The Political Dominance in Maupassant's 'Two friends'

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Abstract

Many studies were conducted to explore how dominant a group over other subgroups. Through reviewing some related literature about power and dominance within the field of critical discourse analysis, the present study represents an account for the political representation as being violent and dominant over the other social groups which there role is almost absent. The sample text represents an important period in the history of France, the invention on the hands of the Prussian army during the Second World War. The study has adopted the ideas of Van Dijk concerning power and dominance as being a phenomenon within the social groups and applied them on the type of sentence structures, and turn–taking.

Key words: power, dominance, turn–taking, sentence types

المستخلص

أجريت العديد من الدراسات لاستكشاف المجموعات المهيمنة والمتسلطة على المجموعات الأخرى . من خلال مراجعة بعض الدراسات المتعلقة بالسلطة والهيمنة ضمن مجال تحليل الخطاب النقدي , تمثل الدراسة الحالية تفسيرا للتمثيل السياسي كونه عنيف ومتسلط على المجموعات الاجتماعية الأخرى والتي عادة ما يكون دورها غائب. يمثل النص المختار فترة مهمة في التاريخ الفرنسي وهي فترة احتلالها على ايدي الجيش البروسي خلال الحرب العالمية الثانية . اعتمدت الدراسة على أفكار فان دايك فيما يخص القوة والسلطة كونها ظاهرة ضمن المجموعات الاجتماعية وتطبيقهن على أنماط تركيب الجمل و اتخاذ دور .

الكلمات المفتاحية : القوة , الهيمنة , اتخاذ الدور , انواع الجمل

1.1 Introduction

The interest in analyzing the political speeches has got much more attention recently. Various studies have tried to reach the underlying relations behind a given political speech or interview. In a similar way, many studies were conducted to investigate the political values of some literary works. The present study is one of these studies that try to meet some recent issues concerning the idea of power and domination between social groups and the reflection of these relations on the nature of life that each group has. The sample story documents a very important

period in the 20th century, the period of the Second World War. Such story was a good reflection of the ideology of both sides : the conquerors that is represented by the Prussian officer who aims for destruction and going forward in his conquest, and the poor people in France who are represented by the two friends who were looking for living their simple life away from the war and guns.

The idea of dominance is highly clear within the sample text. Many linguistic aspects were highly devoted to show how dominant the Prussian officer was who left no choice for the subgroup, 'the two friends' other than death or being traitors. Such kind of powerful turns of the officer left nothing for them but silence. The present study has focused on the language structures as well as turn–taking strategies to come up with the set of conclusions.

1.2 Politics and Literature

It is said that Politics and literature are just like old lovers. Politics and arts have shared an expanded amour characterized by promises that are not achieved and remorse lasting, by frequent

disputes and occasional wars as well as mutual charm and common distrust. The artists have public and therefore political visions of the world that are interpreted by their arts no less than the statesmen and the legislators who have creative visions of the world that they wish to be in. Art and politics are usually considered as denizens of different fields (Grath &Barber, 1982,P.ix).

The idea of "politics of literature" indicates that literature "does" politics as literature i.e. there is usually certain connection between politics as a specific way of doing and literature as a certain practice of writing. The politics of literature does not represent the politics of its own writers as it is not concerned with their personal pledges of the social as well as political matters and struggles of their times. Moreover, it does not meet the modes of representation of the political events nor the social structures and struggles of their writings. (Ranciere, 2011, p.10) So, what kind of relationship that holds literature with politics? One could understand such question in terms of causality. e.g. one may wonder if literature has any effect on politics and if so how (Hagbery,2008,P.P.87–101).

To answer this question, one should understand the scope of politics, and the kinds of phenomena that can completely be called political. politics could be conceived in a more or less large way. The narrowly considered concept sees politics as being interested in the nature and legitimacy of states, governments, legal and other coercive institutions. The wider concept approaches politics as being concerned with power relations among socially classified groups which are expressed through situations rather than institutions . (Hagbery, 2008,P.P.87–89).

Generally, politics is seen as being a kind of practicing power or the implementation of collective interests and wills as well as legislating collective ideas. Such enactments or embodiments indicate that everyone is taken into consideration as subjects–sharing in a common world, making statements and not simply noise, discussing things, taking part in a common world and not in his/her own imaginations. Politics represents the cluster of perception and practices that composed the nowadays–wide world. It is a way of making certain scope of experience and partition of the sensible, visible and slayable ideas

which lets (or does not let) some data to come out. In addition, it permits, or does not, some topic matters to be designated and speak about them. It shows some overlap of ways of being, and ways of doing and speaking. The politics of literature, therefore ,indicates that literature as an art is required in this partition of the visible and the slayable world, in this intertwining of being , doing and saying that framework a dialectical common world. (Ranciere,2011,p.10)

Political literature participated in writing history where is a political duty gives the past a much more human, poetic, and literary dimension. It is no longer merely narrative of abstract events. Historical writing is a shape of political literature that brings past actors and cases into the newly human situation. It lets the audience listen and argue the maxim of the past, to have earlier voices that share the present discussion, and to make historical parallels with present. Therefore, to understand history is to give the past in order to change the present rather than to merely summarize exactly what happened in which political literature conveys these events (Dacobitti, 2000, p.32).

Political literature that deals with the Romantic period provides a narrative of the great social, political and cultural trends which occurred between the years 1780 and 1832 and which affected on the literature prepared by the men and women who lived through them. The Romantic period testified great political and social revolution with such political events and social processes as the American and French Revolutions, the Revolutionary, Napoleonic Wars, the Industrial Revolution and much more in this period transferred by political literature to life now (Poplawak, 2017,p.224).

Doubtlessly, literature could be set in to initiate practical communication for all sorts of knowledge, from having information concerning the Big Bang to the way the illegal immigrants used to escape into First World countries. Such sorts of knowledge are not what one goes to literature for. S/he goes to literature and value it for presenting him/her knowledge that is suitable to be communicated. (Hagbery, 2008, P.P.90–95).

1.3 Critical Discourse Analysis

Within the field of discourse analysis, there is a special kind of analytical research that is majorly interested with the performance (re)production, or resistance of social power and/or dominance within a social context or situation. This type of research is known as Critical discourse analysis(CDA). It tries to expose the reasons behind the inequality relations that are found with in a society. (Van Dijk, 2008,p.85).

The researchers within this area also look at discourse as being political practice as well. It initiates, maintains and changes the power relations. It investigates the language use within social and political contexts in which it takes place. In addition, it tries to explore important issues like gender, , ideology and identity and the way they are represented and reflected in texts and talks, and it might include a detailed textual analysis so that to reach some interpretations . Moreover, CDA might include tracing underlying ideologies that are related to the people's previous experiences and beliefs (Paltridge, 2012, p. 186)

Wodak and Meyer (2009) approaches discourse as being "institutionalized, way of talking that regulates and reinforces action and thereby exerts power". Such definition could be clarified through the image of discourse as a piece of information throughout time. Different discourses are highly related with each other and thus form a huge mass of discourses that are not merely representations of social behaviours, but also serve specific ends, namely the practice of power with in social context . (Wodak & Meyer,2009,p 35)

CDA could be considered as a general label of a specific approach for studying texts and talks which is derived from critical linguistics and semiotics as well as socio– political sciences. According to Van Dijk (1995, p.p. 17–18), CDA has the following criteria :

- It is oriented to investigate issues and problems, rather than paradigms.
- It represents a critical approach for the study of talks and texts.
- It is an inter or multidisciplinary approach that sheds light on the relationships that holds between discourse and society.

- **It is derived from critical studies of human and social sciences.**
- **It is interested in the all levels of the study of discourse among many semantics, syntax ,phonology, pragmatics, and rhetorics.**
- **The semiotic dimensions are also within the scope of CDA like facial expressions and gestures.**
- **It pays special attention to "power, dominance, and inequality" within the social relations between groups.**
- **It pays special attention also to the role of ideologies behind the given discourse.**
- **It aims at revealing what is implicit behind the discursive strategies.**

1.4 Power and Dominance

Power is considered as one of the interesting and complex aspects treated in the social sciences. The way by which an individual or social group affect and control or constrain others has acquired too much attention with in several fields of knowledge like sociology, psychology, and sociolinguistics. Critical discourse analysis has paid special attention to this aspect in specific.

The Modern discourse concerning power has started with Nicollò Machiavelli and Thomas Hobbes. Their works are seen as classical political writings. Taking this into consideration, the notion of Foucault concerning discourse is an important way to explore powers in the poststructuralist era. Within discourse, power and knowledge are mingled together. (Pitsoe & Letseka,2013, p.24). Hutcheon (1991) noticed that discourse is not only a mean of dominance, but it is a tool of power. Moreover, it is considered as a tool and an influence of power.(p.27). Some highly accepted view looks at power is a mean for constructing society in reality and discourse is considered as tool of ideological controls and power.(Pitsoe& Letseka,2013, p.24).

One of the vital presupposition of good critical discourse analysis is to understand the nature of power. Having such insight, one can have ideas concerning how discourse participates in their re/production. Within the field of discourse analysis, linguists deal with the features that characterize the relations among social groups i.e. they shed light on social power, and neglect the personal power, unless it reflects the realization

of group power, that is, the individuals represent group members. Social power is always based on the "privileged *access* to socially valued resources, such as wealth, income, position, status, force, group membership, education or knowledge" (Van Dijk, 1993, p.254). Such resources provide dominance, authority and social position that in turn enable that individual or social group to control and coercion the other groups.

However, Gramsci (1971) (as cited in Mayr & Simpson, 2010) who described through his concept of *hegemony* how the dominant group with in a society is able to convince the subordinate group to accept the dominant's values and ideas. They use any way that could make their beliefs seen as 'natural' and normal. Doing so, they would acquire more stable position as well as shorter access to their goals and desires. In addition, dominant group has to work on how to stay dominant i.e. they try to save domination first. Among other things, they do that through creating a capacity for coercion by police, rules, jails, and/or military.(p.3)

Within the field of Critical discourse analysis, the concept of power is usually an important

element for the study of language and society. It is seen as a pervasive phenomenon which represents "a property of the relationship between groups, classes, or other social formations , or between persons as social members" (Van Dijk, 2008, p.29). Moreover, power could also be seen as a type of 'mental control' positioned in the ideologies and represented through discursive practice (Pastor,2001, p.41). Fairclough (1992) has added that discourse is not only a social practice, rather it is also a political practice that " establishes, sustains, and changes power relations and the collective entities… between which power relations obtain" (p.67). Power could be practiced and achieved through ideology and more so through the ideological use of language. Although language is seen as been not powerful on its own, still it gets the power by its use (Atanga,2010 p.30)

Foucault (1978) emphasized that discourse could achieve the transition , production, and reinforcement of power, however, it is possible that discourse undermines and exposes power, making it without stability and possibly thwart (p.15). It could be considered as the usual practice of humans in his/her everyday life. Thus, it is not

merely text; rather, it is also action. As a social construction , it is made and controlled by those who control the power and mediums of communication and the dominant groups usually decides the production of discourse and control , select, organise and redistribute the discursive interaction in accordance to their ideological point of view (Foucault, 1998: p. 100).

Power encompass control of the dominant group over the subordinate group. This control might be attached to action and cognition i.e. the dominant group might bound the freedom of others as well as affect their minds. In addition to the primary recourse of direct control (such as police violence against protestors) ,the more influential power is cognition, specifically persuasion that could " change the mind of others in one's own interests"(Van Dijk, 1993, p.254). Dominant groups usually perform variable discursive strategies to maintain their dominance. Power is enacted as an aspect of interaction that is socially performed by discourse. In this respect, Van Dijk (2008, p.p. 37–38) has proposed four genres in which power reflected in discourse :

1. **Direct control which could be fulfilled by directive functions of pragmatics within discourse (elocutionary force) like orders, legislations, rules, instructions, or less directly through recommendation and advice. Such speakers usually have official power.**

2. **Persuasion in discourse that aims majorly to control the future actions of the other participants by making a propaganda for example. Such type of discourse often practiced on the different types of media that enable them to interact with the public. The power in such case is dependent on the economic, or financial resources of the institution. This genre is also characterized by using rhetorical means.**

3. **Prescriptive discourse form that predict the possible future situation , action or even status. This is achieved, for example, by setting plans, warnings, programs, or promises which are usually attached with some advices. The users of such genre are often professionals whose rhetorical means are based on argument and description.**

4. **The different types of discourse that have influential narrative like stories or films that**

describe the future. Their rhetoric means are based on drama or emotions. Such users are usually known as symbolic elites.

Moreover, the types of power might be variable according to resources that are used to have the power: the aggressive power of military or criminals usually dependent on force, while the power of wealthy people is based on their money, and the persuasive power of teachers, writer, or scientist is usually based on knowledge, or argumentation. In addition, power is usually partial rather than ultimate i.e. dominant groups have power only in some situations. This power might also be accepted or resisted by the subordinate group. (Van Dijk, 2008, p.p. 88–89)

For van Dijk (2008) Dominance is considered as "a form of social power abuse, that is, as a legally or morally illegitimate exercise of control over others in one's own interests, often resulting in social inequality"(p.65)

1.5 Sentences Types According to Structure and purpose

In the English, there are four types of sentences in terms of each structure and purpose. Such classifications indicate a great impression concerning the qualities of the dominant group, represented by the turns of the officer, and the subgroup, represented by the turns of the two friends Morissot and Sauvage.

A simple sentence is composed mainly of a subject, a verb phrase, and a complementation (one independent clause). It is used to express a single complete idea that could stand on its own. It is not necessary to be very short as it could have some adjectives and/or adverbs.

A compound sentence contains two independent clauses. The independent clause represents a part of the sentence which could stand on its own as it has a subject ,a verb phrase and a complementation to express a complete independent idea. Such type of sentences is usually composed through joining two simple sentences (independent clauses) by using a conjunction (like for, and, nor etc.)

A complex sentence is composed of an independent clause with one dependent clause or

more. **A dependent clause usually cannot stand alone as it does not express a complete idea. The dependent clause is usually subordinated by a subordinator** (**as**, **because**, **since**, **after**, **although**, **etc.**) **or a relative pronoun** (**who**, **that**, **which**). **A compound–complex sentence is constructed through joining two independent clauses and one dependent clause at least**.

The second classification of sentences that could be considered here is classifying sentences according to the communicative purpose behind using certain syntactic form. In this regard, sentences might be classified two four basic classes syntactically, whose use correlates with different communicative functions:

- **Declarative sentence: such type of sentences is used to convey certain piece of information to the other participants. The subject is usually present and generally precedes the verb. It starts with capital letter and ends with full stop .**
- **Interrogative sentence: it is used to enquire some information from the other participants. It starts with capital letter and ends with a question mark. Such kind of sentences is identified by one or more of these three criteria:**

A) **The operator is place directly in front of the subject**.

B) **The initial positioning of an interrogative or Wh–element**.

C) **Rising intonation**.

- **Imperative sentence**: this kind of sentences is normally used with no overt grammatical subject, and whose verb is in the infinitive form . it starts with a capital letter and ends with full stop. Such kind of sentences is used to give orders to the other participants.

- **Exclamatory Sentence**: **This kind of sentences has an initial phrase presented by what or how, with no inversions of subject and operator . it is used to express surprise or hard feelings. It starts with a capital letter and ends with an exclamation mark.**

  Having these classifications in consideration, the turns of the two friends , Morissot and Sauvage, are characterised as being simple on the level of structure. Both friends have used simple and very short structures in their conversations with each other (see appendix No.1). They produced thirteen sentences only along the story. All of these sentences were directed to each other (within the same group) and non were produced

towards the dominant group. Their simple–structured sentences were also simple on the level of ideas as they were discussing simple thing that is fishing. Concerning Purpose, Four of them were in the form of question and the rest were declarative ones as they were describing the weather, talking about their old days and fishing excursions, or criticizing war.

On the other hand, the turns of the representative of the dominant group, the Prussian officer, has used various forms: simple, complex and compound. He sometimes used long turns and some other short ones. In all his turns, he got no reply whether from the two friends or the soldiers. Within the nineteen sentences he produced (see appendix 2), he used nine simple, eight complex, and two compound sentences. Such variation could indicate that the Prussian officer has ultimate freedom in choosing whatever structure he likes as most of the simple sentences got the meaning of command or implicit or explicit threatening. These sentences were divided into seventeen declarative sentences, and a sentence for each interrogative and imperative ones.

In addition to the complete sentences, there were some abbreviated utterances or fragmented expressions. The words "Well , gentlemen", for example, in the sentence "Well, gentlemen, have you had a good morning's fishing?" are not only plain words, rather, The Prussian officer, using such words, poses a threat to the two friends indirectly. The expression "All right" used by the officer in " All right . If you tell me, I'll even let you go" indicates that the officer tries to seduce them to get what he wants as he said to them if they give him the password, he will let them leave .

Moreover, abbreviated commands, like "Fire !" and "Here !" in the officer's speech ,are not just ordinary words. They refer to the orders of the officer to his soldiers without talking a lot, others should understand what he wants and without any discussion. The order, Fire! , was used to command them to kill the captives without any discussion and they should understand and implement.

The numbers which were counted by the officer are "one, two, three" which were not just numbers being counted, rather, behind these

numbers there is a big thing. ; the lives of the men will end and they will die when the officer finishes the third number. The life of the men are related to these three numbers, which the officer are counting. In the same way, the time indication " in five minutes: is a direct reference to threat . In these five minutes, if the two friends do not give him the password, their lives would end and they would be killed.

1.6 Turn–Taking

Turn–taking is a way of organizing roles in conversations and discourses as participants participates individually at a time in interchangeable turns . Practically, it requires some processes for composing contributions, as well as responds to previous taken roles , and allowing the other participant to respond using different linguistic and non–linguistic cues. As the phenomenon is generally universal, the conventions that are used in turn–taking vary according to the culture and community in many ways, as how turns are distributed, how transitions are indicated, or how much overlapping

is available. Turn taking is a valuable mean to sharesocial life and has been subject to competition. (Yule,2010, p.186)

In 'Two friends', the conversations of the two friends : Morissot and Sauvage are characterized as being simple and homogeneous as they exchanged the taking of roles in their conversations as each one took his part in speaking and give the second person a chance to answer him. This expresses the cooperation between the two speakers fulfilling the Maxims of Grice: relevance, quality, quantity, and manner.

In contrast, the Prussian officer was speaking directly and without giving anyone a chance to answer or take a role in talking as he was ordering and threatening that is why he spoke a lot and no one said a word. There was no Turn–taking in the officer's discourse. This indicates the ultimate domination of the officer over the two friends.

1.7 Further indications of Domination

Now, after observing the discourses of the two men and the political man, it could be noted that

the themes that the boys spoke about were simple and have nothing to say about political matters but criticizing the war creators ,and everything they did and said were simple things to live their lives naturally. The political man, on the other hand, has imposed every statement. He controlled the military situation and all the actions that happened.

The style of speech for each group is completely different. When the men talked to each other, they used a simple style to speak about their simple life . The political man, however, has used a more complex style as he used long and imperative sentences to talk with the men and soldiers.

The dominance of the Prussian officer over the captives is clear through noticing how he spoke strongly and they cannot respond and were only silent. This indicates that the Prussian officer has used his position to speak as a dominant person and the poor people who are the subgroup cannot respond with any word .Through his discourse, the officer used the style of seduction to reach his demands and what he wanted.

In addition, the writer here used the personal pronouns skillfully. Within most of the conversational turns, the two friends used the first person pronouns : 'I' and more frequently 'we' to talk about themselves and the third plural pronoun 'Them' to talk about the Prussian army. On the other hand the Prussian officer used the first pronoun 'I' when he talked about himself and the second pronoun 'you' to talk about the two friends. In this way, the writer brought sympathy to the reader about the condition of the two friends through making them representing 'us' as they usually used the first person plural pronoun and at the same time criticizing the inventors through talking about 'them' . On the other hand, the political power, represented by the Prussian officer, is selfish and dictator as they overtly use the first person pronoun 'I' and they direct their speech to the subgroups by talking and threating them directly through using the second person pronoun 'you'. This indicated the fact that the dominant group usually has the power to direct whatever they like personally , directly, and explicitly to the subgroup which whose members usually are poor and powerless

people. **Still**, **this subgroup can only talk about the dominant one when the latter is absent**. **Thus**, **they normally use the third person plural pronoun 'Them'** .

1.8 Conclusion

The present study has concluded the following:

1. **The Prussian officer's discourse reflected high intensity of dominance and power over the two friends as he represents a supreme power that controlled the whole situation**.

2. **The discourse of the Prussian officer is characterized as being long**, **complex**, **powerful**, **and deep as he used different styles in his attempt to achieve his goals**: **convincing the two friends to tell him the password whether softly or harshly**.

3. **The story has shown that the dominant political group leaves no choice for the subgroup other than obeying their instructions or getting hurt**.

4. **The style of the two friends has reflected their simplicity on the levels of structure and ideology**. **They used very simple language that is interested and related with the everyday life**.

5 . **In the conversation between the two friends, they used simple sentences and questions to interact about their simple lives. Still, in their turns in their conversation with the Prussian officer, their replies were only silence. This indicates that the interaction processes in this story represented as follow : simple and short interactions between the two friends, long and complex discourse from the Prussian officer to the two friends, and nothing produced by the two friends to the Prussian officer. Such silence is highly significant as it indicates that politicians usually get no reply when they force their discourses on the simple people.**

6 . **The writer has used the pronouns in a very skillful way as he used the first person pronouns mostly with the two friends and the third persons pronouns when the two friends talk about the Prussians while the Prussian officer used the second person pronouns to refer to the two friends. This indicates that the officer has the power to direct his ideas directly to the subgroup while the latter can talk about the former only when they are absent .**

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Appendix 1

The turns of the two friends (Morissot and Sauvage) and their structure and purpose types

Sentences	Structure and purpose types
1– Isn't it a beautiful day ?	Simple sentence / Question
2– Do you remember the days we went fishing?	Simple sentence / Question
3– Shall we go?	Simple sentence / Question
4– Our soldiers aren't far from there.	Simple sentence / declarative
5– I know the officer in charge at Colombes.	Simple sentence / declarative
6– I'm sure he'll let us go there.	Simple sentence / declarative
7– I'll come.	Simple sentence / declarative

8– The Prussians are over there.	Simple sentence / declarative
9– If some of them found us.	Simple sentence / declarative
10–What would happen?	Simple sentence / Question
11–We would ask them to come fishing with us !	Simple sentence / declarative
12–There they go again.	Simple sentence / declarative
13–How foolish men are, They 'r like wild animals.	Simple sentence / declarative

Appendix 2

The Turns of the Prussian Officer(to his soldiers and the two friends) and their structure and purpose types

Sentences	Structure and purpose types
1– Have you had a good morning's	Simple sentence /

fishing?	Question
2– Yes, I see you've done quite Well.	Simple sentence / declarative
3– Listen to me, for I've some urgent matters to discuss with you.	Compound sentence/imperative, declarative
4– I think you two are spies sent by the French to watch me.	Simple sentence/ declarative
5– You pretended to fish.	Simple sentence/ declarative
6– I've captured you, which is bad luck for you, but that is one of the fortunes of war.	Complex sentence/ declarative
7– As you've got past the French guards, you must know the password.	Complex sentence/ declarative
8– If you refuse, I shall shoot you.	Complex sentence/ declarative
9– If you tell me, I'll even let you go.	Complex sentence/ declarative
10–Nobody will know.	Simple sentence/

	declarative
11–It'll be your secret.	Simple sentence/ declarative
12–You'll go back as if nothing had happened .	Complex sentence/ declarative
13–But if you refuse, you 'll die at once.	Complex sentence/ declarative
14–You must understand that in five minutes you'll be at the bottom of the river , in five minutes, unless you tell me the password.	Complex sentence/ declarative
15–Your families will miss you.	Simple sentence/ declarative
16–I'll give you one minute to tell me the password, and no more	Compound sentence/ declarative
17–Your friend need never know you told me.	Simple sentence/ declarative

18–Tell the cook to prepare these little fish while they're sill fresh.	Complex sentence/ declarative
19–They'll make a delicious dinner.	Simple sentence/ declarative