

Critical Narrative Analysis in Linguistics: Analysing a Homodiegetic Rape Narrative

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Abstract: Why separate the micro world from the macro world when the micro world is a derivative of the macro world? This paper explored the framework of Critical Narrative analysis, acronym CNA and therefore presented and applied a model for said framework in linguistics in the analysis of an extract from a select homodiegetic rape narrative. This study therefore presented a model developed from Fairclough's 3-dimensional model for critical discourse analysis. Utilizing the proposed model, and different theoretical paradigms to analyze the extract, it was established that the model is functional and can be employed for a more in-depth and exhaustive deconstruction of a narrative. Having conducted the analysis using the mixed method research design, the mode of the features of spoken discourse are the fillers with a frequency of 4 and the qualitative analysis shows how language has helped to attract attention to the issue of patriarchy, rape and subjugation which is inherent in our culture and language habits. It also shows how language has given structure to the narrative by creating timelines, imageries, and order to the events and how the narrator used units of language to achieve unity in her narrative.

Keywords: Critical Narrative Analysis, Language, Homodiegetic, Narratives, Rape, Ideology, and Culture

Introduction

Language is a universal, vital and dynamic phenomenon of human existence. It is a tool to observe problems and give real life solutions. Language helps one to report and understand what is happening in the society. It determines how a person views the world; an individual interprets different actions and events based on the language features or personalities of that individual's speech community, which constitutes their linguistic foundations. Sapir (1929) posits that the structure of a language affects a speaker's world and determines a native speaker's perception and categorization of experience. Thus, this elucidates the notion that language is indeed germane to human reality and subjective to societal volatility. Therefore, several scholars (Bloch & Trager, 1942; Okata, 2016; & Osisanwo, 2003) have attempted to define language however, the working definition for this article is the definition given by Robins (1968, 1976) that language is a symbol system based on pure or arbitrary conventions that are infinitely extendable and modifiable, according to the changing needs and conditions of the speaker because it emphasizes on change; change in meaning, situation, purpose, and different uses of communication.

Human beings do not live in an objective world, they live in a world that is subjected to language and the habits it exhibits (Sapir, 1929); thus, humans are subjected and at the mercy of the particular language which has become the medium of expression in our society. Therefore, one of the ways by which language is used to express oneself is through a narrative. Foucault (1966, 1970) posits that the world is structured by discourse. A narrative is a type of discourse usually termed narrative discourse. Therefore, a narrative discourse is a discourse that is a tale of occurrences, often in the past, that uses speech that belong to the verbal grammatical category, motion, and action to portray a series of experiences that are controlled by one another, and customarily center on one or more performers of actions (Manfred, 2017). According to Gerard and Lewin, (1988), there are two types of narratives which include a homodiegetic narrative (a first-person narrative) and a heterodiegetic narrative (a third person narrative). These two types of narratives have at least three textual elements which are: content matter, subjective expressions or expressivity markers and pragmatic signals. Pragmatic signals refer to expressions that indicate that the narrator is aware of an audience and the level of their orientation as regards the available audience.

The term Narrative analysis was first explored by Jerome Brunner (1990) as a way of discerning people's acumen of their lives. It is a scrutiny of how people decode the reality of their world through their life stories. On the other hand, the framework of this study Critical Discourse Analysis is an annex of critical social dissection, which lays emphasis on discourse and on relations between discourse and other social facets (Fairclough, 2012). It brings the critical custom in social deconstruction into language studies and

focuses on the relationship between discourse and social elements; power relations, ideologies, sexuality, social identities, and other forms of social inequality (Dijk, 1995). Scholars working in the tradition of critical discourse analysis posit that social or non-linguistic practice and linguistic practice complement another and center on scrutinizing how societal power relations are inaugurated and augmented through the manner of language use by interlocutors (Van Dijk, 1996).

Therefore, if Critical discourse analysis explores the accord between discourse and social conventions and Narrative analysis deconstructs how people interpret the reality of their world through their life stories, therefore, an interplay between both frameworks is plausible (Souto-Manning, 2014) yielding Critical Narrative Analysis (CNA). It is a framework that explores the relationship that exists between the Micro and Macro world. The framework of narrative analysis explores narratives to elicit themes, the narratives' referential and evaluative functions, ideology of the narrator because ideology is related to social relations of power, the social reality of the narrator, and ultimately the experiences of the narrator. Furthermore, employing the framework of critical discourse analysis in addition to the narrative analysis, it goes beyond eliciting the aforementioned concepts and further explores the social relations in institutional practices from the macro world that are represented linguistically in the narratives (micro). The framework of critical narrative analysis may be employed in exploring various fundamental linguistic practices in the society and the narratives by exploring the relationship that exists between the social relations in institutional practices that are represented linguistically in the narratives and the contemporary society.

However, the combination of the frameworks of critical discourse analysis and narrative analysis has been frequently used in other academic fields particularly psychology (Gemma, et al., 2016) but scarcely in the field of linguistics. The aim of adopting Critical narrative analysis is that critical discourse analysis is a fundamental problem-oriented, interdisciplinary approach which is absorbed in scrutinizing social phenomena which are naturally complex and therefore depend upon a multidisciplinary and multi-methodical approach (wodak & meyer, 2008), and Narrative analysis aims at understanding people's life stories which are dependent on these naturally complex and social phenomena.

Fairclough (1989, 1995) posited a model for CDA which consists of three inter-related processes of analysis tied to three inter-related dimensions of discourse.

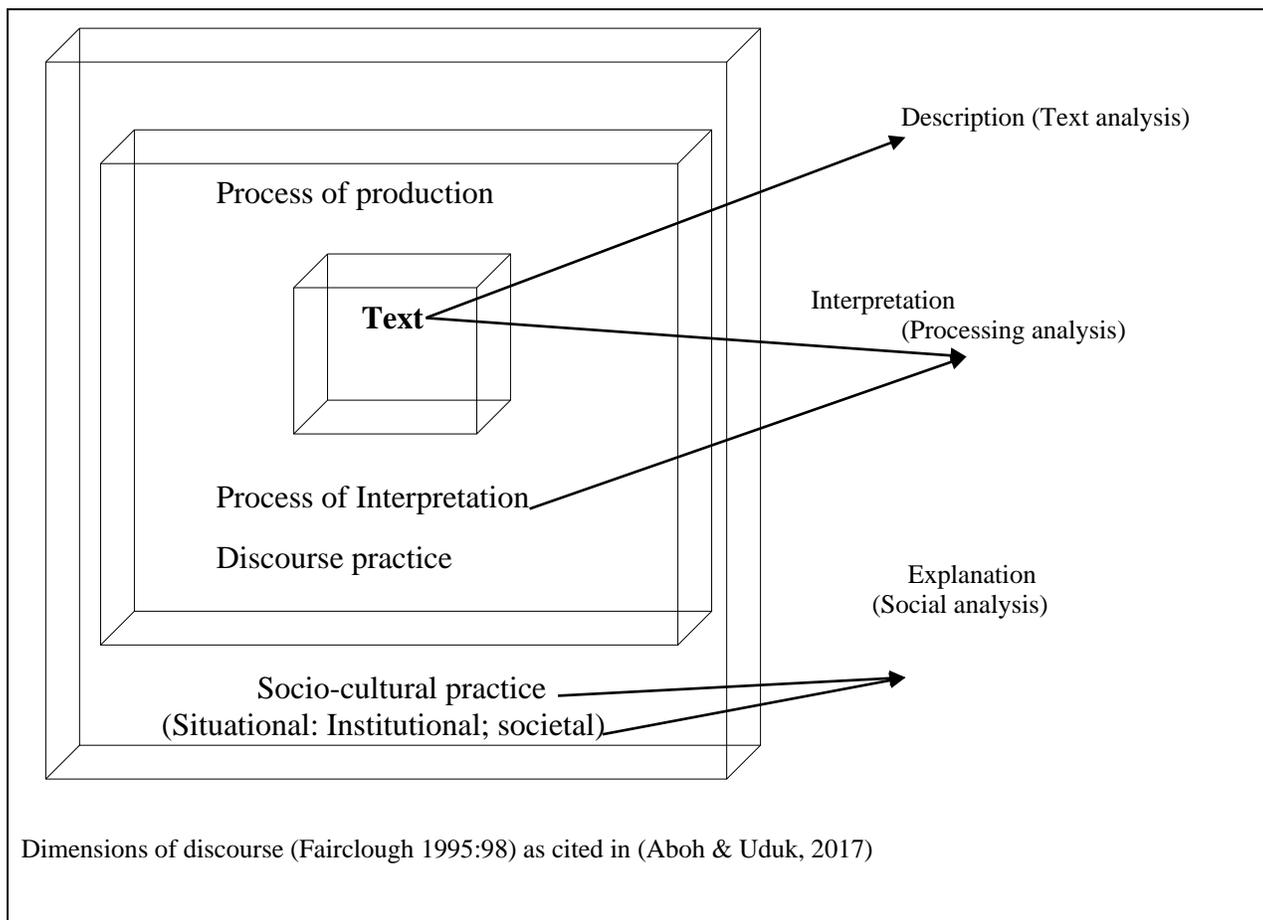
- 1) The object of analysis (including verbal, visual or verbal and visual texts).
- 2) The processes by means of which the object is produced and received (writing/ speaking/designing and reading/listening/viewing) by human subjects.
- 3) The socio-historical conditions which govern these processes.

According to Fairclough each of these dimensions requires a different kind of analysis

- 1) Text analysis (description): This involves an analysis of the formal properties of the texts using linguistic tools.
- 2) Processing analysis (interpretation): This refers to the various discursive processes and its relationship with the text, the process through which the text is produced that can enable its interpretation.
- 3) Social analysis (explanation): This entails the explanation of a text within the context of a socio-cultural reality, or the wider context of society.

(Norman, 1995) As cited in (Romanus & Uduk, 2017).

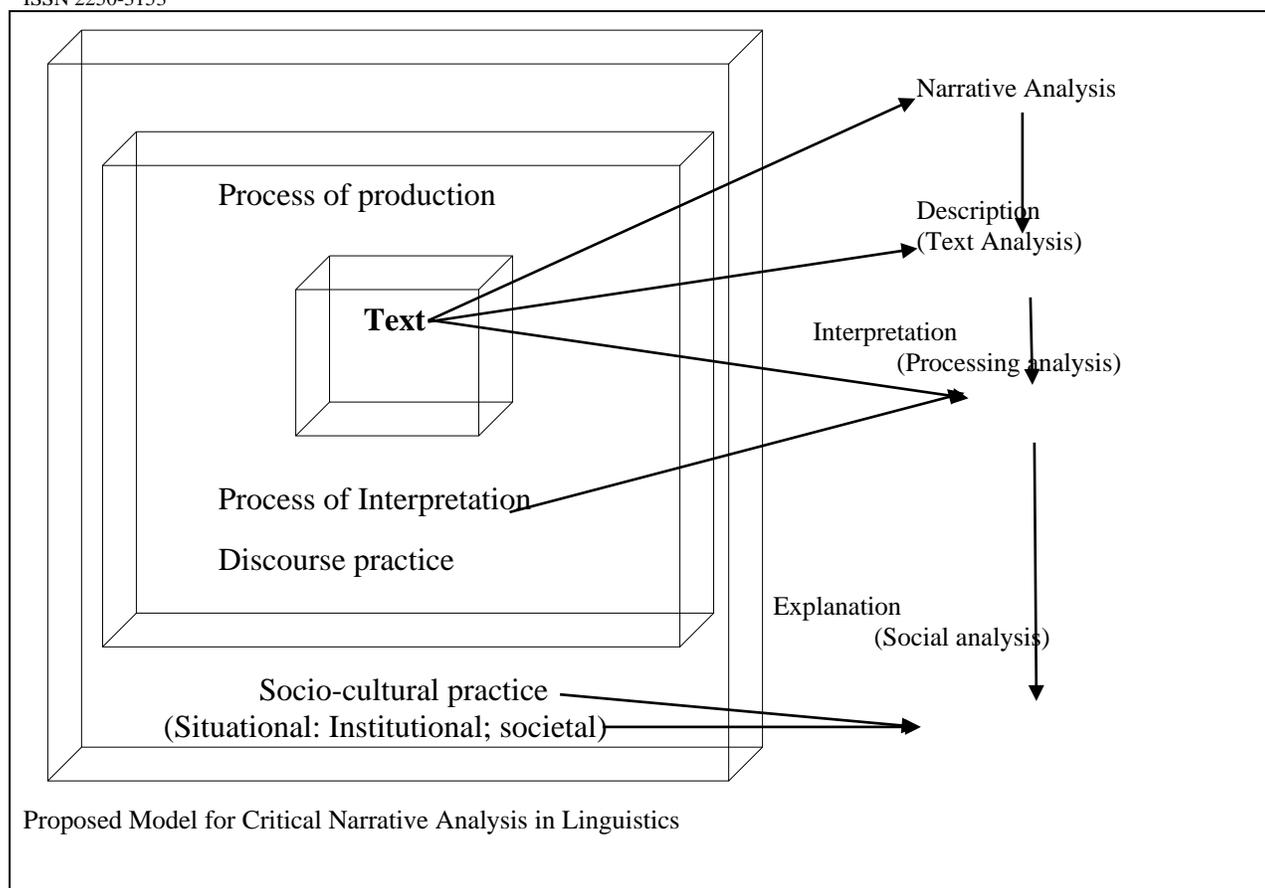
DIAGRAM 1



However, this article aims to propose a model for CNA in linguistics developed from the above model for CDA where the analysis will be carried out in two stages:

- 1) Narrative Analysis: This involves shaping chaotic events into a coherent narrative.
- 2) The three-dimensional model by Fairclough for the socio-cultural approach to CDA which involves:
 - i. Text analysis (description): analysis of the formal properties of the texts using linguistic tools
 - ii. Processing analysis (interpretation): various discursive processes and its relationship with the text, the process through which the text is produced that can enable its interpretation.
 - iii. Social analysis (explanation): explanation of a text within the wider context of society.

DIAGRAM 2



Application

This model was applied in the analysis of the purposively selected data which is an extract from the rape narrative given in an interview by the Anonymous Ex COZA staff to Chude Jidonwo and uploaded to YouTube on Yaw Naija TV channel in June 2019 and the analysis was divided in to two stages namely:

- 1) Narrative Analysis using the Labovian technique for thematic progression in a narrative and
- 2) The three-dimensional model by Fairclough for the socio-cultural approach to CDA which involved
 - i. Text analysis: A bar chart indicating the linguistic feature of spoken discourse with the highest frequency of occurrence in the excerpt and highlighting the cohesive devices and their use.
 - ii. Processing analysis: Linguistic and Situational context using Dell Hymes SPEAKING acronym to provide an in-depth interpretation of the discursive processes and its relationship with the text. Exploring the process through which the text is produced and how it helps interpret the text.
 - iii. Social analysis: Socio-Cultural Context where Edward Sapir and Benjamin Whorf's theory of cultural relativism otherwise known as Sapir-Whorfian hypothesis will be used as a framework to explore the social context and explain how the theme of the text is possible because of societal norms and archetypes.

Analysis and Results

Extract

X: "so that day he had asked me to meet him at the house it was a Thursday he had asked me to meet him at the house on Thursday morning and erm I went there it was supposed to be the usual you know, go there, take instructions oh! To either do this for church or go do that for us (Biodun and his family) personally, and then go do whatever needed to be done erm, I like to say that at this time, I considered him to not just be a mentor, but he was someone who I regarded as a father figure of sort, I mean yea, so, the trust was basically... he started trying to pull me into a hug and then of course the trying to kiss me which I found shocking it was I don't know, maybe one of the most shocking things I was about to experience because I have known this man for such a long time I had known him not just as a mentor but as this spiritual leader I have heard him preach, I have heard him talk about you know God and there I was about to witness what would seem like the complete opposite that like thought,

that this person stood for... I didn't go there to have sex with him, I didn't ask to have sex with him, I told him to stop on countless occasions ...there was no consent, I didn't give my consent".

1. Narrative Analysis

Abstract: The extract tells the story of how the narrator was raped by her Pastor boss who was her mentor on a Thursday morning in his house.

Orientation:

Antagonist:Pastor Biodun, a mentor, boss, pastor and Father figure to the victim as at the time of the event.

Protagonist/ Victim: A young woman who at the time of the event was an employee in the antagonist's Church

Location:Not specified, but in the Pastor's house

Period (when): on a Thursday morning, specific date, and time not specified

Other people mentioned: The Antagonist's family.

Complication: the narrator went to the antagonist's house for a meeting which was not an unusual occurrence. However, the most unusual thing happened was when He raped her.

Evaluation: She was shocked and surprised because she could not reconcile the image of the man who was about to rape her to the image of her boss who was a pastor, her mentor, and her spiritual leader.

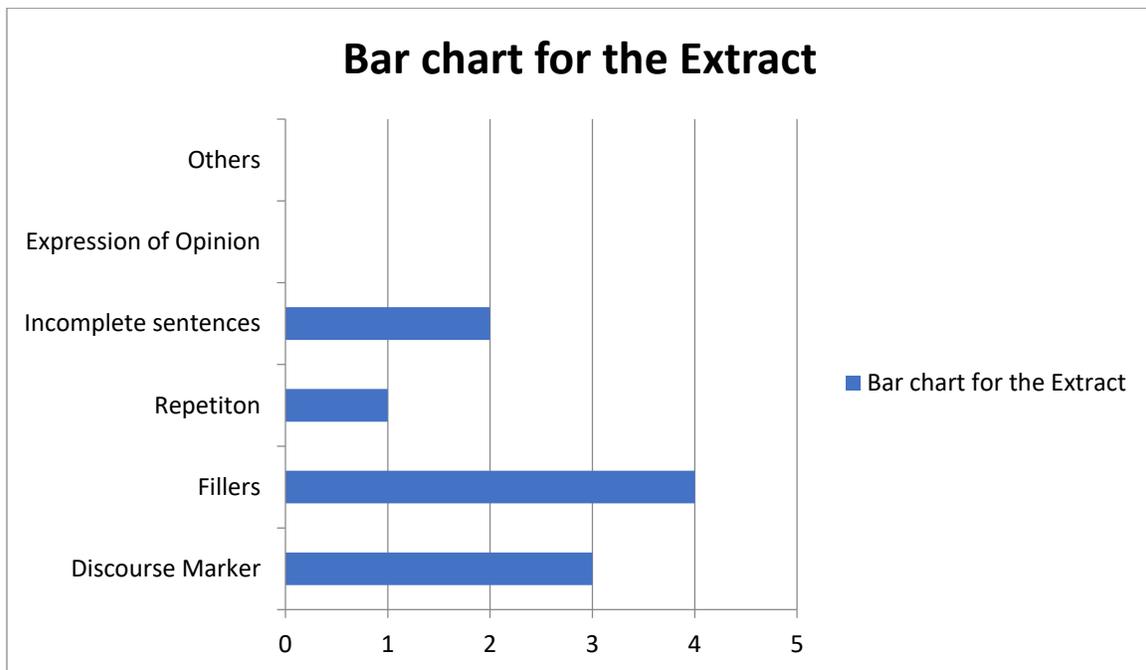
Consequence:the event made her see the antagonist as the complete opposite of what the pastor, she, and their religion, stood for.

Coda: The narrative is a Homodiegetic narrative; therefore, it was told in the first person point of view, it is a narrative therefore the narrator made use of past tense in the course of the narration. And several cohesive devices were employed to unify the utterances and embellish it in a state of continuity. The themes discovered are the themes of Rape, and Religion

2. Critical Discourse Analysis

Description: Text analysis; A bar chart indicating the linguistic feature of spoken discourse with the highest frequency of occurrence in the excerpt and highlighting the cohesive devices and their use.

Spoken discourse is accompanied with varying features. Features like facial expressions, body language, non-phonetic sounds, cohesive devices, and so on. However, this article focused on the features posited by Romanus and Uduk, (2017).



The most used linguistic feature are the 'Fillers' with a frequency of 4 they are used as pragmatic signals when the narrator is trying to remember something, strengthen a point, to dramatize a situation and to fill in pauses, also,

Discourse markers were used to draw the hearer's attention to some statements to elicit understanding or lay emphasis. They were also used as pragmatic signals that indicate that the narrator is aware of an audience and the level of their orientation as regards the available audience,

Repetition was employed as a linguistic feature and a cohesive device by the narrator to lay emphasis, and enhance clarity and

Incomplete sentences also indicate that the narrator was trying to string different thoughts and present them at the same time

Text analysis

The narrator used cohesive devices to achieve unity in her narrative the different cohesive devices used are:

1. so (Continuative) that day he (cataphoric reference to Biodun) had asked me to meet him at the house it was a Thursday
2. he (cataphoric reference to Biodun) had asked me to meet him at the house (Repetition) on Thursday morning
3. And (Coordinate conjunction) erm I went there it was supposed to be the usual you know, go there, take instructions oh! To either do this for church or go do that for us (Biodun and his family) personally,
4. and (Coordinate conjunction) then go do whatever needed to be done erm, I like to say that at this time, I considered him to not just be a mentor,
5. but (Coordinate conjunction) he (Anaphoric reference to Biodun) was someone who I regarded as a father figure of sort,
6. I mean yea, so (Continuative), the trust was basically... he (Anaphoric reference to Biodun) started trying to pull me into a hug and (Coordinate conjunction) then of course the trying to kiss me which I found shocking it was I don't know, maybe one of the most shocking things I was about to experience
7. because (subordinate conjunction) I have known this man for such a long time I had known him not just as a mentor but (Coordinate conjunction) as this spiritual leader I have heard him preach,
8. I have heard him talk about you know God and (Coordinate conjunction) there I was about to witness what would seem like the complete opposite that like thought, that this person stood for...
9. I didn't go there (Nominal substitution to 'his house') to have sex with him, I didn't ask to have sex with him, I told him to stop on countless occasions ...there was no consent, I didn't give my consent".

Interpretation: processing analysis; exploring the process through which the text is produced and how it helps interpret the text utilizing Hymes' SPEAKING acronym

S – The setting and context of the speech event where the narrative was given is in Nigeria in an interview this indicates the referential function of the narrative which according to Labov, 1972 orients and grounds a story to its context of occurrence by recounting the events in the order in which they occurred originally.

P – The participants Pastor Biodun (The Antagonist) and the Narrator (the protagonist).

E – To disseminate the narrative to the general public; this was the outcome. Which suggests that the narrative also perform the evaluative function which according to Labov (1972), indicates the narrator's reason for recounting the events and telling the narrative

A – This extract falls within the Representative act; it is a Recount of a real life experience.

K – The key of this speech event is a sad and solemn one because of 'Rape' is the subject matter and the Rapist is a pastor.

I – The narrative is an oral Narrative delivered through speaking which explains the repetitions, use of fillers, and discourse markers because they are all features of spoken discourse.

N – The narrator made use of past tense which is a norm for narrative discourse because it tells a past event. And the solemn and sad tone of the narrative is an expected norm when talking about 'Rape'

G – The genre of the above extract is a Spoken Narrative Discourse. This explains the use of cohesive devices to keep the narrative in a continuous state.

Explanation: Social analysis; Socio-cultural context where Edward Sapir and Benjamin Whorf's theory of cultural relativism otherwise known as Sapir-Whorfian hypothesis will be used as a framework to explore the social context and explain how the theme of the text is possible because of societal norms and archetypes.

1. The victim's social reality is that she belongs to a patriarchal society where men often view women as objects of pleasure. Most rape cases are often gendered in nature, and she was raped by her boss who is a Pastor, mentor and father figure to her.
2. The word 'pastor', the semantic and cultural import of the title suggests 'safety'.

3. Also, the victim's Ideology is conditioned by her sense of religion therefore, to her, the pastor was 'Holy', 'Righteous' and would do her no harm. However, the opposite was the case.
4. Nigeria is to a large extent unconsciously built up on the language habits of the group of people that live in Nigeria. The language habits that will be explored are;
 - i. Use of Kinship terms: the narrator accorded a kinship term to the pastor. The kinship term 'Father'; "*I like to say that at this time, I considered him to not just be a mentor, but he was someone who I regarded as a father figure of sort, I mean yea, so, the trust was basically, he didn't seem like any red flags to me*" which is the greatest and deepest familial bond one can have. Therefore, assigning this term to the pastor means that she also accorded him the respect, and the level of comfort, safety, and dependence one has with one's father. This is why she was comfortable and did not expect to be raped by him.
 - ii. Use of Titles: Nigeria is a society in which her people love the use of titles. It either depicts respect, or professionalism. In the narrative, the title at play is the title of 'Pastor'. This title in the Nigerian society also denotes safety, holy, Righteous, and good because of the country's highly moralistic nature and the victim's sense of religion; "*which I found shocking it was I don't know, maybe one of the most shocking things I was about to experience because I have known this man for such a long time I had known him not just as a mentor but as this spiritual leader I have heard him preach, I have heard him talk about you know God and there I was about to witness what would seem like the complete opposite that like thought, that this person stood for*".

Conclusion

Having employed the proposed model and different theoretical paradigms to analyze the above extract, it has been established that the model is functional and can be utilized for a more in-depth and exhaustive deconstruction of a narrative. This analysis has shown how multidimensional and multidisciplinary the framework of Critical Narrative Analysis is therefore, it can be utilized in any academic field Linguistics included. This article therefore portrays how language has helped to attract attention to the issue of patriarchy, rape and subjugation which is inherent in our culture and language habits. It also shows how language has given structure to the narrative by creating timelines, imageries, and order to the events and how the narrator used units of language to achieve unity in her narrative. Language really helps one to understand oneself and others in the society and hear about people's experiences while in turn influencing those experiences.

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