Critical Discourse Analysis of Verbal Violence in William Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice*

Raeda Tartory*
Department of English Language and Literature, Al-Ahliyya Amman University, Al-Saro, Al-Salt, Amman, Jordan

Ogareet Khoury
Department of English Language and Translation, Al-Ahliyya Amman University, Al-Saro, Al-Salt, Amman, Jordan

Anoud Tayyeb
Language Center, Al-Ahliyya Amman University, Al-Saro, Al-Salt, Amman, Jordan

Areen Al-Qudah
Language Center, Al-Ahliyya Amman University, Al-Saro, Al-Salt, Amman, Jordan

Nuwar Al-Akash
Language Center, Al-Ahliyya Amman University, Al-Saro, Al-Salt, Amman, Jordan

Abstract—The combination of Critical Discourse Analysis and verbal violence is an entirely new field that needs to be widely explored and this study takes an in-depth dive into this using the literature, 'Merchant of Venice' by one of the canons of literature, William Shakespeare. In doing this, this study identifies verbally abusive speeches from the text, categorizes and analyzes them to reveal the common patterns of violence in the speeches of abusers. This analysis aims to reveal the structure abusers use and the effect that verbal abuses have on their victims. Following the tradition of Critical Discourse, the study investigates, in an exegetical pattern, how violence in the form of verbal expression can cause harm. This is situated within the context William Shakespeare's, 'Merchant of Venice'—these investigations are done using the social and cultural realities/contexts within which Shakespeare wrote his story/narration. Seeing "Discourse" as a social critical theory that emphasizes the place of language in the making of ideas within society, Critical Discourse Analysis [especially as used within the current study] investigates language within Shakespeare's 'Merchant of Venice' and insists that language plays a viable role in society's communication patterns, and as such, should be taken seriously in the critique of verbal violence within Shakespeare's corpus—as this critique is being appropriated within current times.

Index Term—William Shakespeare, critical discourse, verbal violence, merchant of Venice, and Fairclough

I. INTRODUCTION

Language is an important part of society. According to Aquilina (1958), we would be inconceivable (i.e. non-existent) without language because of the different vital roles it fulfills for us. Aside from the fact that it is a major instrument of communication, language is also used as a basic form of expression. We use it in expressing our feelings, reinforcing our ideas and beliefs, establishing our identities, and creating connections with others (Rabiah, 2012; Munishi, 2018; Sirbu, 2015).

In expressing all these however, we also, consciously and unconsciously, reinforce other social issues like power, gender, identity, and ideology, which are all elemental blocks upon which the society we live in rests (Ju, 2005; Banga & Suri, 2015). In Wodak's *Language, Power and Identity* (2011)*,* power and identity are constructed in discourses, in different contexts and genres, which is why there is a need for an interdisciplinary approach (critical discourse analysis) to take context-dependent inquests into discourses and the social practices (relating to power hierarchy and identity dominance) entrenched in them.

This study takes an alternate look at verbal abuse from the text, *Merchant of Venice* by William Shakespeare, to give a general outlook of the patterns or structure of abuse as well as the effect of this in the affairs of the victims. Not many studies have widely explored language's role in enhancing verbal abuse through power relations and other social practices, particularly in the text *Merchant of Venice*. Our main focus in this study is on the analysis of power relations to reveal the patterns of verbal abuse in the discourse, *Merchant of Venice.*

A. Background

---

* Corresponding Author

As a result of the need to investigate how social power relations are reinforced and established with the way we use language, Roger Fowler, an English Linguist alongside other scholars, came about a new theory in linguistics study called: "critical linguistics (CL)", often used interchangeably with CDA in the 1970s. They saw the gap in sociolinguistics which did not give enough room for the linguistic investigations of power relations and social hierarchy and decided to come up with a more intrusive field that would adequately cater for this (Wodak, 2001).

Norman Fairclough, one of the most prominent scholars in this field and the Lancaster school of Linguists, later on developed on this and it gave birth to a more profound discipline for investigating power relations and societal hierarchies, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). This is why CDA, to adequately explain the power relations as expressed in language, draws on the social theories of foremost political theorists like: Karl Marx, Michel Foucault, Pierre Bourdieu, and so many other social theorists.

B. Verbal Abuse and Its Relevance to CDA

Verbal abuse, as defined by the National Resource Center on Domestic Violence refers to the ways an individual uses language, words, phrases and utterances to harm others. It has also been described as one of the ways individuals establish and maintain their power or control over others in social relationships. Verbal abuse is regarded by psychologists as an aspect of emotional abuse (also called expressive aggression or psychological abuse) and can be manifested as any of the following:

●Insults
●Name-calling
●Criticisms
●Verbal threats
●Taunting
●Teasing and mocking etc.

The aim of the abuser, more often than not, is to intimidate, degrade, demean or diminish the victim's esteem such that they develop a sense of inadequacy and feel dominated.

In their research, Yun et al. (2019) described verbal abuse as a form of psychological abuse with intent to humiliate, denigrate or build great fear in the victim. They also discovered that verbal abuse affects the victims' brain morphology and significantly downplays their mental health as well. Verbal abuse tactics have been found to grow more intense day by day and more frequently that it sometimes leads to physical violence.

C. Aim & Objectives

(a). Primary Aim

The primary goal of this research is to critically examine the text *Merchant of Venice* by William Shakespeare to practically reveal the patterns of verbal abuse in discourse. That is, the tactics an abuser uses, how they are used and the effect these verbal abuse tactics have on the victim. We're going to be exposing this through the angle of power relations, through the way abusers constitute and re-establish their power on other individuals.

(b). Research Objectives

The research's objectives are:

●To identify and extract the instances of verbal abuse in the text Merchant of Venice;
●To categorize these according to the types of verbal violence as listed by Evans (2009) in her book; The Verbally Abusive Relationship;
●To critically analyze these categories of verbal abuse using CDA as a framework to testing for verbal abuse structure and pattern in the speeches of the characters/abusers;
●To juxtapose this analysis with what's currently going in today's world to reveal how verbal abuse can affect the psychology of the individual/victim.

D. Research Questions

i.   How can verbal abuse be identified?
ii. What are the patterns or tactics the abuser adopts to undermine their victims?
iii. What are the types of verbal abuse?
iv. What's the effect of verbal abuse on the victim(s)?

E. Research Problem

Despite the extensive body of research on physical abuse, which may or may not have resulted in the widespread awareness against it, you will find out that only a few studies have been done to adequately provide the necessary information needed on verbal abuse, a phenomenon known to be one of the major precursors to domestic violence, through the lenses of the linguistic field of CDA.

F. Limitation(s) of Study

This study is limited to the literature, *Merchant of Venice*, by Williams Shakespeare. This study is going to be identifying and extracting the identifiable instances of verbal abuse in the discourse, both linguistics and non-linguistics, to reveal the patterns of verbal abuse in perpetrators.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Introduction

This chapter establishes the relationship between Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and verbal abuse with the focus on power relations, specifically how an abuser asserts their power over victims. The first section gives an overview of the term CDA and how important it is to this research. It then goes on to present the framework for the analysis of the text, *Merchant of Venice*. The second section, however, focuses on the psychological concept of verbal abuse with special attention to how this concept is relevant in Critical Discourse Analysis.

B. Critical Discourse Analysis

In this study, it would be most appropriate to view critical discourse analysis as more of a theory than a discipline of study as it is popularly viewed by most scholars in different works of research. As some scholars would argue, CDA is a movement and not a single or unified entity that stemmed from different investigative approaches of studying language use (Breeze, 2011). So, to define critical discourse analysis, we would prefer to say it is a multiform of the linguistic discipline of discourse analysis that focuses on studying or investigating the role language plays in society with a special focus on power-related topics such as race (Saeedi, 2020), gender (Allagbé et al., 2020), politics (Zienkowski, 2018) etc.

Models of Critical Discourse Analysis

As mentioned earlier, CDA is more of a movement than a linguistic discipline. This is why in this section; the study considers the different approaches of prominent theorists before verbal abuse is discussed. These approaches include the following:

(a). Norman Fairclough's Socio-Cultural Approach

Language, according to Fairclough (2014) is an intricate part of the society. In his study, Fairclough's first move was to establish the fact that language forms a reflection of our societal values and vice versa (Zotzmann & O'Regan, 2016). His focus was on language in context, as used in society, as well as the inter-relationship between language and power. Fairclough posits that there is a dialectical relationship between language and society and that language cannot be removed from social practices. He described language as a "social process" that is; a foundational part of society.

It is important to note that Fairclough's approach rests on the linguistic model of M.A.K Halliday's systemic functional linguistics, which sees language more as a form of meaning rather than a system of signs. This is why his theory strongly emphasizes language in practice. Fairclough also goes ahead to narrow down the workings of CDA, with its heterogeneity and dynamics in several critical theories, to 3 cornerstone approaches (Allagbé & Amoussou, 2017), namely;
- Ideology
- Power
- Discourse

  i.   Ideology, according to Van Dyk (1998), refers to a system of beliefs, rules and conventions shared by members of a group. Ideology usually constitutes what is generally accepted by the group as right or wrong and it also represents what the group's view or explanation of the world is.
  ii. Power is another central part of CDA. It's been referred to as the power dynamic between the speaker and their listener. It constitutes how language is used to direct or control others and/or actuate events.
  iii. Discourse, as defined by Merriam Webster dictionary is the verbal exchange of ideas and beliefs. It is how ideologies are expressed and power demonstrated.

Fairlough goes ahead to say that text is a part of discourse that forms the basis of the process of social interaction. He further argues that the critical analysis of the text is important to uncover the hidden meaning embedded in discourses. This is why we must examine the text based on 2 factors; the hidden meanings in the discourses that make them up (hidden determinants) and the effect of these on conversants in a social relationship (hidden effects).

Fairclough's model is subdivided into 3 dimensions which form a three-dimensional framework for discourse analysis and revelation. Fairclough explains that to reveal the hidden elements in discourse, we must first see it as the following: text, discursive practices and social context (Okata, 2019). Here, text covers written and spoken discourse. A set of sentences put together by lexemes and a few cohesive elements. It can as well be viewed as a semantic unit that seeks to manifest the relationship that exists between utterances and the meaning embedded in them. Discursive practices on the second hand, refer to the conventional rules or principles that govern socially acceptable behaviors depending on the roles, channels and situations that surround the transfer and interpretation of discourse embedded messages. These practices are rules that govern how we converse in different social situations. The last level is social context, which refers to the different social situations discourses occur. This level puts into consideration the societal environment discourses occur as well as the social practices upon which discourses rest.

He also suggested the 3 stages for the critical analysis of discourse. The first stage is the Description stage which focuses on the linguistic aspects of a text. The next stage is that of Interpretation. This focuses on the relationship that exists between the interpretation of the text and discourse as a process of production. Explanation, which is the last process, focuses on revealing the existent relationship between discourse and the text to reveal social practices.

(b). Teun Van Dijk's Socio-Cognitive Approach

Van Dijk, like Fairclough, also emphasized the connection between the elements of language and social practices. But unlike Fairclough, Van Dijk dealt with in his study, how social cognition forms the connection between text and society. He combined linguistic theories, cognitive theories, & social theories, and then presented these as the basis for textual analysis. For him, the integration of the cognitive approach helps us to realize how social practices are reinforced in conversations we have daily.

Van Dijk, along with Kintsh (1983) also goes ahead to distinguish between two structures of the text; microstructure and macrostructure, with microstructure referring to the language use, i.e language in action while the macro level refers to the expression of inequality, power and dominance between groups in society. He proposed different levels for analyzing these structures or levels to bring the critical analysis of discourse into one;

- **Members-groups:** We, as language users, engage one another as members of specific social groups. The actions of members are based on the dictates of the groups they belong to.
- **Actions-process:** Our social acts, as individual actors in society, are dependent on social processes and collective actions. An example is the 'Black Lives Matter movement' by African Americans who share the same experiences on racism and police brutality.
- **Context-social structure:** Discursive contexts are based on the conventions of the group(s) conversants belong to. For example, the content of a press conference would be representative of the practices of an organization or instruction (Salma, 2019).

(c). Ruth Wodak's Discourse Historical

Wodak's approach is what is also regarded as the 'Vienna School' of discourse analysis. Like Fairclough's and Van Dijk's, the focus of Wodak's CDA is on social structures and how language is used to represent or reinforce these structures. For Wodak, the context of language use is a crucial part of critical discourse analysis. Her approach is aimed at revealing the historical contexts of discourses. In doing this, Wodak's Historical Approach of Discourse attempts to trace the historical development in different kinds of discourses to reveal the changes that occurred over time.

C. Verbal Abuse - An Overview

The concept of verbal abuse is a less discussed topic in the field of critical linguistics or psychology for that matter. For this reason, our study aims at analyzing the structure of verbal abuse through the lenses of critical discourse analysis.

Stark (2015) describes verbal violence as the use of derogatory or unpleasant language by an individual to hurt their victim. The abuser usually bears feelings of hate and aggression against the victim and would grow increasingly manipulative, often disguising insults and threats in caring speeches.

(a). Identification of Verbal Abuse

Verbal abuse can either be obvious or not. But essentially, it has to do with the abuser definitively establishing their control over their victim. As a result, they become manipulative and would repeatedly blame their victim for the kinds of behaviors they elicit (Stark, 2015).

Stark goes on to say that verbal abuse, over time, grows or becomes intense and can often lead to physical violence. It usually occurs in circles and stark divides this into phases, namely:

i. Phase I - Tension building phase: This is when as the name suggests the abuser builds up tension and increasingly becomes more demanding and controlling. It is at this stage the abuser begins to make repeated threats that would end up increasing the insecurities of their victim.
ii. Phase II - Violence phase: This is the peak of the abuser's demands and control attitude. At this stage, the abuser begins to feel they are losing their grip, which would then lead them to intensify their actions and emphatically exact their dominance in a more dangerous manner. It is at this stage physical abuse on the victim builds up.
iii. Phase III - Honeymoon phase: The abuser becomes apologetic at this stage but would still go ahead to manipulate his victim to surrender.

(b). Patterns of Verbal Abuse

In another study by Sprigg et al. (2007), verbal abuse is defined as someone "screaming" in your face, calling you offensive names or harshly threatening you. According to them, forms of verbal abuse like these happen about 10 times daily at call centers which was the focus of their research. In their research, they discovered a few other important things as well. Prominent among them are; (1) there's a connection between verbal abuse and the mental well-being of

people; (2) a connection also exists between verbal abuse and people's commitment to the particular groups they belong to.

Patterns of verbal abuse refer to the traces by which the exact type of abuse is exhibited. It can be referred to as the signs or symptoms of verbal abuse. They give hints to the actual abuse as it occurs.

(c). Types of Verbal Abuse

According to Fernandes et al. (1999), verbal abuse is name-calling, screaming and threatening someone. As succinctly as this definition tries to capture verbal abuse, it doesn't however give much context to what verbal abuse is. Another definition that better captures verbal abuse is that of Hyden (1995) where verbal abuse is defined as a deliberate or seemingly deliberate verbal act that's done to hurt an individual and threaten their existence, as well as what they may stand for.

Hyden (1995) goes on to establish some of the things that can be classified as verbal abuse:
- Incessant name-calling
- Violent threats
- Taunts and ridiculing that publicly humiliates and/or bloats the ego of the victim.

In Ayuwatt (2017) verbal abuse was found to often lead to physical abuse amongst Students in a small province in Thailand, in Ubon Ratchathani Province.

D. Forms of Verbal Abuse as Highlighted By Evans (2009), in her Book: The Verbally Abusive Relationship

(a). Withholding

This is intentionally not sharing any information when the occasion or need arises especially when the other party needs it. This could be providing information or details of information haphazardly.

In this text, we see this form of abuse come into play where Tubal deliberately withholds information from Shylock with the aim of offending him. We see Shylock exclaim close to the end, "Thou torturest me, Tubal. It was my turquoise! I had it with Leah when I was a bachelor. I would not have given it for a wilderness of monkeys" (p. 101)

"To these injunctions everyone doth swear
That comes to hazard for my worthless self"

(b). Countering

Countering halts all conversation because there can be no relating to a person who does not tell the truth. It is normal for people to disagree and hold differing opinions, but countering involves irrationality and a degree of anger towards the victim.

(c). Discounting

Discounting means denying someone else's rights to their thoughts, emotions or experiences. This usually involves repetitively discounting and dismissing someone's feelings. It didn't occur in the text.

(d). Verbal Abuse Disguised as Jokes

This is simply masking insults and abuses as humor, giving it a cushioned and indirect effect from its original meaning. There was no record of this form of verbal abuse in the text.

(e). Blocking and Diverting

Blocking and diverting is also another form of withholding in which the abuser tries to slip away from having conversations and may sometimes avoid responding to talks from the victim. The abuser may even go as far as changing the topic of the conversation. There was also no record of this form of verbal abuse.

(f). Accusing and Blaming

Here, the abuser focuses on blaming someone for things they can't reasonably control. Blaming or accusing the victim of things they have little to no control over - say for them forgetting to do things. It didn't occur in the text.

(g). Judging and Criticizing

This form of abuse involves repetitive negative and judgmental evaluations that challenge someone's sense of self-worth. This form of abuse appeared three times in the data.

One of which is where Portia vehemently criticizes her suitors;

"Ay, that's a colt indeed, for he doth nothing but talk of his horse...I would rather be married to a death's-head with a bone in his mouth than to either of these". (pp. 21-23).

Again, it is observed in the text extracted from the speech of Bassanio while he was discussing with Antonio (p. 12).

"Gratiano speaks an infinite deal of nothing, more than any man in all Venice. His reasons are as two grains of wheat hid in two bushels of chaff: You shall search all day where you find them, and when you have them, they are not worth the search." (p.12).

(h). Trivializing

Trivializing is a form of verbal abuse that often makes most things the victim of the abuse does or wants to do seem unimportant, by repeatedly uttering comments that negatively attack the person's opinions, interests and personal preferences. Trivializing as a form of verbal abuse appears twice in the text. One of which is in page 37, where Shylock happily mentions to his victim that the pound of flesh was a "merry sport" .

It was also identified where Shylock tries to trivialize the act of taking his bond by comparing it with taking flesh from animals when he knows this is not the same.

(i). Undermining

Undermining is similar to trivializing, which consists of hindering and disagreeing on everything the victim says or suggests; opinions and interests. This may cause them to feel as though they should resort to accepting the other person's decisions.

It occurred only one time. We see this undermining act done by Portia to Arragon in Act 2 Scene 9 where Portia tries to describe herself as a "worthless self", to cause the victim to see her in a different light than what he's conjured up in his head.

"To these injunctions everyone doth swear that comes to hazard for my worthless self" (p. 85)

(j). Threatening

Threats are a more direct form of verbal abuse. Often, threats are a way of getting someone's attention or controlling their behavior. Some examples of threatening statements include:

"If you ever leave me, I will hurt myself or take the kids." "if you don't do as I say, I will hurt you".

It appears twice in the data. A first instance is when Shylock continually states that he will take his bond of flesh even if more than what is owed is offered as repayment after they default on the loan.

Another instance was when though Shylock borrows them the money, he expressly states that his repayment would be a pound of flesh if Antonio fails to repay within the agreed time.

(k). Name-calling

This type of verbal abuse involves someone calling someone else names that are negative, demeaning or belittling, such as: "stupid", "idiot", "worthless", "dumb bitch".

It occurred four times in the text.

In the text, two instances of name-calling are identified where Shylock describes Antonio and Bassanio as "Christian fools" (p. 67). He also describes Lancelot, his servant, as "a fool of Hagar's offspring" (p. 67).

(l). Forgetting

Forgetting involves both denial and covert manipulation. It involves consistently forgetting interactions that have a great impact on another person. It doesn't appear in this text.

(m). Ordering

This is a form of verbal abuse. It falls under the general issue of control. Constantly demanding and *"bossing around"* the victim to do his or her bidding. Ordering does not appear in this text.

(n). Denial

Denial is simply refusing to realize the consequences of one's behavior that is how it can lead to more damage. An abuser will always find a way to justify and rationalize their behavior. It doesn't appear in this text.

(o). Abusive Anger

This form of verbal abuse is very popular. Any form of yelling and screaming, whether out of or within context is considered aggressive. Abusive anger appears once in the text.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research is both qualitative and quantitative. Selected parts of the text will be extracted from the text *Merchant of Venice* by Williams Shakespeare as data, while instances of verbal abuse will be identified and categorized into different tags as listed in Patricia Evans' *The Verbally Abusive Relationship* and critically analyzed to reveal the patterns of verbal abuse and the effects it can have on the victim of this kind of abuse (Wodak, 1989). With CDA as this study's analytical framework, a thorough analysis of the extracted data will be done to achieve social correctness.

A. Scope of Study

This study is aimed at uncovering the mechanics of verbal abuse in discourse with our data derived from the literature; *Merchant of Venice* by the English canon, Williams Shakespeare. Thus, its analysis will focus on drawing out the instances of verbal abuse in the discourses of different characters and critically analyzing them to reveal the workings of language in the expression of verbal abuse.

B. Analytical Framework

It is possible to find different studies that, focusing on such issues as sexual abuse, gender, racism and other related controversial topics, have taken on Critical Discourse Analysis with a new perspective, expressly analyzing how language reflects our society, how important discourses are formed, and how they can't be removed from our everyday lives (Hoppstadius, 2019; Barkhuizen, 2013; Murray & Powell, 2009). However over the years, not more than a few studies have taken an investigative dive into CDA to uncover more on the topic of verbal violence. Although numerous works discuss the impact of verbal abuse on people and how they are dealing with this, you will find that only a few have been able to touch on how exactly language is used as an instrument of abuse, or in another word, violence (Thomason, 2018).

To give an empirical background to how we're going to be revealing the patterns of verbal abuse through the lenses of Critical Discourse Analysis, it is appropriate that we provide you with a detailed overview of our practical approach. Norman Fairclough's (2001) 3-dimensional model:
- Texts
- Discourse practices
- Socio-cultural practices
  Will be adopted in the interpretation of the data extracted from the text.

IV. Discussion & Analysis

A. Merchant of Venice - A Summary

A summary of the plot of this text must be provided before diving ahead to the analysis proper.

William Shakespeare's Merchant of Venice is a tragicomedy play of five acts said to have been written between the years 1596–97. It tells the romantic story of the English aristocratic class, the working class, the peasants and of two couples; Portia and Bassanio who fall in love under the most unexpected situation. Merchant of Venice starts with Antonio, an anti-Jew merchant in Venice, borrowing some money on behalf of Bassanio from Shylock, a popular Jewish loaner in Venice. Bassiano needs this money from Shylock to woo Portia, a wealthy heiress who later becomes his wife and Antonio is unable to help due to his ship being held at sea. This is why he sends Bassiono to Shylock to take a loan in his name. Shylock's condition for giving out this loan was that should Antonio default, he will have his pound of flesh. With the intent that he would refund it just in time, Antonio agreed but was later met with the bad news of his ship being held at sea. The story moves on to the court proceedings of Shylock and Antonio, with Portia preceding over the case is pretense. The play ends on a happy note, with Antonio winning his case and Portia marrying Bassiano.

Textual Analysis

The instances of verbal abuse contained in the text will be randomly extracted and categorized based on the types highlighted by Evans (2009) and analyzed to reveal the patterns of verbal violence and the effect this can have both on the abuser and the victim alike.

The first form of verbal abuse observed in the text is extracted from the speech of Bassanio while he was discussing with Antonio (p. 12). "Gratiano speaks an infinite deal of nothing, more than any man in all Venice. His reasons are as two grains of wheat hid in two bushels of chaff: you shall search all day where you find them, and when you have them, they are not worth the search." (p.12). Power, in critical discourse analysis, comes to play when the perpetrator wants to exact their dominance over others. And without a dominant ideology to back it up, it can be difficult to express this power. This is why we see here that Bassiano dislikes because he holds a dominant ideology of critical thinking which is common during this period. Because of the disassociation Bassiano feels with Gratiano, he thinks of him as someone who talks nonsense, someone whose speech often leads nowhere because they're hardly relatable if tried to be understood at all.

In the second scene of this act are also instances of the same form of verbal abuse we mentioned earlier; "judging and criticizing". In this scene, Portia vehemently criticizes her suitors.

"Ay, that's a colt indeed, for he doth nothing but talk of his horse...I would rather be married to a death's-head with a bone in his mouth than to either of these". (pp. 21-23).

These forms were done behind the victim showing that verbal abuse can be covert, that is, not apparent to the victim or unknowing to them. We see here that for dominance to be established and sustained, it must come with refuting the other's belief system, especially if it does not agree with their identity and affiliations. Portia's criticism is a reflection of her person as someone who dislikes fakeness or pride.

We also see Shylock exact his dominance over his victims by boldly showing them his worth and power over them and deliberately expressing this in his words to offend others. And because his victims deliberately need this money, they have no choice but to bow to his interests and follow his bidding (the pound of flesh bond which Antonio agreed to eventually) despite it being against their religious acclimation.

In Act 2, scene 3, you'd also find another instance of verbal abuse where she accuses Lancelot, her father's slave, of being the "merry devil" (name-calling) that accentuated the evil perpetrated in their house.

A few instances of name-calling were also identified in the text where Shylock describes Antonio and Bassanio as "Christian fools" (p. 67). He also describes Lancelot, his servant, as "a fool of Hagar's offspring" (p. 67). From here, we're able to deduct that Lancelot might be a Muslim who does not usually get along well with Jews despite their joined

origin. This is also an allusion to the bible where Hagar is the Egyptian slave of Abraham that conceived Ishmael who's known to be the origin of Muslims.

Another instance of verbal abuse appears in Act 2, scene 3 (pp. 57-59) while Bassanio is preparing to make his journey to Portia's. Gratiano enters and demands that Bassanio allows him to come along. But, in a bid to convince Gratiano not to go, Bassanio replies, using a verbal abuse form called "judging and criticizing" and describing Gratiano as a rude fellow who doesn't know how to speak. We must remember earlier that Bassanio, while speaking with Antonio, had talked bad about Gratiano. We can see here the pattern of abuse moving from covert to overt, behind the victim to in the presence of the victim.

"Why then you must. But hear thee, Gratiano, thou art too wild, too rude and bold of voice - Parts that become thee happily enough, and in such eyes as ours appear not faults. But where thou art not known why, there they show. Something too liberal. Pray thee take pain to allay with some cold drops of modesty thy skipping spirit, lest through thy wild behavior I be misconstrued in the place I go to, and lose my hopes" (p. 57).

We find another instance of direct verbal abuse in Act 2, Scene 9 when Portia describes Arragon as a deliberate fool with no sense of humor. At the climax of the story, Shylock comes angrily to request his money after Antonio fails to pay his debt as promised. He name-calls Antonio a fool that lent out money gratis. He goes ahead to blame Antonio by falsely accusing him of calling him a dog.

"Thou callest me dog before thou hadst a cause;

But, since I am a dog, beware my fangs:

The duke shall grant me justice. I do wonder,

Thou naughty gaoler, that thou art so fond

To come abroad with him at his request"

According to Bosch (2004), the verbal abuser tries to undermine themselves or the actions they take as a form of offending their victims. We see this undermining act done by Portia to Arragon in Act 2 Scene 9 where Portia tries to describe herself as a "worthless self", to cause the victim to see her in a different light than what he's conjured up in his head.

"To these injunctions everyone doth swear that comes to hazard for my worthless self" (p. 85)

In act 3 scene 2, we see the form of abuse, withholding, come into play where Tubal deliberately withholds information from Shylock with the aim of offending him. We see Shylock exclaim close to the end, "Thou torturest me, Tubal. It was my turquoise! I had it with Leah when I was a bachelor. I would not have given it for a wilderness of monkeys" (p. 101)

TABLE 1

Verbal Abuse Form	Occurrence
Discounting	0
Verbal abuse disguised as jokes	0
Blocking and diverting	0
Accusing and blaming	0
Judging and criticizing	3
Trivializing	2
Undermining	1
Threatening	2
Name-calling	4
Forgetting	0
Ordering	0
Denial	0
Abusive anger	1

The occurrences of verbal abuse in the text, "*Merchant of Venice*"

B. *Signs/Tactics of Verbal Abuse*

Verbal abuse, because it is different from other forms of abuse, is usually difficult to identify, especially to its victims. Unlike physical abuse which is glaringly apparent, verbal abuse can carry some vagueness as it can be masked in love, attention, jokes and other less apparent means. Although verbal abuse is usually oblivious to the victims, it can still eventually come to others around the victim of this targeted abuse as it is primarily any form of language directed at harming the other person.

Below are some of the identifiable acts or tactics of the abuser:
- The abuser calls you unpleasant names that are not acceptable to them and their victim, especially because they may share the same ideology and identity. We see this come to play between Shylock and Antonio. Although they do not completely share the same ideology on religion, we could see the use of the allusion; "serpent", "devil" by these two.
- They openly humiliate you. Antonio and Bassanio had seen Shylock in private when they needed the money. When they default and it is time to take his bond, he does this publicly to embarrass his victims and exert the power he holds over them in that situation.

C. The Effect of Verbal Abuse on the Victims

i. **Guilt:** Verbal abuse causes feelings of guilt and shame to build up in the victim. We see this come to play between Shylock, Bassanio and Antonio. Bassiano begins to feel guilt when Shylock comes to demand his pound of flesh.

ii. **Acquiescence and Submission:** Verbal abuse also leads to reluctant agreement, when the victim agrees to do the bidding of the abuser even when it hurts them or what they stand for.
Stress: Verbal abuse also intensely stresses the victim and causes them to misbehave.

V. Conclusion

In our analysis of the text, we discovered the following:

i. Verbal abuse usually begins behind the victim and it comes in the form of criticisms before the abuser goes on to do it to the victim's face. We saw this pattern play out in the cases of Shylock, Portia and Bassanio who started off bad-talking their victims with other parties before summoning the courage to do it directly to their innocent victims.

ii. Verbal abusers often hold control over their victims as we can see from the case of Shylock and Antonio. We saw Shylock's money and the oath Antonio made to him as a true Christian who would not tell lies according to the dictates of the bible. His overbearing power came to play at the court sessions where he vehemently demanded his pound of flesh be paid even after he was offered double the amount he was owed.

iii. We observed that in the text, there were only a few occurrences of certain forms of verbal abuse. Namely:
- Judging and criticizing
- Trivializing
- Undermining
- Threatening
- Name-calling
- Abusive anger

References

[1] Ahmadvand, M. (2011). *"Critical Discourse Analysis: An Introduction to Major Approaches"* in *Dinamika Bahasa Dan Budaya, 5*(1), 82-90

[2] Allagbé, A. & Amoussou, F. (2020). Patriarchal ideologies and female un-femininities in a contemporary feminist writing: A gender-oriented and critical discourse analysis perspective. AFRREV LALIGENS: *An International Journal of Language, Literature and Gender Studies. 9*(1), 13-27. https://doi.org/10.4314/laligens.v9i1.2.

[3] Allagbe, A. A. (2017). *Principles, Theories and Approaches to Critical Discourse Analysis International Journal on Studies in English Language and Literature, 6*(1): 11-18.

[4] Al-Manaseer, D. F. & Shaban, S. A. (2018). *A Critical Discourse Analysis of Personal Deixis in Isis Selected Messages. Global Journal of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences. 6*(11), 1-7.

[5] Aquilina, J. (1960). The Role of Language in Society. *Journal of the Faculty of Arts, 2*(1), 1-17.

[6] Ayuwat, T. (2017). Verbal Abuse Among Students In Ubon Ratchathani Province, Thailand. *International Journal of Criminal Justice Sciences (IJCJS), Vol. 12* (1): 154–167. DOI: 110.5281/Zenodo.345724.

[7] Banga, C. and Suri, J. (2015). Role of Language in Human Life. *International Journal of English Language, Literature and Humanities, 3*(7), 1-18. Retrieved August 2, 2021 from, <http://ijellh.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/16.-Chaman-Lal-Banga-paper-final.pdf>

[8] Barkhuizen, L. R. (2013). *A Discourse Analysis of Young Adults' Discussions of Intimate Partner Violence in Dating Relationships*. University of Cape Town.

[9] Bouvier, G. & Machin, D. (2018). *Critical Discourse Analysis and the Challenges and Opportunities of Social Media. Review of Communication. 18*. 178-192. 10.1080/15358593.2018.1479881.

[10] Breeze, R. (2011). *Critical discourse analysis and its critics. Pragmatics, 21*(4), 493-525

[11] Evans, P. (2009). *The Verbally Abusive Relationship (3rd Ed.)*. (pp. 81-100). Adams Media.

[12] Fairclough, N. (2001). *Language and Power (2nd ed.)*. Harlow: Longman.

[13] Fernandes C. M. B., Bouthillette F., Raboud J. M., Bullock L., Moore C. F., Christenson J. M., Grafstein E., Rae S., Ouellet L., Gillrie C. & Way M. (1999) Violence in the Emergency Department: a Survey of Healthcare Workers. *Canadian Medical Association Journal 161*(10), 1245-1248.

[14] Gursel-Bilgin, G. (2020). Critical Discourse Analysis: An Effective Tool for Critical Peace Education Informed by Freirean Dialogue. *Educational Policy Analysis and Strategic Research, 15*(2), 25-40. DOI: 10.29329/epasr.2020.251.2

[15] Hoppstadius, H. 2019) Representations of Women Subjected to Violence: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Study Guides in Social Work. *Affilia: Journal of Women and Social Work*. DOI: 10.1177/0886109919872968.

[16] Hydén, M., & McCarthy, I. C. (1994). Woman battering and father-daughter incest disclosure: discourses of denial and acknowledgement. *Discourse & Society, 5*(4), 543–565. Retrieved August 2, 2021, from http://www.jstor.org/stable/42887950

[17] Murray, S. & Powell, A. (2009). "What's the Problem?" *Australian Public Policy Constructions of Domestic and Family Violence*. Retrieved August 2, 2021, from https://doi.org/10.1177/1077801209331408

[18] Nnamdi-Eruchalu, G. I. (2015). A Critical Discourse Analysis of Rev. Fr. Prof. B.A.C. Obiefuna's "Let's Walk Together" *Journal of Religion and Human Relations. Vol. 7 No. 2*. Retrieved August 3, 2021, from https://www.ajol.info/index.php/jrhr/article/view/119684.

[19] Okata, N. (2019). *Power and the Manipulative Function of Language: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Tracie Chima Utoh's* "Our Wives Have Gone Mad Again".

[20] Rabiah, S. (2012). *Language as a Tool for Communication and Cultural Reality Discloser*. Universitas Muslim Indonesia, Makassar.

[21] Saeedi, S. (2020). *Perceptions of Racism in Educational Settings: A Critical Discourse Analysis of InterRacial Stories*. E-Graduate School of the Ohio State University.

[22] Salma, N. F. (2019). Exploring Critical Discourse Analysis' Renowned Studies: Seeking for Aims and Approaches. REiLA: *Journal of Research and Innovation in Language, 1*(1), 17-22. https://doi.org/10.31849/reila.v1i1.2769

[23] Shakespeare, W. (1888). Merchant of Venice. In Barbara, A. M. & Werstine, E. A. (Eds) *"The Complete Works of William Shakespeare"*. New York: The Aimes Publishing Company.

[24] Sirbu, A. (2015). *The Significance of Language as a Tool of Communication*. 10.21279/1454-864X.

[25] Sprigg C. A., Armitage C. J., & Hollis K. (2007). Verbal Abuse in the National Health Service: Impressions of the Prevalence, Perceived Reasons for and Relationships with Staff Psychological Well-being. *Emergency Medicine Journal 24*(4):281-282 DOI 10.1136/emj.2006.038166.

[26] Stark, S. (2015). *Verbal Abuse in Psychology and Behavioral Health*. Moglia, P. (Ed.) 4(5). (Pp.1975-1977) Emotional Abuse Salem Press at Greyhouse Publishing.

[27] Thomason, L. (2018). "Childhood Verbal Abuse and its Psychological Effects on Adults" *Walden Dissertations and Doctoral Studies*. 5276. Retrieved August 2, 2021, from https://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/dissertations/5276

[28] Ting, C. (2019). Language Ideology Within Shifting Political Ideology: A Critical Discourse Study of Taiwan's Plans for Indigenous Language Revitalization. *Critical Approaches to Discourse Analysis across Disciplines (CADAAD) Journal, 11* (2), 125–144.

[29] Van Dijk, T. A. (1998). *Ideology*. London: Sage.

[30] Van Dijk, T. A. & Kintsh, W. (1983). *Strategies Discourse Comprehension*. New York: Academic Press.

[31] Wodak, R. & Meyer, M. (Eds). In *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis* (1st ed., pp. 1-12). SAGE Publications Limited, London. Retrieved August 2, 2021, from https://books.google.com.ng/books?id=dZY2OQJiPlQC&lpg=PA1&ots=_jhYwrc4q7&dq=(Wodak%2C%202001).&lr&pg=PR4#v=onepage&q=(Wodak,%202001).&f=false

[32] Wodak, R. (2001). What CDA Is about—A Summary of Its History, Important Concepts and Its Developments. In W. R., & M. Meyer (Eds.), *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis* (pp. 1-13). London: Sage Publications.

[33] Wodak, R. (2012). *Language, Power and Identity. Language Teaching, 45*(2), 215-233. Doi: 10.1017/S0261444811000048.

[34] Xie, Q. (2018). Critical Discourse Analysis of News Discourse. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies. 8*. 399. 10.17507/tpls.0804.06.

[35] Yun, JY. Shim, G. & Jeong, B. (2019). *Verbal Abuse Related to Self-Esteem Damage and Unjust Blame Harms Mental Health and Social Interaction in College Population. Sci Rep 9*, 5655. https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-019-42199-6

[36] Zienkowski, J. (2019). Politics and the Political in Critical 1q1Discourse Studies: State of the Art and a Call for an Intensified Focus on the Metapolitical Dimension of Discursive Practice, *Critical Discourse Studies, 16*:2, 131-148, DOI: 10.1080/17405904.2018.1535988

[37] Zotzmann, K. & O'Regan, J. (2016). Critical Discourse Analysis and Identity. In book: *The Routledge Handbook of Language and Identity* (pp.113-128). Preece: Routledge

Raeda Tartory holds PhD in Applied Linguistics from the University of Sussex, UK. She is an Associate Professor in the Department of English Language and Literature at Al-Ahliyya Amman University (AAU), Amman, Jordan. Her research interests are conversation analysis, discourse analysis in general, language and gender, TEFL, TESOL, translation and applied linguistics. She has published papers in different well-indexed journals, and on different topics such as conversation analysis, discourse analysis and ideology, language and gender, and teaching English as a foreign language.

Ogareet Khoury obtained her PhD in Translation Studies from Aston University, UK. She is currently teaching at Al-Aliyya Amman University (AAU) in Jordan. Her research interests lie in the scope of translation competence and translation pedagogy. She has published papers on translation competence, translation assessment, and translation teaching methods.

Anoud Al-Tayyeb is a lecturer in the Language Center at Al-Ahliyya Amman University (AAU). She got her M.A. in English Literature from the University of Jordan, Amman-Jordan. Anoud is currently teaching English general courses and Literature courses. Her research interests are in women studies, literature of minorities, and gender studies.

Areen Al-Qudah is a lecturer in the Language Center at Al-Ahliyya Amman University (AAU). She got her M.A. in TESOL from the University of Texasat at San Antonio, USA. Areen is currently teaching English general courses. Her research interests are sociolinguistics, multilingualism, language maintenance, and language assessment.

Nuwar Al-Akash is a lecturer in the Language Center at Al-Ahliyya Amman University (AAU). She got her M.A. in English Language and Literature from the University of Oakland in Michigan, USA. Nuwar is currently teaching English general courses and Literature courses. Her research interests are in feminism, gender roles and equality