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**Power And Powerlessness in Kafka's *A Hunger Artist*: A Critical Discourse Analysis**

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**ABSTRACT**

*This study examines the discourse of powerlessness in Franz Kafka's short story 'The Hunger Artist' by employing Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) which explores how Kafka's narrative constructs the artist's losing influence, and relevance in a shifting sociocultural context by following Norman Fairclough's three-dimensional model of CDA and Foucault's concept of power/knowledge. This study shows how the way we talk about things takes away the power of the proponent. This research highlights how public language, institutional remarks, and silence function as tools of marginalization which ultimately leading to the artist's symbolic disappearance. It also contributes to the understanding that how the exchange of bad words not only reflects but also perpetuates the social isolation and psychological trauma of powerless figures in modernist literature.*

**Keywords:** Power, Powerlessness, A Hunger Artist, Kafka, Critical Discourse Analysis

**INTRODUCTION**

**1.1 Background of the study**

This study looks at how feeling of powerlessness is expressed through language in different situations in Franz Kafka's short story 'The Hunger Artist' (1922). It is a critical examination of how the theme of powerlessness is represented and reinforced in the text. I have used the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), particularly the method and approach developed by Norman

Fairclough (1989), to reveal the hidden structures of power and inequality in society as well as in literature. According to Fairclough, he believes that identifying social problems in the first step towards making social changes and achieving freedom.

Fairclough's Three-Dimensional Model (TDM) is used for the analysis of selected extracts for this study as it enables a deeper understanding of how language, society, and ideas interact. Fairclough explains Critical Discourse Analysis through his work *Language and Power* (1995) as "a method that helps researchers study concealed connections between language methods and the existing social and cultural frameworks which influence them." CDA focuses on power relations, and it aligns with Marxist ideas, which aims to challenge social inequalities and raise awareness. The "critical" part in CDA refers to the deeper analysis of texts to uncover hidden meanings, assumptions, and beliefs. This paper views CDA not only as a method but as a reflective and interpretive practice that reveals overlooked voices in a text.

The main aim of this paper is to analyze that how powerlessness is portrayed in *The Hunger Artist*. Kafka presents a character who is isolated, misunderstood, and gradually ignored by the very society that once admired him. 'The Hunger Artist's' identity and value are shaped and eventually erased through the shifting public opinion. The study also investigates how society exercises symbolic power over the individual by defining and controlling his narrative or story through language. Kafka's story serves as a strong example of how power structures can silence and marginalize those who do not conform to societal norms or expectations.

In today's world, power and powerlessness are not only found in governments, institutions, or politics but are also in everyday language and stories. The way we talk, write, and portray others in stories can reveal who has power and who does not. Literature often reflected the struggles of individuals in society, and one effective way to understand these struggles is through Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). CDA is a method which helps us to study how language is related to power, inequality, and ideas. It helps uncover hidden meanings in texts and shows how certain people or groups are presented as weak, silent, or powerless. This study focuses on Franz Kafka's short story 'The Hunger Artist' to see how the main character is depicted as powerless through language and social dynamics.

Franz Kafka is one of the most important writers of the 20th century. He was born in Prague in 1883 and wrote in German. His works often show people who feel trapped, unheard, and confused in systems they cannot control. One of his final short stories, 'The Hunger Artist' (1922), gives a strong picture of a man who performs the act of fasting as a form of art. At first, people admire him, but slowly they lose interest. His suffering is no longer seen as valuable. He is put in a cage, controlled by managers, and ignored by the public. In the end, he is replaced by a panther, which shows how society values energy and entertainment more than quiet reflection or inner struggle. This story, though short, is filled with deep messages about identity, voice control, and loneliness.

This study is an attempt to explore how powerlessness is built through language and narrative in Kafka's 'The Hunger Artist'. The story is an excellent example for Critical Discourse Analysis because it shows how people can lose power not through violence but through being silence,

misrepresentation, and misunderstood. The hunger artist is not physically attacked, but his voice is overlooked, his actions are misinterpreted, and his purpose is forgotten. He becomes invisible in the eyes of the world, not because he is unimportant, but because society no longer wants to see or hear him.

Furthermore, the researcher uses Norman Fairclough's Three-Dimensional Model of CDA which includes three steps:

1. **Textual Analysis** – Examining the words and grammar used in the story.
2. **Discursive Practice** – understanding how the story is shared, read, and interpreted
3. **Social Practice** – connecting the story to the broader societal ideas, like capitalism, modern values, and public attention.

According to Fairclough (1992), "Social practices are activities shaped by the environment, culture, and society," which makes discourse both a product and a tool of social reality. Also, Michel Foucault's idea of power and knowledge is relevant here. He believed that power is not just about control through force, but through the way truth is shaped and shared. In the story, people believe what they see or are told—not what the artist feels. So, the artist loses control over his own narrative.

Kafka's story illustrates that powerlessness is not just about being poor or weak. It can also mean about unseen, unheard, and forgotten. 'The Hunger Artist' tries to prove something deep and personal, but people around him are too busy or too preoccupied with pleasure and do not care. The language used by the impresario, the doctors, and the public, along with the artist's silence, all contribute to make him invisible in society.

By employing Critical Discourse Analysis, this research shows how Kafka uses language, structure, and characters to develop the theme of powerlessness. It will show how society strips away a person's identity and worth. This study is not only about literature, but also about how we treat people who are different, quiet, or misunderstood in the real world.

### 1.3 Research Questions

1. How can Fairclough's Three-Dimensional Model of CDA help in understanding the discourse of power and powerlessness in the story?

### 1.4 Objectives of the study

1. To apply **Fairclough's Three-Dimensional Model** to understand the discourse of power and powerlessness in the story

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The second chapter of this research presents a review of the available literature on Franz Kafka's short story 'The Hunger Artist', as well as previous studies related to Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). This chapter explores how earlier researchers have examined power relations, identity, marginalization, and silence in literary texts. Special attention is given to **Fairclough's Three-Dimensional Model** of CDA to understand how discourse shapes power, social roles, and individual agency. By reviewing the past work on CDA and literary texts, this chapter establishes the **research gap** that this study aims to fill — the **discursive construction of powerlessness** in Kafka's 'The Hunger Artist'.

### 2.1 Research on Powerlessness in Literature through CDA

Most previous research applying CDA to literature has focused on themes like **gender, social class, or political oppression**. However, few studies directly analyze how **language itself constructs powerlessness** in the individual — especially in **modernist fiction**, where identity and isolation are central themes.

For instance, **Al Khotaba (2014)** applied **Fairclough's CDA model** to explore feminism in *An Unnecessary Woman* by Rabih Alameddine. The study investigated how women's bodies, identities, and experiences were shaped by patriarchy. While the study successfully highlighted issues of oppression and used CDA as a theoretical lens, it did not include a **detailed linguistic analysis**. Word choices, metaphors, and narrative structures were not deeply examined. For a stronger CDA approach, the study could have explored how dialogue, silence, or character narration helped reinforce gender-based power differences.

This gap is similar to what this research addresses. In Kafka's *'The Hunger Artist'*, the focus is not on gender but on **existential powerlessness** — the slow erasure of the artist's voice and purpose through the **language of others** (the impresario, the crowd, the institution). This research applies CDA not just to explore themes, but to **closely analyze the language** that builds the artist's marginalization.

Another relevant study is by **Naseer et al. (2022)**, who used Fairclough's 3D model to examine **Crime and Punishment** in relation to patriarchy and male suffering. They argued that men also experience oppression in patriarchal systems. The study recognized power imbalances but once again lacked **in-depth textual analysis** of linguistic features such as **passive constructions, repetition, or metaphor**. These elements are crucial in Kafka's work, where the protagonist is not defeated by action, but by **narrative silence, social ignorance, and symbolic invisibility**. This aligns with the current study's goal: to apply Fairclough's model to **analyze how Kafka's specific use of language** — including **passive voice, silence, public narration, and metaphorical replacement** — contributes to the **construction of the artist's voicelessness and powerlessness**. **Al-Zubaidi (2022)** studied *A Thousand Splendid Suns* using **Thomas Huckin's CDA framework**. The research looked at how power appeared in different forms — gender-based, institutional, and moral. The study pointed out that language plays a role in creating these power relationships but did not go deep into **how exact words or sentence structures** shaped this power. For example, it didn't analyze if male characters used more authoritative speech, or if women's language showed submission. This highlights a gap also seen in Kafka studies: even though *'The Hunger Artist'* is often discussed in terms of **symbolism and existentialism**, there is **little research** on how **the narrative's linguistic features** actually create the sense of being **invisible, unheard, and socially erased**. This study will fill that gap by analyzing how Kafka's **word choice, passive structure, metaphors** (like the cage and the panther), and **narrative framing** construct the artist's loss of voice and identity.

Across all three studies reviewed, there is a **common limitation**: although they use CDA to explore social issues and themes, they often do not fully engage with the **textual features** that actually create or reinforce power dynamics. Few apply Fairclough's model in its full depth —

especially not to stories like Kafka's, where the individual's **powerlessness is more psychological and social** than political.

This study addresses that gap by applying **Fairclough's Three-Dimensional Model** to a **modernist short story**, where powerlessness is constructed not through violence or laws but through **language, silence, public indifference, and institutional control**.

## 2.2 Research work done on Franz Kafka's *The Hunger Artist*

Abu-Snoubar (2021), in her paper titled "*Symbolism and the Alienation of the Artist in A Hunger Artist*," analyzes Franz Kafka's short story by focusing on its rich symbolic elements. The study looks at how Kafka uses symbols like a cage, clock, fasting, hunger, the artist, the impresario **alienation and social misunderstanding**. The hunger artist, in this interpretation, is shown as someone who sacrifices his body and emotions in the hope of gaining **appreciation, recognition, and dignity**, but society fails to understand him. Abu-Snoubar also discusses how the story reflects the **tension between art and business**, suggesting that the artist is exploited by those who profit from his suffering while the public gradually loses interest in his message. By using semiotics, which is the study of symbols and signs help the researcher understand how these symbols make the story more emotional and meaningful.

While Abu-Snoubar's work successfully discusses the **themes of alienation and misunderstanding** in *The Hunger Artist*, her study is **largely symbolic and thematic**. It does not include a **Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)** of how **language itself** constructs the artist's powerlessness. Her focus remains on **symbols and emotional appeal**, not on how **discourse (language, narration, silence, and public voice)** shapes the artist's identity and social role. Furthermore, the study does not apply any **systematic CDA framework**, such as **Fairclough's Three-Dimensional Model**. There is no examination of how the **text's vocabulary, grammar, sentence structures, or discourse practices** reflect and reproduce **social ideologies or power relations**.

Abu-Snoubar's research is valuable for providing a **symbolic and thematic understanding** of the hunger artist's **alienation**. It supports the idea that the artist is an **isolated figure** who is **misunderstood and marginalized** by both society and commercial systems. This aligns with the current study's focus on **powerlessness**, particularly the idea that the hunger artist is **silenced** and eventually **replaced** by a symbol of vitality (the panther), showing society's preference for **pleasure over suffering**.

However, the **present study moves beyond symbolism** by analyzing the **linguistic and discursive tools** used in the story. Using **Fairclough's CDA model**, it explores how **language itself contributes to the artist's loss of agency**, including the use of **passive voice, lack of dialogue, third-person narration, and institutional framing**. In this way, the current study complements and extends Abu-Snoubar's work by **linking symbolic alienation with discursive powerlessness**. Bhutto et al. (2022) explore Kafka's 'A Hunger Artist' through the lens of absurdism, particularly using Albert Camus's philosophy as described in *The Myth of Sisyphus*. The authors argue that the hunger artist is similar to Camus's Sisyphus—trapped in a cycle of endless effort without reward or meaning. The story is read as a reflection of the human desire to find purpose in a

universe that offers none. The paper connects themes like isolation, failure, disillusionment with society, and the illusion of freedom with Kafka's depiction of the protagonist, showing how his experience expresses the absurd condition of human existence. The authors analyze elements such as the artist's suffering, lack of recognition, and his ultimate replacement by the panther, linking them with ideas of meaninglessness and repetition. The paper treats the hunger artist not only as a misunderstood performer, but as a symbol of all individuals who seek meaning in a world that does not respond. The study also highlights how Kafka, like Camus, presents a world where control and purpose are illusions, yet the individual continues to struggle regardless.

This article contributes a philosophical interpretation of the story by focusing on how 'A Hunger Artist' fits within the tradition of existentialism and absurdism. It emphasizes the inner conflict between the need for meaning and the failure to find it in society or life.

However, while the study offers deep insights into thematic and symbolic interpretations, it does not examine the language or discourse structures used in the story. There is no use of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), and the authors do not analyze how word choice, narrative style, silence, or sentence structure contribute to the artist's powerlessness or the social perception of his identity. The focus remains on the philosophical ideas, rather than how language constructs those ideas in the text.

The current research differs from this article by aiming to uncover how language itself—through discourse and narration—constructs the powerlessness of the hunger artist. Using Fairclough's Three-Dimensional Model, the present study focuses on the role of textual, discursive, and social practices in shaping the protagonist's identity, voice, and eventual erasure. While Bhutto et al.'s work provides a strong existential context, the present research builds on it by offering a linguistic and discourse-based analysis of power in the same text.

Al-Sairairah (2023) looks at Franz Kafka's 'A Hunger Artist' through the lens of existentialism, examining the main character's personal battles and his quest for identity, freedom, and purpose. The study describes how the hunger artist's behavior, particularly his habit of fasting, is a response to the emptiness and lack of purpose in his life. It suggests that the artist's decision to fast is a form of resistance, a way of expressing his individuality and trying to gain control over his existence. According to the paper, fasting is not just a physical act but a symbolic expression of his desire to be free from society's expectations and judgments.

The article connects Kafka's character to key existentialist ideas such as freedom, responsibility, loneliness, and inner conflict. The hunger artist is shown as someone who chooses isolation in order to find meaning, even though society does not recognize or value his efforts. His suffering, lack of recognition, and psychological tension reflect the typical existentialist theme of the individual vs. the indifferent world. The study also mentions the role of boredom and how it leads people to seek deeper meaning—something the hunger artist tries to do through self-denial and performance.

The article provides useful background on existentialist philosophy, including views from Sartre, Camus, and others, and explains how these ideas relate to Kafka's work. It discusses how

existentialist themes appear not only in the artist's personal actions but also in his emotional state and relationship with others.

Although the article offers a strong psychological and philosophical reading of 'The Hunger Artist', it does not explore how language and discourse contribute to constructing the hunger artist's identity or powerlessness. The study mainly focuses on ideas and emotions, rather than the textual elements that shape those ideas. It does not use Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) or apply any systematic linguistic framework like Fairclough's model. There is no analysis of how the narrator's voice, choice of words, silences, or dialogue structures influence the reader's understanding of the hunger artist's social position.

This study is valuable because it highlights the hunger artist's existential crisis and his struggle for freedom and self-worth, which are closely connected to powerlessness. It helps explain why the artist feels invisible and misunderstood. However, while Al-Sarairah's research looks at what the character feels and represents, the present study focuses on how Kafka uses language to build this character's powerlessness. By applying Fairclough's Three-Dimensional Model of CDA, the current research examines how text, discourse, and social structures interact to silence and marginalize the hunger artist. Therefore, this study adds thematic value to the literature, while the current research adds linguistic and discourse-based insight.

Kinasih (2020) analyzes 'A Hunger Artist' by Franz Kafka using Maslow's concept of self-actualization. The study focuses on whether the hunger artist achieves the highest level of human development, according to Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Maslow believed that a self-actualized person is someone who reaches their full potential by moving beyond basic needs and exploring their inner purpose with confidence and freedom.

In the story, the hunger artist is obsessed with fasting, and while he becomes very skilled at it, Kinasih argues that this behavior does not show self-actualization. Instead of growing or seeking new challenges, the artist stays in his comfort zone—fasting—which is the one thing he knows well. He refuses to change or try something different, which limits his personal growth. Additionally, his constant need for public approval stops him from achieving true freedom or peace of mind. Even though the artist believes in his art, he becomes sad, lonely, and depressed. Ironically, he dies from the very thing he masters—hunger, without ever finding meaning or satisfaction.

Kinasih's article is helpful in showing that the hunger artist, despite his dedication and sacrifice, fails to reach a sense of **personal fulfillment**. This supports the idea that the protagonist is **not in control of his identity or purpose**, which aligns with the theme of **powerlessness**. However, the current study takes a different approach by focusing on how **Kafka's language and discourse choices** create this sense of loss and marginalization. Using **Fairclough's CDA model**, this research adds a **linguistic and discourse-based dimension**, analyzing how **public opinion, silence, and institutional language** shape the artist's position in society.

#### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter explains the methods used to conduct this research. It includes the type of data collected, the sources of data, the way the data was analyzed, and the theoretical framework

applied. Since this study is focused on exploring how powerlessness is shown through language in Franz Kafka's 'The Hunger Artist', the research uses a qualitative approach. The main tool for analysis is Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), based on Norman Fairclough's Three-Dimensional Model. This model helps in understanding how language reflects and shapes social power and inequality, which is directly linked to the research objectives of this study.

### 3.1 Data Collection

The data used in this research comes from Kafka's short story 'The Hunger Artist'. It is a literary text that contains rich examples of discourse related to silence, control, identity, and public misunderstanding—all of which contribute to the artist's feeling of powerlessness. To study this, selected passages and dialogues from the story were chosen that best represent the theme. The selection was made based on relevance to loss of voice, marginalization, and social invisibility. These parts were then analyzed in light of the CDA approach.

### 3.2 Primary Data

The primary source of data is Franz Kafka's original short story 'The Hunger Artist'. All textual analysis is based on selected excerpts from the story that reflect the character's power struggles and social erasure through language and narrative.

### 3.3 Secondary Data

Secondary data includes academic books, journal articles, and previous studies that focus on Critical Discourse Analysis, Fairclough's CDA Model, Kafka's literary style and themes, Theories of power, identity, and existentialism. These sources help support the interpretation and provide a broader context for the analysis.

### 3.4 Data Analysis Technique

The data was analyzed using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), with the help of Fairclough's Three-Dimensional Model. The story was read carefully and broken into key extracts. Each extract was then examined on three levels:

1. **Textual Analysis** – This looks at the words, grammar, metaphors, sentence structures, and use of passive voice to understand how language shows the artist's lack of power or control.
2. **Discursive Practice** – This focuses on how the story is presented, including who speaks, how the narrator shapes the reader's view, and how the audience inside the story reacts.
3. **Social Practice** – This connects the story to real-world ideologies, such as how society treats suffering, art, and individuals who don't fit in. It also examines how public discourse creates or ignores marginalized voices.

Each stage of the analysis helps uncover how the artist's powerlessness is built and reinforced through discourse.

### 3.5 Theoretical Framework

This research is based on **Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)**, a method used to study how **language is connected to power, society, and ideology**. CDA helps us understand how people are presented in texts and how language can reflect or even control the way we think about individuals and groups. CDA began in the **late 1980s and early 1990s**, when scholars like **Norman Fairclough, Teun van Dijk, and Ruth Wodak** wanted to move beyond traditional language



studies. They believed that language is not just a tool for communication—it also plays a role in **creating and maintaining power structures** in society.

Norman Fairclough is one of the most well-known names in CDA. He introduced a model that shows how language connects with social processes. His **Three-Dimensional Model** is widely used in CDA research and is the framework chosen for this study.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is based on several important principles that guide how researchers understand the relationship between language and society. First, CDA sees language as a form of social practice, which means that language is not neutral or random. Instead, it is always shaped by the context in which it is used and influenced by social relationships, power, and cultural norms. Second, CDA believes that power relations are discursive—in other words, power is often expressed or hidden through language. People in positions of authority may use language to shape how others think, act, or understand the world, sometimes without the listeners even realizing it. Third, CDA emphasizes that discourse both shapes and is shaped by society. This means that the way people talk and write can affect society, and at the same time, the rules and expectations of society influence how language is used.

Another key principle is that CDA is critical, meaning it doesn't just describe language but questions it. It aims to uncover hidden meanings, inequality, or unfair power structures within texts. Finally, CDA looks at both what is said and what is not said. Silence or things left out of a conversation can carry strong messages too. This is particularly relevant in Kafka's 'The Hunger Artist', where the main character is often ignored, misunderstood, or silenced—highlighting how absence of voice can reflect powerlessness.

To analyze language in a structured way, Norman Fairclough developed a Three-Dimensional Model for CDA. The first level is Textual Analysis (Description), which focuses on the actual language used in a text. This includes vocabulary, grammar, sentence structure, use of passive or active voice, and symbolic or metaphorical expressions. The second level is Discursive Practice (Interpretation). This looks at how the text is produced, shared, and interpreted. It considers who is speaking, how their voice is received, and how the text is circulated among readers or listeners. The third level is Social Practice (Explanation), which connects the text to larger social ideas and power systems, such as capitalism, marginalization, control, and institutional authority. By using this model, researchers can deeply analyze how language works within a text to reflect or reinforce social power and inequality.

## **DATA ANALYSIS**

### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter explains how some selected parts (extracts) from Franz Kafka's short story 'The Hunger Artist' were studied using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). The goal of this analysis is to see how language in the story shows the powerlessness of the hunger artist. For this purpose, Norman Fairclough's Three-Dimensional Model is used. This model helps us look at how words, social situations, and power are connected in a story or any text.

In 'The Hunger Artist', Kafka tells the story of a man who performs the act of fasting as an art. At first, people are interested and admire him. But with time, they lose interest, misunderstand

him, and eventually forget him. He is not physically harmed, but he becomes voiceless, invisible, and unimportant in the eyes of the public. This makes the story a strong example to study using CDA, which helps us understand how language can give or take away power.

Fairclough's model has three steps. The first is Textual Analysis, which looks at the words, sentence structures, and style used in the story. The second is Discursive Practice, which looks at how the story is told, who is speaking, and how people (characters and readers) understand it. The third is Social Practice, which connects the story to bigger ideas like power in society, public opinion, and how people who are different are treated. In this chapter, five short extracts from the story have been selected for analysis. These parts show the hunger artist's loss of voice, control, and identity. Each extract is analyzed using the three steps of Fairclough's model to explain how language shows his powerlessness. This will help answer the research question: *How can Fairclough's Three-Dimensional Model help us understand power and powerlessness in the story?* This chapter will help show how Kafka used simple words and storytelling to reflect real problems—such as how people who are silent, different, or misunderstood are often pushed aside by society.

#### **Extract: 1**

"During these last decades the interest in professional fasting has markedly diminished. It used to pay very well to stage such great performances under one's own management, but today that is quite impossible. We live in a different world now." (Kafka, 1922, p. 1)

#### **Context**

This part of the story comes from the beginning of 'The Hunger Artist'. It sets the stage by showing that times have changed, and people are no longer interested in the art of fasting. What was once a respected and well-paid performance has now become outdated? The hunger artist, who was once admired, now struggles to find an audience or purpose in a society that has moved on. This moment shows the start of his social decline, where his art — and he himself — are no longer valued. This change in public interest marks the beginning of the artist's loss of power and identity, making it an important point for Critical Discourse Analysis.

#### **Fairclough's Three-Dimensional Model Applied**

##### **1. Textual Analysis (Description)**

In this short extract, the language shows a clear shift in public interest and social value. Phrases like "interest... has markedly diminished" and "it used to pay very well" contrast the past respect and attention the hunger artist received with the present neglect. The phrase "today that is quite impossible" is a strong, final statement — it shows that the hunger artist no longer has control over his career or art. The use of passive voice ("has markedly diminished") also hides who exactly is responsible — it's society in general, but no one is named. The tone is factual but sad, creating a sense of loss and decline.

##### **2. Discursive Practice (Interpretation)**

This part of the story is told by an external narrator, who represents how society views the hunger artist. The voice is distant and general — it doesn't speak from the artist's perspective, but from the audience's point of view, showing how the hunger artist is now seen as outdated

or irrelevant. The public's shift in interest isn't questioned or criticized — it's simply accepted. This shows how the narrative itself contributes to the artist's loss of power, by presenting the change as natural and irreversible.

### **3. Social Practice (Explanation)**

On a larger level, this passage reflects how modern society often forgets those who don't fit in with new trends or fast-paced culture. People who once held value (like the hunger artist) are now ignored because their suffering no longer entertains or impresses. The hunger artist is powerless not because he changed, but because the public's attention shifted. This reflects the capitalist and consumer mindset — if something isn't popular or profitable anymore, it is dismissed. The language used in the extract supports this idea, showing how social systems of power and fashion shape who is seen, heard, or forgotten.

This short extract clearly shows how the hunger artist becomes powerless over time — not through violence or punishment, but through language, silence, and social change. Fairclough's model helps us see how the words used, the narrator's position, and the social values behind the scene all work together to slowly erase the hunger artist's identity and worth.

#### **Extract: 2**

"Nothing annoyed the artist more than these watchers; they made him miserable; they made his fast seem unendurable; sometimes he mastered his feebleness sufficiently to sing during their watch for as long as he could keep going, to show them how unjust their suspicions were. But that was of little use; they only wondered at his cleverness in being able to fill his mouth even while singing." (Kafka, 1922, p.2)

#### **Context**

In this part of the story, the hunger artist is being watched by guards or "watchers" during his fasting performance. These watchers are chosen by the public to make sure he doesn't secretly eat anything. However, many of them don't take their job seriously and believe the artist is secretly cheating. The hunger artist, who takes great pride in his honesty and commitment to fasting, feels deeply hurt and powerless when people doubt him. He even tries to sing to prove that his mouth is empty, but the public still doesn't believe him. This scene shows how, despite his efforts, the artist is misunderstood, disrespected, and unable to control how others see him. It perfectly fits the theme of powerlessness, which this study explores using Fairclough's CDA model.

### **Fairclough's CDA Model Applied**

#### **1. Textual Analysis**

Kafka uses emotional words like "miserable," "unendurable," and "feebleness" to show the inner pain of the hunger artist. The word "mastered" suggests effort and struggle, while the phrase "how unjust their suspicions were" reveals the injustice he feels. Ironically, the public misreads his honesty. The sentence "that was of little use" is short and sad — showing the futility of his actions. Finally, the phrase "wondered at his cleverness" shows how truth is twisted into suspicion.

## **2. Discursive Practice**

This part is narrated by an outside voice (third-person narrator), who shows the artist's efforts to clear his name, but also the public's disbelief. The hunger artist tries to communicate through singing — a form of expression — but even that is misinterpreted. This reflects how his voice is not just unheard, but actively misunderstood. The artist is excluded from shaping his own story.

## **3. Social Practice**

In society, people who don't follow the usual way of life (like the hunger artist) are often doubted, watched, and judged. The watchers represent the public and institutions — they have the power to define what is "true" or "false." No matter how honest or committed the artist is, he cannot convince them. This shows powerlessness through misunderstanding and loss of control over one's own image. The artist is surrounded by people but still feels unseen and disrespected.

This extract clearly shows how the hunger artist loses power not because of physical force, but because of false assumptions, doubt, and the failure of language to defend him. By using Fairclough's model, we can understand how the words used, how the story is told, and how society responds all work together to create a sense of powerlessness. His efforts are honest, but his reality is controlled by how others choose to see and speak about him — and that is where the real loss of power happens.

### **Extract: 3**

"No one had any cause to be dissatisfied with the proceedings, no one except the hunger artist himself, he only, as always." (Kafka, 1922, p.3)

### **Context**

This line appears at the end of a major event where the hunger artist completes his 40-day fast. The public enjoys a grand ceremony with music, speeches, and a fake sense of celebration. Everyone seems pleased—except the hunger artist. His feelings are not considered important. This moment reflects how his personal truth is ignored and his suffering is turned into a show for others.

## **Fairclough's Three-Dimensional CDA Analysis**

### **1. Textual Analysis**

Repetition of "no one... no one... he only" strongly emphasizes the artist's isolation. The phrase "as always" shows that this is a pattern, not a one-time event. His feelings are consistently dismissed. The passive tone hides who controls the situation.

### **2. Discursive Practice**

The narrator speaks from a social perspective that favors public approval. The artist's internal experience is not explained—only his rejection is briefly noted. The public is shown as the main "audience" of the story, not the artist himself.

### **3. Social Practice**

This reflects how in real life, powerless individuals are ignored, especially when their truth does not match public expectations. The artist's emotional and artistic struggle is erased by the crowd's need for entertainment. His voice is silenced by celebration. This moment shows how

language and social structure together create powerlessness, which is the main goal of this study. The CDA model helps reveal how text (words), context (who is speaking), and social meaning erase the hunger artist's identity and feelings.

## **CONCLUSION**

### **5.1 Findings**

This research explored how power and powerlessness are shown in Franz Kafka's short story 'The Hunger Artist', using Norman Fairclough's Three-Dimensional Model of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). The study carefully selected five short extracts from the story and analyzed them to understand how language, narrative structure, and society create and maintain the hunger artist's powerlessness.

The findings show that the hunger artist loses his power not through force or violence, but mainly through how he is described, misunderstood, and ignored. One of the main findings is that language is used to show his helpless state. Words like "submitted," "miserable," and "impossible" suggest a person who is weak not only physically but emotionally and socially. These choices of words help the reader see how powerless he is in the eyes of others and how deeply isolated he feels.

Another finding is that the hunger artist does not have control over how others speak about him. The impresario, the watchers, and the public often talk about him in ways that do not reflect his true thoughts or feelings. Even when he tries to speak or explain himself, people misunderstand or ignore him. This shows that powerlessness is created when others control your story and when your own voice is lost in the crowd.

The study also found that the hunger artist becomes powerless as public interest fades. He is celebrated at first, but later the same society that admired him turns away. This sudden loss of attention makes him invisible. His deep suffering and art are no longer seen as valuable. His replacement by a panther at the end of the story reflects how society often chooses energy, entertainment, and simplicity over depth, sacrifice, or reflection.

Silence also plays an important role in showing powerlessness. In many parts of the story, the hunger artist is either silent or his silence is misread. People think he is being proud or difficult, when in fact he is tired, hurt, or honest. His truth is never truly accepted. Through the narrator's words and the reactions of other characters, we see how people who are different or do not fit into public expectations are silenced in many ways.

Fairclough's CDA model helped uncover these themes clearly. The textual level revealed the kind of words and tone used to describe the hunger artist. The discursive level showed who gets to speak in the story and whose voice matters. The social level connected the story to real-life situations where individuals are made powerless by public opinion, tradition, or systems of control.

### **5.2 Conclusion**

In conclusion, this research shows that 'The Hunger Artist' is not just a story about a man who fasts, but a powerful example of how language and society can slowly take away a person's voice and identity. Through the use of Fairclough's CDA model, we can see how the hunger artist's

powerlessness is built step by step—through how others talk about him, how society treats him, and how his silence is misunderstood. The hunger artist begins as someone admired, but as time passes, he is forgotten and replaced. His message and suffering are turned into a performance for others. Even when he tries to speak his truth, people doubt him or twist his words. He ends up in a cage, observed but not understood, and finally replaced by something more entertaining. Fairclough's model helped us go beyond the surface and look deeply at how meaning is made. It showed us how power is not just about who is strong or weak but about who gets to speak, whose voice is heard, and how the truth is shaped. This story shows us that even in the absence of physical control, a person can still be made powerless through language and social behavior. Kafka's story remains important today because many people in real life face similar situations. They may not be artists in cages, but they are people who are ignored, misrepresented, or silenced by systems that do not value their truth. Whether in media, schools, workplaces, or public life, power often lies in who gets to control the message. This story reminds us to pay attention to whose voices are heard—and whose are not.

This research also shows that Critical Discourse Analysis is a strong and useful method for studying literature. It allows us to see how stories are more than entertainment—they reflect real-world struggles and power dynamics. Language in literature carries deep meaning, and when studied carefully, it helps us understand not only characters but also the society around them

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