Women Discrimination in Lynn Nottage's By the Way, Meet Vera Stark: A Critical Discourse Analysis

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Abstract— The current research paper aims to investigate and reveal the implicit ideologies that are used by Lynn Nottage in her play By the Way, Meet Vera Stark to represent her patriarchal society. The study exhibits critical discourse analysis (CDA) of the representation of women discrimination within Nottag's play By the Way, Meet Vera Stark. The study delves into the complex construction of American societal stratification, centering on the discursive depiction in the context of women discrimination in the play. The study adopts Reisigl and Wodak'(2001,2009) framework to analyze the collected data qualitatively and quantitatively. The data of this study are four extracts from a different scene of the play to represent women discrimination. The analysis of the data reveals that Nottage criticizes American society for the interplaying between power dynamics, societal status, and the depiction of women exploitation, spotlighting on the multifaceted dimensions of discrimination exemplification within the play. By utilizing all of the discursive strategies, the study concludes that the predicational strategy gets a higher percentage of the total use of the discursive strategies, which indicates the writer's frequent reliance on predicational strategies to project how characters' attributes and qualities thereby affecting the depiction of discrimination in the context of the play.

Keywords— Critical Discourse Analysis, Women Discrimination, Nottage's By the Way, Meet Vera Stark

I. INTRODUCTION

The concept of women discrimination is prevalent and multifaceted In Lynn Nottage's play *By the Way, Meet Vera Stark*. So, this research paper attempts to conduct a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) of women discrimination representation within the play, examining the underlying power dynamics, societal stratification, and the discursive strategies employed in characterizing discriminated women. Reisigl and Wodak's (2001, 2009) can be employed to analyze women discrimination, examining both linguistic and social aspects within the play. The model highlights linguistic strategies, discursive patterns, and social power dynamics used to depict and reinforce gender inequalities experienced by the female characters, providing insight into the nuanced layers of discrimination portrayed in Nottage's literary work. The current study intents to examine the intersectionality of discriminated women within the broader stratification of American society, employing Reisigl and Wodak's approach to CDA as a framework to explore the discursive formations of women discrimination. By identifying and analyzing these discursive strategies, the research endeavors to spotlight how women discrimination is structured, realized, and used within the play, substantially contributing to a profound comprehension of societal power dynamics, representation, and the discourse on discrimination in the context of Nottage's play. This research employs a thorough methodology for data collection and analysis to reveal the complexities of the discursive mechanisms at play, terminating in a comprehensive conclusion which synthesizes the findings and implyings of the study.

II.   MAJOR CONCEPTS OF CDA

In addition to addressing language and its formal properties, CDA also emphasizes the connections between language, society, and ideology. Due to its ability to explain how language functions in social contexts and the relations of Power and hegemony in society, concepts like Discourse, Power, and ideology serve as the core of the study of CDA (O'Halloran, 2003, P. 14). The concepts of, discourse power, and ideology are discussed independently in the next few pages.

2.1 Discourse

Discourse can signify many different things depending on the researchers themselves and the academic culture. For instance, in Germany and Central Europe, "text" and "discourse" are recognized as having different meanings, although in English-speaking societies, discourse refers to both written and spoken texts (Wodak and Meyer, 2008, PP. 5-7).

Discourse, according to Schiffirin et al. (2001, P. 1), is "everything beyond the sentence,"; however, structuralists do not seem to agree with this definition. They contend that discourse is "language above the clause," putting a focus on the structural characteristics of texts. As a result, they disregard all interpersonal communication (Stubs, 1983, p. 1). Contrarily, functionalists believe that discourse is inextricably linked to the social connections that language creates, indicating that any study of language must also include a study of how it works in the real world (Brown and Yule, 1983, p. 1).

However, Fairclough (1992, p. 3) notes that due to the overlapping definitions of "discourse" and the fact that it relates to both written and spoken examples of language, it is difficult to define it precisely. In addition, he notes that each social circumstance has a unique sort of discourse, such as "newspaper discourse, advertising discourse, medical discourse," etc. Discourse, however, has three primary aspects: first, it is "anything beyond the sentence," second, it relates to "language use," and third, it is "a broader range of social practice that encompasses nonlinguistic and nonspecific instances of language" (Jaworski and Coupland, 1999, p. 1).

Cognitively, when processing discourse, language users turn to their "mental models" to elicit pertinent subjects from their "hierarchical knowledge." Thus, locally and globally discourses become coherent (van Dijk, 2011, p. 30). In other words, discourses "permit" and "delimit" the information and inquisitional domains and "regulate" what should be spoken, thought, or done there (Luke, 1996, p. 3). So, just like any other method of imposing control, such as laws, orders, bans, etc., discourse plays a crucial part in the exercise of power. It might control

groups and their members' thoughts (van Dijk, 2015, p. 71).

Therefore, the influential elite groups, such as the media, politicians, and the dominant groups in society, employ discourses to subtly embed their beliefs and alter the perceptions of the less influential groups (van Dijk, 2011, p. 30). Moreover, the ideological components (such as inequality, injustice, hegemony, etc.) that may be concealed under any sort of speech to the weaker people, CD analysts work to expose these elements (Bhatia et al., 2008, p.11).

2.2 Power

When one person (X) has control over another person (Y), such that X can order Y to do things against Y's will, this is referred to as having power (Dahl, 1957: 201). Power is "a systemic quality, a transformative and non-static feature of interaction that is enacted and challenged in every interaction," according to a more sophisticated definition. As a result, language and power consistently relate to one another (Holmes, 2005, p. 32). However, individuals who use language are what gives it power, not the language itself. That is to say, language is not a goal in and of itself but a tool for transforming authority into virtue and compliance with rules (Thomas, 2004, p. 10).

This intricate relationship between language and Power is demonstrated in several ways, including the fact that "language indexes power, expresses power, and is involved where there is the struggle over and challenge to power" (Weiss and Wodak, 2003, p. 15). As a result, power continues to play a significant part in the development of what is known as the "knowledge society," which explains that knowledge does not just "grow on people"; rather, it is "made and used," "sold and consumed." Such knowledge is formed through the sources of power, including "parents, schools, mass media, politicians, and media corporations" (van Dijk, 2011, pp. 33-34).

In this respect, accessing the human mind is more crucial than accessing human behavior because doing so would result in manipulating, assimilation, and persuasion of thinking and interest (van Dijk, 1993, p. 254). Put differently, authority, and dominance are described as a "particular relationship of control between social groups or organizations — and not as a quality of interpersonal relations." Both a cognitive and a social component make up this kind of control. In other words, they are in charge of both the socially accepted knowledge and the discursive behaviors of the controlled groups (van Dijk, 2015, p.71).

CDA demonstrates how discourse conceals ideology and power in its content (Fairclough, 1992, p. 12). It makes clear how the abuse of power results in the

enactment, reproduction, and expression of social inequality and supremacy (van Dijk, 1993, p. 96). To decipher the dominance that is hidden in language's structures, CD analysts, therefore, seek to demonstrate how language is used (Wodak, 2000, pp. 10-11). They want to analyze "discursive power abuse," (van Dijk, 2015, p. 71)

2.3 Ideology

The term "ideology" has been used in English for roughly 200 years. Its original meaning was "the study of ideas," but it gradually acquired a more logical sense of ideology that denotes "impracticality." According to Merriam-Webster's Dictionary, the word means the science of ideas, yet it started to gain more logical meaning which implies social practices within which the social world is made.

According to van Dijk (1995a, p. 21), ideology is more like "particular basic frameworks of social cognition with distinctive social structures and specific cognitive and social functions." Additionally, he contends that ideas are primarily communicated through discourse and communication, encompassing non-verbal cues like semiotic messaging (images, movies, etc.). Ideologies serve as the dividing line between cognitive representations and basic procedure of discourse and action procedures on the one hand and societal circumstances and the advantages of social groups on the other (van Dijk,1995). However, introduces "ideology" as having two different meanings according to Schwarzmantel (2008, p. 29). In its narrow sense, ideology refers to the hegemonic acts and dominance that a particular group adopts in a given situation. In its broad sense, ideology refers to "a broad range of views which cover the central aspects of how society should be organized, answering such questions as what the role of the state should be, what forms of difference or differentiation between people should be accepted, and which rejected" (Schwarzmantel, 2008, p.43).

van Dijk (2015, p. 69) also distinguishes between ideologies and attitudes. In contrast to ideologies, attitudes are "only shared by particular groups." For instance, even though many individuals are aware of abortion and immigration, depending on the type of ideologies they subscribe to, they may have varying opinions on them, including whether they are favorable or unfavorable or if they should be authorized (van Dijk, 2015).

Although various interpretations of ideology differ, the critical theory seeks to raise awareness and explain to individuals how they are being misled (Wodak and Meyer, 2001, p. 10). In the opinion of CDA, ideology has a fundamental role in creating and maintaining unequal

power relations; therefore, deciphering ideologies to "demystify" discourses is one of CDA's primary goals. This will allow it to provide a manual for the enlightenment and emancipation of human behavior (Eagleton 1994, p. 15).

2.4 CDA Aims

The stated goal of CDA is to "Offer a different perspective of theorizing analysis and application throughout the entire area" (van Dijk, 1998, p. 2). It should pay attention to and guide human language and behavior because critical theories equip people with crucial information that frees them from all forms of mastery (Wodak and Meyer, 2009, p.7).

According to Fairclough (1992, p. 6), CDA's primary objective is to expose manipulation and deception that might go undetected in texts and regular readers cannot recognize them. So, CDA can transfer them into the critical consciousness, to demonstrate how language is being exploited to advance the interests of one party over another.

The ultimate aim of CDA, according to van Dijk (1993, p. 250), is to expose and critique societal inequalities. In turn, social disparity leads to dominance, which offers elite groups the advantage of using their social authority. The reproduction process may include many verbal and social mechanisms that promote, legitimize, reject, lessen, or conceal dominance. As a result, CD analysts seek to identify the types of discourse elements, structures, or strategies that participate in these replication mechanisms. The goal of CDA, according to Wodak and Meyer (2001, p. 2), is to examine social inequality that arises from language use critically.

However, according to van Dijk (1998: 2), for CDA to achieve its goals, several conditions must be met, including the following:

1. For it to be approved, the research must be superior to previous work.

2. Rather than focusing on other topics, it should emphasize social and political ones.

3. To be appropriate, it should be multidisciplinary.

4. It should clarify the discourse structures that represent the features of social connections, especially social structure, rather than describing them.

5. It should consider how discourse patterns "enact, validate, justify, replicate, or question" social power and dominance relations

3- Self and other in Riesegel & Wodak`S DHA (2001, 2009, 2016)

The discourse-historical method is connected to Reisig

and Wodak's (2001, 2009) and Wodak's (2009, 2015) writings on discourse analysis (CDA). Discursive strategies topoi and linguistic and rhetorical analyses are used to dismantle notions of social power and their associated practices. According to Khosravinik (2015, p. 84), both Reisigal's and Wodak's methods rely heavily on linguistic analysis. While Fairclough is schooled in "the systemic functional model of theory" and "socio-cultural components of power in ideology", Reisigal and Wodak (2001, 2009) instead rely on "the sociolinguistic and ethnographical traditions" and "mental representation" to ground their model (p.40).

Wodak (2001, p. 65) reassures us, however, that her method is designed to be compatible with "various approaches multi-methodically and based on a variety of empirical data" as well as historical and political context. The DHA's concept of context, according to Wodak and Meyer (2001), draws on historical information that can be broken down into four categories: the linguistic co-text, the intertextual and interdiscursive level, the extra-linguistic level, and the socio-political and historical level (pp. 1-14). DHA is mostly associated with multimodal studies of racism and abuse's pervasive influence.

### 3.1 Identification of Discursive Strategies in Discourse Historical Approach

The identification of discourse primary issues and the historical analysis of discourses utilized in the narrative is crucial to DHA's practical application concerning other discourses (Van Leeuwen and Wodak, 1999; Reisigl and Wodak, 2009; Khosravinik, 2015). It employs sociopolitical history as a toolkit, relating diachronically to the creation of discourse and the cognitive linkages between synchronic discourses and discourse topics to understand discursive production processes. DHA differentiates discourse from texts by treating texts as an instance of discourse and demonstrating that discourse is a processing of (i) relatedness in macro-topics in discourse, (ii) discursive strategies and topoi, and (iii) macro-micro the legitimatory mechanism via constitutive elements (Reisigl and Wodak, 2001, 2009). Wodak (2001) focuses on five distinct discursive strategies, all of which contribute to the development of identities and the justification or legitimization of inclusion or exclusion. Strategies are "a more or less exact and more or less purposeful set of actions, including discursive practices, adopted to attain a certain social, political, psychological, or linguistic aim" (Wodak, 2011, p. 42).

Wodak (2011) identifies these strategies by establishing several classification tools by which they are implemented.

The discursive creation of global, national, and local identities can be analyzed via the lens of five questions (Wodak, 2016):

1. How are persons, objects, phenomena/events, processes, and actions named and referred to linguistically?

2. What characteristics, qualities, and features are attributed to social actors, objects, phenomena/events, and processes?

3. What arguments are employed in the discourse in question?

4. From what perspective are these nominations, attributions, and arguments expressed?

5. Are the respective utterances articulated overtly? Are they intensified or mitigated? (Wodak, 2016, p. 5).

The five strategies as developed by (Reisigl & Wodak, 2009, p. 104) are as follows, (see the table below) which lists these strategies and their related linguistic devices: first is the referential or nomination strategy, which involves the construction and representation of social actors through the establishment of in and out-groups. Referential strategies are concerned with "how social actors can be portrayed in speech" (Van Leeuwen, 1996, p. 32). People can be referred to in a variety of ways, including by name, gender, occupation, social status, involvement in the story being told, etc. Referential strategies in language can be actualized through the use of both overt and covert noun phrases. (Duszak, 2002, p.5) recognizes that "the rubric of social deixis" encompasses both referential strategies and the institutions that materialize them. According to (Reisigl and Wodak, 2001), the following types of representations can be used to talk about social actors while we're talking about their relationships. "Collectivization, Spatialization, De-Spatialization, Explicit Assimilation, Originalizations, Actionalism/Professionalization, Somatization, Culture, Economics, Politics, Militarism, Social Problematization, Relationalism/Sociativization" (Reisigl and Wodak, 2001, p. 48-52). Referential expressions such as antonyms, toponyms, xenonyms, and deictic pronouns are used to actualize the formers. Moreover, referential strategies are inherently ideological; "the dropped oil prices" is an example of nomination; this manufactured nominal term hides the actors who are accountable for the drop in oil prices. According to Fairclough (2000), such structures, and the processes of change are relegated to the background while the effects are brought to the forefront. Nomination provides context for processes but also for concerns of agency and causality, such as who or what brings about change (Machin and Mayr, 2012, p. 138).

Resigl and Wodak's DHA Model of discursive strategies
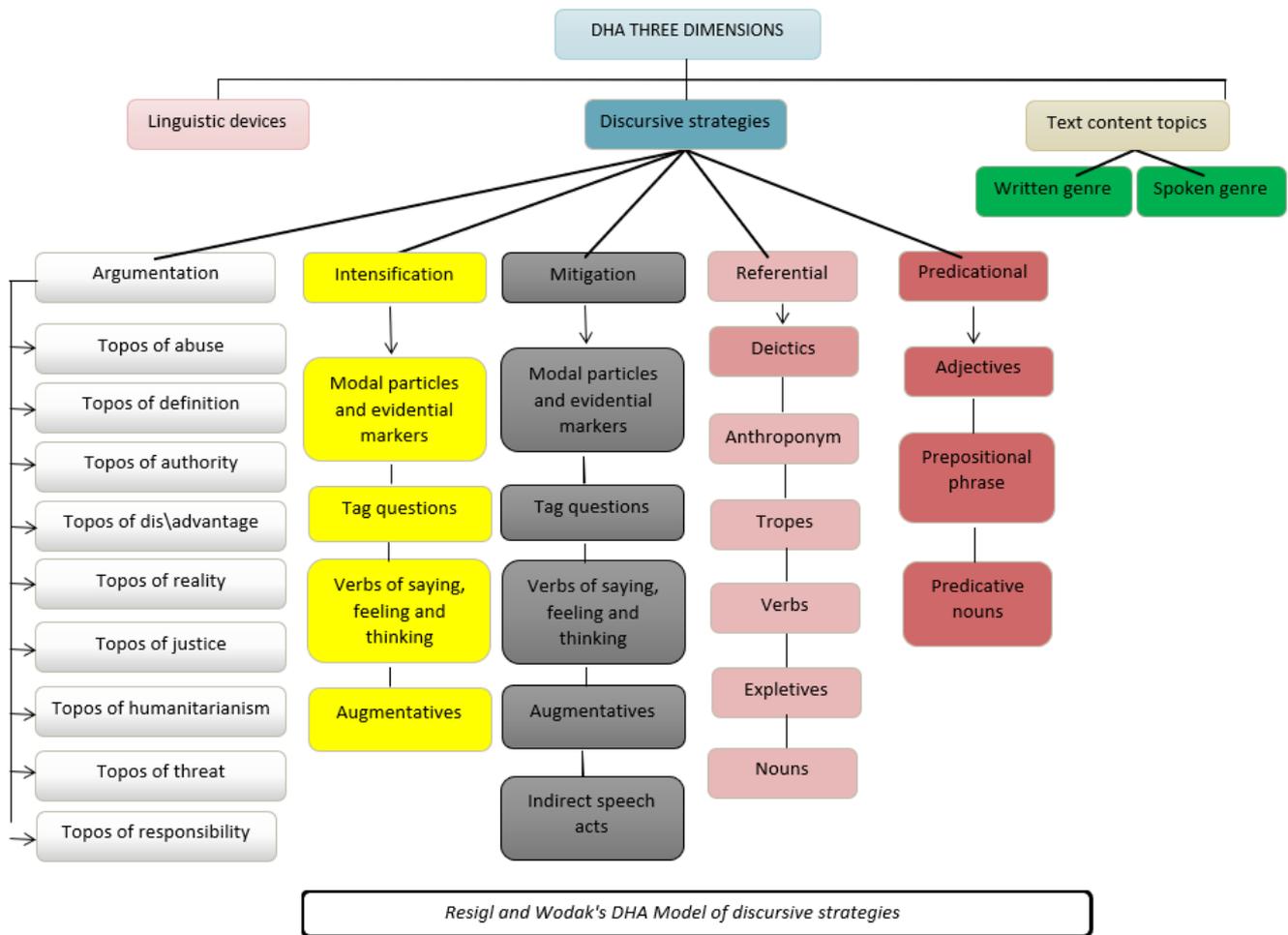
III. METHODOLOGY

The current research paper adopts Risigl and Wodak (2001,2009) critical discourse analysis framework to analyze the collected data quantitatively and qualitatively. The data of this study are four extracts from different scenes of Nottage's drama *Ruined*. They are chosen depending on the theme of disability. The extracts are related to the main characters in the play.

IV. BY THE WAY, MEET VERA STARK

5.1 Theme of Gender Discrimination

The most salient theme in this play is gender discrimination. It shows how the patriarchal society exploits women at all levels. Some chosen extracts are taken from the characters' conversations to be analyzed. These extracts depend on the theme of gender discrimination.

Extract 1(p.8-9)

"GLORIA. . . . These words. "Sweater." "Cardigan."

Who gives a goddamn? The woman is dying, why does she have to make so many speeches about it?

VERA. Because that's what's written, honey. And as you know, the writer likes for you to say what's written. That's how it works.

GLORIA. Oh, I know that. Don't you think I know that? *(Vera snatches the glass out of Gloria's hand, and sniffs it.)*

VERA. Gin? Now, let's do it again. *(Gloria snatches the glass back.)*

GLORIA. The indignity, really! Why should I have to screen test for this film? I've played this role, I practically invented it. Tragic Jane with consumption, Lydia with the hole in her fragile heart, and who can forget poor stupid little Maybelle who was slowly being poisoned by her diabolical, but "winsome" husband." (p. 8-9)

5.1.1 Contextualizing the Extract

In this extract, the conversation is between the main character Gloria, the white mistress, and Vera, the black maid of Gloria. The conversation is in Gloria's lavish Holywood dig at the second stage theater.

5.1.2 Referential and Predicational Strategies

Gloria utilizes the deictic pronoun "I" eight times to show that she is at the deictic center of the speech. Besides, she uses nouns such as "Sweater, Cardigan" to refer to an event. The verb "die" in "the woman is dying" refers to internal conflict. It seems that Gloria is bored with her condition because of her society's tradition which discriminates against women.

As far as predication strategy is concerned, some phrases and adjectives are used to qualify women negatively, for instance, "with consumption, fragile heart, poor, stupid, little, and poisoned". It seems that those women are humiliated, whereas the phrase "winsome husband" is used to qualify the man positively. This exemplifies a patriarchal society.

5.1.3 Argumentation Strategy

Topos of abuse is utilized in this extract. Actually, the idea behind these lines is discrimination, and this can be justified through the phrase " that's what's written and say what is written." It means that those women can do nothing except what is set up by men. She must follow instructions and submit to the authority of the males who have power over her. Additionally, it clarifies how the patriarchy controls her acting career. The patriarchy itself despises women. The words consumption, frail heart, poor, stupid, and being poisoned by her evil describe this. These are derogatory words directed towards the woman. It is reinforced that the white woman cannot be trusted by giving her this responsibility. The woman is seen by patriarchal society as a bad object and exhibits undesirable behaviors, but fortunately, she is married to a nice man. The use of the word "winsome" husband indicates this. This clarifies that the male is better than the female in such a society.

5.1.4 Intensification and Mitigation Strategies

Intensification strategy is realized in the use of some model auxiliary verbs like "can and should" which indicate possibility and obligation. Moreover, particles like "really, practically, and slowly" are utilized to get more emphasis. Last but not least, the verbs "know and think" are used to show an involvement. Mitigation strategy, on the other hand, is exemplified in the use of the question "Don't you think I know that?" to show Gloria's detachment.

Extract 2 (p.11)

VERA. Well, the role of Tilly, you said they're casting Tilly the

maid, and, and, and, you know, well, I know the role and -

GLORIA. And, and, and, you know. What are you asking?

VERA. You promised you'd put in a word with the studio.

GLORIA. Oh, Vera, I have so many things to worry about. Why

on earth are you bothering me with chis?

VERA. Never mind. I'll go "fetch" the dress.

GLORIA. Oh boo-hoo. Sometimes it would do you a bit of good

to remember the distance you've travelled from there to here.

VERA. You'll never lee me forget, honey. Will you? And you

might remember there's a lot I could say about your daddy, my

mother's -

5.1.5 Contextualizing the Extract

In this extract, the speaker is Vera. She talks to Gloria about taking a role in the epic of "The Belle of New Orleans" in which Vera aspires to take a role.

5.1.6 Referential and Predicational Strategies

Vera uses the pronoun "I" to make herself at the deictic center of the speech. Turning to the predicational strategy, the noun phrase "the maid" is used to qualify Vera negatively just like her reality is no more than a maid.

5.1.7 Argumentation strategy

Topos of abuse is illustrated here as the main idea behind these lines is the underlying conflict between black and white actresses. Discrimination experienced by black actresses seems more intrinsic and uncontrolled because the film production community innately assigns to them, no matter how talented they are. They will be given the role of housekeepers and inferior citizens. Although Vera, the black actress, appears to be the backbone of Gloria, a movie star known as "America's Little Sweetie Pie", Gloria still treats her disdainfully.

From the beginning of the play, Vera is confident despite being black and inferior. She works as a domestic protector and confidant partner. Regardless of her talent and ambition, Vera wishes to get the maid role in the Southern epic "The Belle of New Orleans" because it fits her according to her societal conditions. So, she begs Gloria to help her to get the role of Tilly, the maid. Yet, Gloria is upset by Vera's request due to the fact that she is jealous of the talented actress Vera.

5.1.8 Intensification and Mitigation Strategies

The intensification strategy is exemplified in the use of the augmentative " lot" and verbs like "say, know, and remember" for emphasis. Furthermore, the model auxiliary verbs "could and might" are used to show possibility. The mitigation strategy is expressed through the use of the diminutive " bit" and the use of the tag question in "you will never let me forget, honey. Will you?" for confirmation.

Extract 3 (p.14)

ANNA MAE. Oh, hey Vera.

VERA. Where are you going all spiffed up? *(Anna Mae, demonstratively,*

twirls.)

ANNA MAE. The double D, darling. Dinner and dancing.

LOTTIE. She's got a date.

VERA. Tonight? Who? He must be something, looks like you

broke out the expensive rags. Let me see. *(Anna Mae shows off her*

dress, doing a sexy shimmy.)

ANNA MAE. I beg your pardon, he's a little more than something.

Thank you. He's a genuine movie director.

LOTTIE. Like that last one.

ANNA MAE. Oh, go to hell. He's the real deal this time. I met

him at the studio on Tuesday.

5.1.9 Contextualizing the Extract

In this extract, Vera is the speaker. She talks to Anna, a colored actress in the play, about meeting the film director in order to take a role in a film in Hollywood 1930s.

5.1.10 Referential and Predicational Strategies

The nouns "dinner, dancing, and date" are used to refer to an event, in which Anna will meet the film director. This illustrates Anna's temptation for the director

to get a role in the film. Then, Vera uses the adjective "spiffed up" to evaluate Anna negatively for such behavior. Anna, on the other hand, uses the phrases "a genuine movie director" and "he's the real deal" to evaluate the film director positively. In addition, the rhetorical figure simile is used in the word "like" to show the similarity between Anna and the movie director and to evaluate them negatively as having the same attitude of following temptation.

5.1.11 Argumentation Strategy

Topos of abuse is illustrated as the main idea behind these lines. A colored actress, Anna, seems to seduce the director sexually in order to give her a role in the movie. Actually, she is exploited whether willingly or unwillingly to survive. Anna Mae treats her workmates cruelly, irritating them by exposing her seductive ability to obtain whatever role she aspires to, even though they are of the same race and social status as her. She continues to argue with them while trying to take things at their expense for her benefit.

5.1.12 Intensification and Mitigation Strategies

The intensified attitude is used to modify the deontic status of the proposition in the use of the model auxiliary "must" in "He must be something like you" to express necessity. Furthermore, the augmentative "little more" in " a little more than something" is used to provide a positive manifestation for expressing the film director.

Extract 4 (p.28)

"SLASVICK. Thank you. *(Slasvick sits.)* What's

your name?

VERA. Mine? Vera.

SLASVICK. Vera, you're a very pretty colored girl.

VERA. I suppose I should say thank you.

SLASVICK. I don't want you to think me forward,

but it's my job to notice these things. You ever

thought about being in pictures?

VERA. Yes, sir, who in this town ain't."

5.1.13 Contextualizing the Extract

In this extract, the conversation is between the film producer, Slasvick and Vera. They are in a meeting to choose the characters to take a role in the movie.

5.1.14 Referential and Predicational Strategies

Slasvick, the film producer refers to Vera by using the deictic expression "you" to refer to Vera. Then, he uses the adjective phrase "pretty colored girl" to qualify her positively.

5.1.15 Argumentation Strategy

Topos of definition is utilized here. Vera is qualified as having specific traits. It is illustrated through Slasvick 's speech which is about the physical appearance of women. Because of her appearance, the black woman can become an actress. The producer acknowledges her physical beauty. This shows how patriarchal society looks over the body manifestation of women. Here the use of the word "colored" seems to be a compliment to Vera, the black woman, yet, in fact, it is like an insult to her because in such a patriarchal society she is just another woman of color. Basically, it implies that a woman's beauty does not mean that men treat her respectfully. This demonstrates how the patriarchal society devalues women.

5.1.16 Intensification and Mitigation Strategies

The intensification strategy is expressed in the use of model auxiliary verbs "should" to indicate obligation, and the verb "suppose" to express possibility. Turning to the mitigation strategy, the verb of thinking "think" is used to show detachment.

V.   OVERALL VARIANCE AMONG DISCURSIVE STRATEGIES

In this section the scores of discursive strategies are presented and contrasted with reference to the theme of gender discrimination in *By the Way Meet Vera Stark*.
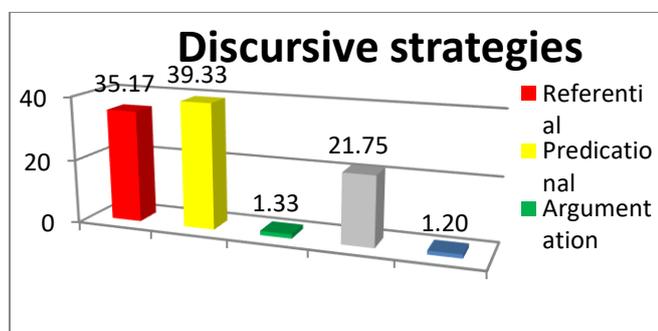

Fig.12 Tthe percentages of total mean frequency of discursive srtategies in By the Way Meet Vera Stark

Based on both, the statistical analysis shown in the figure above which marks predicational strategies as the top scoring strategy with 39.33, and the qualitative analysis, it can be seen that predicational strategies such as adjectives, prepositional phrases, and predicative nouns and to some extent referential strategies (35.17) play a crucial role in how the theme of gender discrimination is represented via dialogues and how the discriminated female characters are negatively projected in the relevant discourses and eventually how their gendered identities are indexed in the play. These frequent textual strategies are

used by the author for the purpose of negative and\or characterization and stereotypes as in the use of belittling language and expressions of prejudice and gender bias already discussed in the qualitative analysis. These strategies also carry the traits of character-to-character power dynamics where suppressed female characters are explicitly or implicitly marginalized through discourse. Predictions are frequently used more than other strategies in an effort to establish authority, sway perceptions, or uphold particular ideologies by presenting them as the most likely or inevitable course of events. Predication strategy can be used to influence decisions, legitimize specific behaviors, or change people's perspectives by making them seem like the most sensible or inevitable course of action. Predication strategy as a focal point can disclose a great deal about power relations and ideological stances, using fear or uncertainty to influence attitudes and behavior.

In this respect, the quantitative analysis also explicates how gender discrimination intersects with other forms of discrimination, for instance, racial or class-based discrimination. The higher frequency of such strategies uncovers how intersecting identities affect characters' experiences of discrimination on the part of both the discriminator and the discriminated.

VI.   CONCLUSION

In Nottage's play "*By the Way, Meet Vera Stark*", the portrayal of women discrimination presents a nuanced and multi-layered depiction. The narrative encapsulates the experiences of women affected by psychological conflict, illustrating how discrimination is not solely defined by gender differences but also by societal prejudices and systemic biases against women. It also highlights the intertwining obstacles that women—particularly women of color—face as they work toward achievement and recognition. The protagonist, Vera Stark, struggles not only with racial prejudices but also with the obstacles placed in her path as a woman attempting to succeed in a field that is controlled by men and frequently exploitative of women. The play focuses on the ways in which Vera's journey and the larger social setting are impacted by these intersecting types of discrimination.

The text's power hierarchies, silences, and linguistic devices used by Nottage draw attention to the complexity of gender discrimination. The play asks the auaudience to consider and critically examine the pervasiveness of discrimination against women in many sociocultural contexts through sophisticated dialogues and character interactions.

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