make the themes from fragments and then they are called global propositions. On the other hand, macrostructures explicate the overall meaning of the speech, as they are known under the term of gist, notion (van Dijk, 1982, p. 180).

Microstructures construct the local meaning. These structures include lexical, stylistic, syntactic, and rhetorical features of the language. The choice of lexicon explains the use of specific words to show the deliberate implication and manipulation. Rhetorical devices and questions used to emphasize and de-emphasize certain in-group and out-group conflicts by using metaphorical language. The number game is another important technique to show precision and credibility.

The use of pronouns indicates the power relation, status, control and manipulation (van Dijk, 1998).

In microstructures, presupposition plays an important role in discourse because this is used by the speaker to present certain hidden ideologies and assumptions in front of the audience to keep them from any other for granted beliefs by making the claim of power (van Dijk, 1995b). In the discourse of politics, macro propositions are always modalized whether the discourse occurred in past, present or future. The use of modals is an implication of authority and persuasive function (van Dijk, 1997). The use of conjunctions whether coordinating or subordinating with the references made to events, people or ideologies reflects other political and social driven perspectives (ibid).

In the light of van Dijk's framework this study is carried out on the speech of Dr. Aafia Siddiqui at Houston, a city in Texas, USA to analyze the micro and macrostructures to examine whether these structures complement each other by reflecting the social ideologies of the speaker embedded in the speech structures.

Methodology

This study investigates the speech of Dr. Aafia Siddiqui at Houston in 1991 on "Women's rights in Islam". In-depth analysis is rendered with the help of qualitative approach. The speech consists of 2610 words. It is transcribed by the researcher because no text of the speech is available due to the time was long ago when this speech was delivered. Although this speech is delivered in English, yet there are Arabic verses with the English translation for the comprehension of the audience. For the identification and analysis of the discourse elements, the speech was listened and watched many times available online at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SAGlRYLOPw&pp=ygUVYWFmaWEgc2lkZGlxdWkgc3BIZWN0>. The data are analyzed into two categories: macrostructures and microstructures by using van Dijk's (1980) framework. The first step is to analyze the global themes underlying women's status in society versus women's rights in Islam, western treatment of women, non-Muslim women, man's obligations and duties, the duty of whole Muslim community, un-Islamic practices, and history of renowned Muslims. The second includes the analysis of linguistic features like lexicon, conjunctions, pronouns and presupposition. Then both perspectives are analyzed to finalize the ideological and power dynamics of the speech.

The data are restricted to time because many political and social speeches concern a specific theme and time. One caution is strongly recommended that the present work focuses only one speech of the speaker to make it context and time oriented. The views might have changed or manipulated with the passage of time, so the readers cannot judge the personality of the speaker by this one speech only. This one speech cannot analyze the mannerism and true self of the

speaker. This study just analyzes the textual features and hidden ideologies excluding facial expressions, eye contact, and body language.

Data Analysis

Macrostructures and microstructures are analyzed categorically in part 1 and part 2 of the transcribed speech.

Part 1: Analysis of macrostructures in the speech of Dr. Aafia Siddiqui at Houston in 1991

This section of the study provides in detailed analysis of the global themes examined at macro level derived by the small fragments of the meanings of the speech.

Macro proposition 1: The dire need for the speaker was to address the problems faced by the women in the society because the speaker had the exposure of different social contexts and cultures. The speaker had assertive tone and she manipulated her listeners by saying ...*it is my challenge not only to humans on this planet of earth but if there is any civilization on the other planets it is my challenge to them as well... that Islam is the best protector and provider of men and women....* As the title of speech is *women's rights in Islam*, the speaker started the speech by her main concern that it is the religion of Islam that can provide equal rights to every human being.

Macro proposition 2: The speaker points out the West's treatment of women that how the females are objectified and mistreated. They are deprived of rights and tortured mentally and physically. The speaker compares Western poets and saints' saying about women with that of Islamic point of view. *The western philosophers and saints they say woman is the seat of devil but Quran calls her Mukhsana, a fortress against the devil, they say that she is the one responsible for our downfall from paradise but Prophet Muhammad says paradise is under the feet of the woman, a mother.* The speaker here draws attention on different versions of women being portrayed in society. Here she gives the background knowledge to the audience belonging to the Muslim community.

Macro proposition 3: The speaker lists out many rights given to Muslim women in Islam to support her earlier claim that Islam treats woman highly as compared to other religions and cultures. *She has been given the right and protection in every sphere of life. She has all basic human rights including the right of inheritance, owning property, choosing her husband, keeping the dowry of divorce and earning money and not only earning money but even keeping the every cent she earns and what not? You name it and it is there.* The speaker here tries to control the audience with her ample knowledge and firm Islamic beliefs with commanding tone.

Macro proposition 4: The speaker goes on to the obligations and rights of men in Islam. The speaker presents the view that Islam has given men a status and more power in some matters of life. She not only focuses on the rights of women but also points out what men should be doing according to Islam. *Do not keep your wives by force so that you may injure them or hurt them and whoever does this, wrongs his own soul, do not treat the words of Allah as a joke my dear brothers. For man is different from the woman psychologically, biologically, and physiologically ;man is physically stronger we can see that doesn't need any explanation so Allah has given him the charge the responsibility for providing for the family for earning for the family he has been given the darajah the position of the nurture of his family but this does not make a woman inferior.* Here the speaker clearly accepts the fact that men are given some higher account of responsibility to provide provisions for their family. The speaker also emphasizes in her speech that men should not bury their wives mentally.

Macro proposition 5: The speaker points out the un-Islamic practices in the society which have no trace or implications in Islamic teachings. She points out the burden of dowry; girls have to face while getting married. She mentions that these practices are very common in Pakistan and India, which show her exposure and travel history because she was born in Pakistan and has witnessed such practices. *Brothers and sisters, when I was in Pakistan I had worked very closely with the president of united Islamic organization for two years and in fact she will be coming to America and I will introduce you to her and ask her day in and day out how many cases of women as they are suffering and having serious problems because of these and many other un-Islamic practices and when I say un-Islamic practices I am including all these Western forms of dating and what not I am including all these.* Again the speaker compared some Western cultural practices as un-Islamic practices. She expresses her disapproval of such things and urges the audience to bring change in society.

Macro proposition 6: According to the speaker, there is an ideal Muslim woman and she has some responsibilities to fulfill. *Her responsibility and her duty is with Allah and her family and if she takes care of that Alhamdulillah she is in good shape according to the Prophet Muhammad that's enough for her salvation but that does not mean that her duty is to stay at home like a one's maid this was at least not the practice or the teaching of our Prophet Muhammad or his companions.* The speaker also quotes many examples from historical references of the women in the times of Prophet Muhammad. These women were scholars, doctors, warriors, nurses, mothers, daughters, and wives. The speaker emphasizes that why great Muslim historical leaders like Muhammad bin Qasim are not born now, she emphasizes that mothers like Sahabiyat which means pious women are distracted from the right path of Islam and the women are so naïve today that if anyone come up to them and tell them this is Islam then they will accept it because they are not aware of this. The speaker goes on further and says that the Western culture does not give them the freedom of wearing *hijabs* whereas she was studying in Houston at that time. She

clearly shows dislike and hatred for the discrimination but the speaker has the same views about the non-Muslim women because she further compares the Muslim sisters with them and says that the western non-Muslim women have to prove our caliber to anyone because Allah knows our caliber and that is enough. The speaker claims that if the naïve Muslim woman who doesn't have the awareness about Islamic practices; raises a child, what kind of values that child will be born with. The ideology of the speaker is clearly visible here that she urges the women of all cultures and religions that they do not have the caliber of raising a well-mannered child if they do not practice Islam.

Macro proposition 7: There has been many things the speaker points out during her speech mostly surrounding her main agenda that Islam is the best of all and it has the most beneficial practices. On the other hand, she also emphasizes the so-called un-Islamic practices and the Muslim women not having enough awareness and caliber of raising ideal Muslim children like the women in history of Islam for that very reason she firmly addresses the need to get the solution of these problems together. *Has not the time come for Muslims that their heart turn towards Allah, remembrance of Allah, and Allah has revealed which is the truth yes the time has come the time is now for us to get together and come up for solution to these problems.* The speaker, no doubt, gives a number of Islamic references through Arabic or Qur'anic verses. This shows not only the knowledge but also the devotion of the speaker. The speaker's roommates at Huston inform that she was very religious in her ways and only focused on studies. The speaker also mentions the development of a child's brain, which indicates her biological study background.

The speaker elaborates a woman's rights and true status that she can enjoy. She urged her Muslim brothers and sisters repeatedly to refrain themselves from un-Islamic practices and she points out the women in the West and asks the Muslim-women not to be like them. She gives many references from Prophet Muhammad's life and his behavior with his wives. She also shows concerned that earlier Islam spread to three continents and today what has happened to the Muslim community.

Part 2: Microstructures in the speech of Dr. Aafia Siddiqui at Houston in 1991

This part of results presents the lexical features of the speech in the form of microstructures, including pronouns, conjunctions, lexicon, modality, references, and presupposition.

Pronoun

There are many types of pronouns used in the speech, including personal pronouns, possessive pronouns, and objective pronouns. For example, the speaker starts the speech by using the statement...*it is my challenge...I say this with all this confidence...because I believe that Islam was revealed by Allah...what I am saying is woman is not an unpaid slave...I repeat where are*

the women...when I say un-Islamic principles; I include all these Western dating things. This shows the clear, confidence, authority, manipulation, and taking control of the stance on speaker's behalf because she is directing everything to her. The speaker emphasizes her beliefs and uses demanding tone to shape the beliefs of the audiences. The speaker on the other hand uses "she" for the ideal woman while pointing the Muslim-women's rights...*she has been given rights...she enjoys the status in Islam...she gets the right to keep the right of divorce in her hands.* But when the speaker talks about the non-Muslim women, she clearly points out the Western women because she had the exposure while studying there she clearly said...*we not like the western women have to prove anything or to prove our caliber, Allah knows our caliber and that is enough...* Apart from this point, the speaker calls the people in the audience as "My dear brother and sisters" that shows her inclusive language just towards the Muslim community.

Rhetorical Questions

The speaker uses a number of rhetorical questions in accordance with them the main themes to highlight them. *Holy prophet said paradise?...What's got to do with inferiority and superiority?...there are so many names and who are all these?...may I ask whose sunnah are they following?...I repeat where are the women?...why are all these un-Islamic cultural traditional practices are so prevalent in the Muslim world?...why is it that so many good girls cannot get married because of this?...why does the whole society look down on her?...has the time not come for Muslims?...*All these rhetorical questions emphasize the speaker's ideology of speech, which surrounds the ideal Muslim woman and her duties and obligations. The speaker is of the view that Muslim woman does not have to prove anything to anyone but on the other hand, she has the luxury to go out, get education, and earn the money as well.

References

The speaker gives many Islamic references to support her ideologies from the Qura'nic verses and from Islamic events like Umar bin Khatab (May God be pleased with him) and his wife's encounter to show that woman is in no slightest degree responsible of washing her Husband's clothes. On the other hand, the speaker mentions Prophet Muhammad's (Peace be upon him) interaction with Hazrat Ayesha (May God be pleased with her) to show that how Prophet (Peace be upon him) used to let his wife win in a race. Then Asma bin Yazeed's story in which she was a scholar and fought in battles as well. The historical figures like Muhammad Bin Qasim was mentioned because sons like him are not born today and many other references are given to emphasize and shape the beliefs of the audience and manipulate them to take action and improve the standards of living as the Muslims.

Number Game

The speaker somehow uses this micro technique as well to get a good impression of being precise and credible. For example, *fifty percent tax bracket...not five feet ten inches...in her twenties...killed nine soldiers...thirty years after the prophet...three continents...357 verses...*The speaker implies the number game to manipulate the audiences by giving them the impression of giving out facts and credibility in the knowledge of the speaker.

Presupposition

There are many instances where the speaker shares her assumed beliefs with the audience. For example, *if our intention is pure...if we strive in the path of Allah...if they are getting married, a lot of times their parents don't ask them...if she is totally ignorant...* These instances show the insightfulness of the speaker to foresee and assume that audience would agree with her.

Negation

The speaker shows her dislike by putting negation as a singular command in the sentences. There are many places where she uses No/Yes commands. This shows that the speaker feels some stance to challenge the narratives and practices of the society. For example, *woman as the price cow to be paraded before work, No...the one who brings more dowry, No...this does not make a woman inferior, No...something like that No...yes the time has come...* The speaker takes the control of expression and answers to her own rhetorical questions, which shows her unyielding nature.

Lexis

The speaker choice of words is not harsh or vulgar as she belongs to a well-reputed social background; she was a PhD scholar and the person who was responsible for teaching Islamic values and teachings. The speaker uses a word *shameless* for a woman that she is addressed as this by the society. Then she uses the word *challenge* to exercise her power of eloquence, she uses the virgins, mentally burying, and dowry to explain the themes of her speech. The speaker uses a number of Arabic words that show her particular social identity. She uses women like western non-Muslim that shows her dislike towards a particular community. She talks about extremes and hellfire to warn the audience. She talk about ideal and pious Muslim woman. She talks about *hijab* as her and other Muslim women right of freedom. She uses submissive and apologetic words to describe the conditions of Muslims in the present time.

Conjunctions

The speaker uses quite a few conjunctions because she has either used a rhetorical question with *why and what* or she has used negations. Examples include; *not only women but men as well...I see so many men but where are the women?*

Discussion

The study answers the three research questions related to macro and microstructures and the extent to which they complement each other. The macro structure analyzes the major themes presented in the speech regarding the issues faced by the women in society and their place in Islam. Microstructure analyzes that the linguistic features complements the themes because there is coherence whether it comes to lexicons or presupposition. Pronouns and many other linguistic features explain the analysis of the macro and microstructure functions in the speech.

Macro structures are very influential in pointing out the themes that are beneficial for the readers to take out the stance of the speaker by negative and positive self-representation. The ideological perspectives are also very clear for the readers and the manipulation of taking a negative impact of the western cultural perspective shows the hidden agenda of the speaker that of in-group and out-group. The speaker has very familiar address to her community fellows but she points out other people and their living standards as the disliked version of most of her community fellows. The speaker also talks about the extremes in her speech, which shows her fundamentalist side as well. Although she is trying to preach Islam and motivate people to get the benefits, yet there is an edge to her tone because she uses negations to take a stance against evil practices.

The linguistic features show that the speaker has some hidden agenda or motive behind the speech. The speaker uses many Arabic words, which show that her speech is for a particular community and she addresses the targeted audience only. Dr. Aafia Siddiqui's choice of words shows that she delivers the speech to affirm the audience about her strict religious beliefs and practices. The elements of her speech reveal that they are delivered with a motive of manipulating the audiences' beliefs and thinking. Dr. Aafia Siddiqui presents this speech to serve the purpose of urging the Muslims to stay on the right path without the least trace of planting the hatred seed into the brains of audiences against the western civilization.

Conclusion:

The speech of Dr. Aafia Siddiqui is analyzed by using van Dijk's framework of macro and micro structures. The speech is clearly analyzed by bringing out global themes at macrostructures and the linguistic features like pronouns and presupposition at microstructures. Both structures are coherent and complement each other. The speech has an impact on the audiences because of the firm ideologies presented by the speaker with the help of references and authentic examples. The

macro and microstructures help the speaker to address vividly her concerns in front of the audience. The framework is very useful to point out the ideological and power dynamics of the speaker. As there is not much work done on this speech, it will be helpful for other CDA researchers to find out more about the conspiracies behind Dr. Aafia Siddiqui's case concerning her imprisonment in the US.

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