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Narrative Voice and Female Subjectivity: A Socio-Linguistic Inquiry into Violence in Tarantino's Cinema

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates how Quentin Tarantino's films construct discourses of female violence and subjectivity, focusing on *Kill Bill* (2003) and *Inglourious Basterds* (2009). It examines how the protagonists, Beatrix Kiddo and Shosanna Dreyfus, are positioned as active architects of violence who reclaim autonomy within male-dominated social and narrative frameworks. Employing Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), the study emphasizes the linguistic dimensions of speech acts, metaphors, and narrative framing, showing how language functions as a medium for resistance and the negotiation of gendered power relations. Beatrix embodies vengeance through direct combat, while Shosanna employs vigilance and silence as strategic tools; both approaches reveal different pathways to restoring subjectivity. Yet the empowerment they achieve is inherently paradoxical: their use of violence reproduces the traditional masculine models of aggression and retribution, blurring the line between liberation and conformity. This duality demonstrates that while Tarantino's female characters resist patriarchal constraints, they simultaneously embody its logic of power. The findings contribute to feminist film theory by providing a nuanced perspective on how language and violence together shape, challenge, and complicate the representation of femininity in contemporary action cinema.

Keywords: Female Violence; Feminist Film Theory; Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA); Gender and Cinema; Quentin Tarantino; *Kill Bill*

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1. Introduction

1.1. Contextualizing the Topic: Tarantino's Cinematic Style

In the works of Quentin Tarantino, this Article examines how the discourse of female violence and subjectivity seeks to ground and orient the portrayal of female strengths and weaknesses. By exploring features through *Kill Bill* (2003) and *Inglourious Basterds* (2009), the researcher concentrates their attention on the creation of the female protagonists, played by Beatrix Kiddo and Shosanna Dreyfus, who are noted as active architects of violence, able to restore their power within a world where a male figure predominates^[1]. Under CDA, the emphasis is placed on the linguistic aspects of speech acts, metaphors, and narrative framing to highlight the role language plays in the agency and resistance efforts of the female characters against patriarchal systems.

Only through vengeance, as seen in *Kill Bill*, and constant vigilance, as with Shosanna in *Inglourious Basterds*, can Beatrix and Shosanna be seen as fulfilling their roles as women, despite their differing language and violence^[2].

The use of violence to establish control by both characters occurs in the same ways as reciprocating within the storylines of masculinity, despite the revenge and justice principle^[3]. Such a conflict between female empowerment and patriarchal ideals is one of the major themes of the paper. The results indicate that although femininity is empowered due to violence in Tarantino films, the violence is complex since it is enacted in the traditional male models of aggression and revenge^[4].

The research advancement in feminist film theory is that it provides a nuanced perspective on how language shapes and challenges the gendered power relations in action movies today. The moral and ideological problematic differences in the portrayal of female violence as an empowerment device or a faculty for the reinforcement of patriarchal ideologies have been brought to the fore in the study.

1.2. Research Questions

Though women are the subject of Tarantino films, how violence intrudes into female subjectivity has not been given full coverage, especially concerning the socio-linguistic angle. The critical research questions associated with the given

paper concern the following:

- How does Tarantino come up with the idea of language and narrative voice to establish a female subjectivity in the context of violence?
- Does female violence in Tarantino perpetuate or disrupt gendered power relations in his movies?
- How can Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) shed some light on the means of integrating language and power in representing women in the films by Tarantino?

1.3. Research Objectives

It is with these questions that the paper aims to understand the effects that the narrative techniques deployed by Tarantino, particularly the linguistic strategies he employs, have on shaping the audience's perception of the violence committed by women, as well as their subjectivity. Through the use of the CDA as a methodological approach, this study will critically analyze how the discourse of social power and gender mainstreaming is conveyed through language in conversations involving the main female characters in his movies.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Feminist Film Theory: Understanding Gender Representation in Cinema

The feminist film theory has also been explicit in discussing how females are portrayed in movies, especially where the genre has been exclusively a male-dominated discourse, like action, crime, and violence. Criticisms of the male gaze in film emerged early on, with Laura Mulvey being a major critic who contested that women were frequently portrayed as passive objects of male fantasy, introduced merely to entertain the viewer's gaze^[5]. In her 1975 treatise, *Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema*, Mulvey claimed that the prescribed male gaze in popular cinema diminishes a female to a mere spectacle and stresses her deobjectification^[6].

This critique has evolved over Time, with feminist theorists not only examining the visual portrayal of the female but also analyzing narratives on how the female voice and subjectivity are constructed. Examples of scholars who studied the notion of gender as performative are Judith Butler, who suggested that attention should be paid to how films

are produced visually, performatively, and linguistically, and how they display female identities. The notion of gender performativity, developed by Butler, will play a crucial role in understanding how female subjectivity is constructed in Tarantino's films through the violence, vengeance, and resistance of female characters^[7].

Embodied by popular movie characters such as Beatrix Kiddo in *Kill Bill* and Shosanna Dreyfus in *Inglourious Basterds*, female characters in Tarantino's movies subvert traditional depictions of female characters in film. These characters are not wronged people, but highly active violators who apply it as an instrument of struggle against oppression and reestablish control over their lives. According to this, these aggressive women breach gender-related norms by employing aggressive and assertive tactics typically associated with males, resulting in a reversal of the traditional story plot^[8]. It is likely that one will think that these women are empowered, yet on the other hand, I question the criteria of violence and the phenomenon of female aggression as resistance.

2.2. Violence in Tarantino's Films: Aestheticizing Female Aggression

Tarantino is often hailed as a master of violence in art, as he transforms an act of brutality into aesthetic and emotional pathos. In his films, the aesthetics of violence are also excessive and stylized: in the scenes of blood and gore, his camera angles are so deliberate that they become aesthetically elegant yet emotionally irritating. Nevertheless, the question of the relationship between violence in his films is about gender.

The character of Beatrix Kiddo in *Kill Bill* is an example of how Tarantino uses violence to empower the character. The progression of how Kiddo carries out his plan of revenge through an incessant physical battle of wits and blood defies the norms of the action movie protagonist. In contrast to male protagonists, when the violence is described as a self-seeking or justice vendetta, in the case of Kiddo, her violence is made out to be both necessary and justified revenge against the harms and wrongs that the male-led axis of assassination commission had inflicted upon her. Violence used by Kiddo is not only a matter of action, but it is a matter of taking control back and becoming a symbol of female dominance over the patriarchal order of the world^[9].

In *Inglourious Basterds*, once again, the use of symbolic violence is seen via Shosanna Dreyfus displacing the Nazi regime through staging an intentional cinematic fire that becomes the means of vengeance on those who killed her family. In the movies, violence is not only a diversion; it also becomes a means of storytelling. Specifically, it is a literary device used to convey the inner reality and struggles of female characters. Both characters demonstrate that female violence in Tarantino cinema extends beyond physical cruelty, encompassing self-assertion and reaction^[10].

However, Tarantino has been criticized because of the aspects of female violence depicted by him. The fetishization of female violence in his movies is that, despite these female characters appearing empowered in the movies, they are still captives of masculine concepts of retribution and power. Therefore, even though the structure of agency (violence) is granted to women by Tarantino, it remains embedded in a mainstream narrative of overcoming the outsiders, which has historically always been a masculine sphere^[11].

2.3. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) in Film Studies: An Overview

Another method that plays a critical role in the study of the power relations in discourse and language is Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Norman Fairclough, who became one of the leading representatives of CDA, stresses the importance of the connection between language and social power by stating that discourse does not just represent the world but creates it, organizing the way we come to perceive the world, relationships, and identities. CDA has gained wide application in studies of media and culture in the construction of social hierarchies and ideologies achieved through language.

When applied to the study of film, CDA enables the researcher to highlight the fact that not only do language and dialogue contribute to the development of individual identities, but it also reveal a broader social reality in the representation of social norms and power. The moviemaker as Quentin Tarantino, is the author of the films that are distinguished by the great value of dialogue, as the characters differentiate themselves and present their ideology with the help of the dialogue. As in the case of *Kill Bill*, Beatrix's conversation sometimes swings back and forth from manifestation of strength to rationalization of her violence. Her

language decisions are at the centre of explaining her agency and subjectivity in the narrative. With the help of CDA, we could observe how Tarantino employs speech to position the female characters as competent subjects capable of challenging existing gender roles, yet still operating within a male-oriented system.

2.4. Previous Applications of CDA in Film Studies

Otherwise, CDA has already been applied to analyze violence and gender in the film, which provides an understanding of how gendered power structures are reinforced or undermined through the language used in films. In another example, CDA is used to decipher the use of passion by patriarchal ideals in action films using the issue of how the male heroes use language to influence their dominating power over the female gender^[12]. On the same note, the language of violent film asserts that language choices serve the end of normalizing violence as an instrument of power^[13].

Yet, the connection between CDA and violence against women in Tarantino movies is not adequately developed^[14]. Although researchers have addressed the question concerning the aestheticization of violence, little has been said about the linguistic displacement of female characters into violent situations, especially the language construction of female subjectivity. In this paper, this gap will be bridged by applying Fairclough's CDA to the discourse of female characters in *Kill Bill* and *Inglourious Basterds*, examining the role of language in positioning them as initiators of violent action within a generally male narrative.

3. Methodology

The present study employs Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), as developed and promoted by Norman Fairclough, as the primary analytical framework to explore the construction of female subjectivity and violence in Quentin

Tarantino's *Kill Bill* (2003) and *Inglourious Basterds* (2009). One of the most important research approaches is the DA which is interested in the role of language in keeping or dismantling the power structures in society. The procedure will have the advantage of multimodal discourse analysis that will help the researcher to transcend beyond verbal communication since visual, auditory, and symbolic dimensions are important characteristics of cinematic presentation.

Its mission will be to operationalise the idea of CDA in a more integrated and inclusive way, such that the level of analysis can focus not only on language discursive selection (speech acts, metaphors, silence), it will also be able to extend into what used to be referred to as the tertiary levels of analysis (camera angle, frame, sound, and display of symbolism). It is based on these lines that the following paper will explore the extent to which the structures of power that are gendered are affirmed, complicated, or disrupted by Tarantino in his depiction of the female protagonists.

3.1. Corpus Selection

To make the sample of texts profound and concentrated, four key scenes from the two Quentin Tarantino films that are connected to the critical action or open confrontation of the main female characters were chosen to create a scene-based corpus. In **Table 1**, these segments have been chosen because of their dramatic aspects of agency, silence and symbolic violence, and contribute to the academic aim as the study dissects the stratified discourses at hand.

Each scene was transcribed by hand, off of high-definition versions of the movies, where care was taken to use written speech and any major silences, and paralinguistics, such as pitch, volume and pauses. These transcriptions were subdivided into analytic units when there was a change of speaker, a change speech act type or significant visual or auditory remarks. This gave a micro-corpus of approximately 20 large dialogue and 3 large non-verbal sequences which were coded later.

Table 1. Selected Film Scenes for Analysis.

Film	Scene	Timestamp
<i>Kill Bill</i>	Beatrix Kiddo vs. O-Ren Ishii (final duel)	Vol. 1, 01:13:00–01:20:00
<i>Kill Bill</i>	Beatrix vs. Vernita Green (kitchen fight)	Vol. 1, 00:15:00–00:23:00
<i>Inglourious Basterds</i>	Shosanna and Fredrick Zoller (café scene)	00:34:00–00:38:00
<i>Inglourious Basterds</i>	Shosanna's final film reel message	01:35:00–01:39:00

3.2. Coding Framework

Data analysis was carried out using the three dimensional model of CDA proposed by Fairclough and found in:

- **Textual Analysis** (linguistic features such as speech acts, metaphor, silence)
- **Discursive Practice** (how texts are produced, consumed, and interpreted)
- **Social Practice** (broader cultural and ideological frameworks)

To provide structure and clarity, a coding framework was developed for the textual level, integrating speech act theory^[5], feminist film theory, and symbolic interactionism^[15]. The categories included:

- **Speech Acts**: directives, declarations, interrogatives, silences
- **Metaphoric Language**: weapon metaphors, bodily

metaphors, retributive justice terms

- **Symbols**: recurring imagery (e.g., swords, lipstick, fire, blood)
- **Narrative Framing**: justification of violence, role positioning, agency

Multimodal features were also coded, using the framework from Carradine^[10]:

- **Visual Design**: camera shots (close-up, low-angle), lighting, color palette
- **Sound**: diegetic vs. non-diegetic sound, silence, musical motifs
- **Typography**: on-screen text, subtitles, graphic inserts

Each coded excerpt was labeled with multiple categories when applicable, allowing layered interpretations. Specifically, in **Table 2**. This approach facilitated an integrated reading of language and image, essential for understanding the narrative construction of female agency^[16].

Table 2. CDA of Film Scenes.

Scene	Line or Action	Speech Act/Feature	Metaphor/Symbol	CDA Interpretation
<i>Kill Bill</i> – Beatrix vs. O-Ren	“I’m gonna kill Bill.”	Declaration / Imperative	Sword = justice	Asserts agency and revenge motivation
<i>Kill Bill</i> – Beatrix vs. Vernita	“You have one chance to live.”	Directive	Domestic kitchen = power	Female violence in the domestic space reclaims control
<i>Inglourious Basterds</i> – Shosanna	No verbal reply to Zoller	Silence as resistance	Red lipstick = authority	Controlled silence subverts male dominance
<i>Inglourious Basterds</i> – Film message	“This is the face of Jewish vengeance.”	Assertion / Typographic voice	Cinema = weapon	Symbolic reclaiming of narrative and power

3.3. Limitations of Method

The absence of intercoder reliability (multiple analysts cross-checking the codes) may introduce subjectivity in interpretation. Additionally, the use of a limited corpus (four scenes) restricts breadth.

Moreover, while this study integrates some aspects of multimodal CDA, it does not exhaust the full spectrum. A complete multimodal analysis would include frame-by-frame annotation of visual semiotics, mise-en-scène, costume design, and editing rhythm. Future research might also incorporate audience reception studies to evaluate how viewers interpret female violence and agency, thus triangulating production, representation, and reception.

It can be said that this methodological approach en-

ables the examination of female subjectivity, violence, and discourse in Tarantino’s films in a multidimensional and nuanced manner. The study utilizing CDA in combination with multimodal approach is thus able to find out how the empowerment of the agency of both language and image is possible in the construction of empowered, and at the same time ideologically vague, images of female warriors in the films containing violence.

4. Analysis: Applying Fairclough’s CDA to Tarantino’s Films

This chapter offers a detailed and critical discussion of Quentin Tarantino’s *Kill Bill* (2003) and *Inglourious Basterds* (2009), grounded in Norman Fairclough’s three-dimensional

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) model. Each of the chosen scenes from the corpus is discussed on the textual, discursive, and social practice levels, combining speech analysis, multimodal semiotics, and feminist theory. It is hoped that the paper's aim will be achieved, which is to reveal how female violence is represented, constructed, and viewed in films through language, narration, and visual elements^[17].

4.1. Kill Bill: Beatrix Kiddo and the Language of Retribution

4.1.1. Textual Analysis

Rather, imperatives, declarations, and short statements of authority dominate the dialogue of Beatrix Kiddo. Her speech is confident, strong, and deprived of emotional insecurity. In the scene with O-Ren Ishii, Beatrix's use of the statement, "I'm gonna kill Bill," serves as both a declaration of intent and a symbolic positioning of herself as the moral center of justice.

Linguistically, her choice of simple present and modal verb ("gonna") implies inevitability, suggesting an internalized sense of justified retribution. This positions her within the archetype of the avenger, yet her gender complicates this reading.

Imperatives like "You have one chance to live" in her confrontation with Vernita Green employ power-laden structures. These not only elevate Beatrix's status within the conversation but also invert traditional gender roles by casting the woman as the sole arbiter of life and death.

4.1.2. Discursive Practice

The confrontational scenes are filmed up close, focusing on her calm and composed demeanor. The slow-motion shots, along with the sweeping orchestral music, highlight the intensity of her actions. These techniques make her stand out, evoking sympathy and positioning her above the other assassins as a figure of righteous power. Please refer to **Figures 1** and **2** for details.



Figure 1. *Kill Bill* (2003) 01:22:30.



Figure 2. *Kill Bill* (2003) 01:29:05.

The latter form of structuring the story coincides with the feminist tendency to talk about woman agency as the ability to act intentionally and produce determinate results regardless of the patriarchy^[18].

4.1.3. Social Practice

The embodiment of the female body in Beatrix's work can be attributed to the ideologies of the later feminist revolution and the genre of revenge movies.

Her persona challenges the passivity treatments of femininity and active masculinity by being able to perform an act of violence in a way that is precise, purposed and emotional in nature. Her empowerment however is a problematized aspect that involved the codes of the cinematic films in which her violence has been codified to be aesthetic.

By adopting behavior that can be classified as male spe-

cific since being rational, handy and unemotional, Beatrix actively engages in the gender performativity as it is perceived by Judith Butler (1990). She borrows the outward projection of male authority and uses it within the female plot. Such inversion is not perfectly critic-proof: even within her revenge, she merely operates within a system, which has long accepted violence as justice, which has long been dominated by men^[19].

Moreover, her attire (e.g., the yellow tracksuit, which references Bruce Lee) and kung fu patterns align her as part of a spectacle to be enjoyed by the spectators, as shown in **Figure 3**. This way, although she can eroticize her gender deviance, she also contributes to the reinforcement of gender and such techniques of fetishization through the visual representation.



Figure 3. *Kill Bill* (2003) 01:16:30.

4.2. Inglourious Basterds: Shosanna Dreyfus and Cinematic Resistance

4.2.1. Textual Analysis

Unlike Beatrix Shosanna Dreyfus is a victim of the discourse of silence because she finds herself at a loss to speak out. The power is not expressed but coded through means of facial expressions, body language and symbolic actions. Throughout her visit to Fredrick Zoller in the cafe, the way Shosanna minimally engages in verbal communication shows that she is rather uncomfortable, independent, and resistant, as shown in **Figure 4**. Her silences are tactical in nature, as she maintains control over the interaction without engaging in direct confrontation. This is indicative

of Anderson^[9] view on the fact that silence can also be construed as a discourse in the spaces of power in social constructs.

Her last words, and, perhaps, some of the most unforgettable to the screen writer, are the words: This is Jewish blood and this is the face of Jewish vengeance, which are not words, not merely text but tonscript. It is not personal to the voice which it gives her, but collective; it speaks not into a secret, but into the air, refer to **Figure 5**. The subject (she employs violence) and the director (she dominates violence) are also supported through the medium of delivery, that is, the film within a film. Cinema is used in this metanarrative as the means of resistance that erases the borders between fiction and historical trauma.



Figure 4. *Inglourious Basterds* (2009) 00:45:05.



Figure 5. *Inglourious Basterds* (2009) 02:17:59.

4.2.2. Discursive Practice

In terms of narrative, the character of Shosanna has been constructed on the basis of trauma and suppressed revenge. The reason behind her silence during most of the film is a direct effect of her past-killing her family by the Nazis. Revenge by means of film is too symbolic to get even without physical force. The manner in which she transforms, a hidden fugitive, into a Movie star-like vengeance, is an established plot^[20].

This visual placement of Shosanna can be frequently achieved through the medium and close-up shot as the sign of the struggle and self-determination. The various colors (e.g., her red dress and lipstick) that she wears in the significant moments make her a product of both sensuality and subversion. The movie film scene can be horrifying and poetic at simultaneously and introduces a moral loose, which doubts the comfort of the viewer.

Audience positioning is also central to this as well The

approach to Shosanna is contrasted to the presentation of Beatrix because her violence is celebrated whereas Shosanna is filled with historical burden. The destruction of the cinema, though cathartic, is rather ambiguous as well. The importance of this is that viewers are challenged to weigh the morals of revenge even against evil dominators.

4.2.3. Social Practice

The narrative of Shosanna encroaches Holocaust remembrance, women, gendered violence and media power. Her politicization of the cinema is a critiques on male assimilated war genre and recovery of the screen as well as reinstitution of Feminine Justice. In this aspect, she represents an anti-type of a normally portrayed on film image of Jewish victim and turns not only into a survivor but also into an avenger^[21].

The weaponisation of the film is reflective of the feminist politics of narration and representation. Changing

history by spectacle is taken by Hosanna alters history in a manner that pays attention to the problem of martyrdom. The question of what the female agency costs her is brought up due to the time of her death as it came in her moment of triumph.

Can women in patriarchal narratives ever achieve power without sacrifice?

Her portrayal also exemplifies the limits of postfeminist representation. While empowered, Shosanna's character is still framed through aesthetics that align with male gaze theory^[22].

4.3. Comparative Discussion: Beatrix and Shosanna

4.3.1. Gendered Speech and Silence

Beatrix and Shosanna are the two extremes of gendered communication: the speech and the silence. Beatrix dominates space with spoken power, and Shosanna recovers her agency with power-played muteness. These two strategies upset the conventional image of women as passive listeners to the male conversation. They have varying degrees of defiance, control and manipulation of the male characters.

The commands and threats devised by Beatrix assume the existence of some form of a masculine-afflicted agency, that is why, such a speech act can be referred to as a weapon of symbolic castration. In contrast, the silences employed by Shosanna withhold the male interlocutors with the authority of the recognition they seek thus interrupting the normative power relations described in gender terms. Taken together these numbers give testimony that agency is relative to quantities of the actions rather than to what is said as such in volumes.

4.3.2. The Visual Symbolism

The two characters are employing semiotics in their presentation of discursivity. The yellow tracksuit and Hattori Hanzo sword that Beatrix wears and her bloodstained appearance create a symbol that the woman needs to be truly strong but also vengeful. The color of red in the dress that Shosanna wore, the film reel, and her last words of narration amidst the flames become symbolic complexifies of destabilization of narration and revisionism of history.

They also present various applications of the cinema. The scene of violence by Beatrix has been staged aestheti-

cally relying on the elements of anime and kung-fu movies and laying more stress on the effects of spectacle. The revenge mechanism, prominent in Shosanna, is deep-seated within the diegesis of the film industry and cinema itself as the location of the acts of violence and as the means of healing. One will employ the camera to demonstrate aesthetic panache; and the other will employ it to demonstrate a break in ideology.

4.3.3. Spaces of Discourse, Feminist Contradictions

Despite the fact that the two characters could be portrayed to have been empowered, there are inefficiencies in their narrations. The agency of Beatrix is developed under the scenario of the patriarchal fantasy of revenge, which is actually focused on a male (Bill). Her journey, as it were, is even though autonomous is accompanied and supported by male violence. Similarly, Shosanna fights her own battle once she dies but her means of attaining the goal is unable to earn her the results as she is killed in the process of fighting back.

This is reminiscent refers to as the "double bind" of the postfeminist media, whereby empowerment is engulfed with limitation in and under patriarchal aesthetics. Female protagonists in Tarantino's work transgress genre conventions, yet are also created through the prism of violent spectacle, beauty, and tragedy^[23].

The CDA model, introduced by Fairclough, readily enables a multi-stratum inquiry into language-power interaction in these films. Speech acts and silence are gender weapons of power and resistance at the textual level. At the discursive practice level, narrative framing has contrasted the viewer's sympathy with that of the female characters and situated the violence against them within an ethical and necessary context. At the level of social practices, the films involve the negotiation and reflection of dominant ideologies on subjects such as justice, gender roles, and historical memory.

What we get is the complicated representation of the female subject that does not radically rebel against the norms of the patriarchy without them, at the same Time, being compliant. Beatrix and Shosanna assert independence over the systems of control that are to treat them as victims, yet their actions are full of inconsistencies. Their authority is not false since it always passes through the motif of male authorship,

gratification with the visual image, and gratification among other consumers.

In both instances, CDA shows that the discourse of cinema makes gendered violence not only a form of entertainment but a heroic space of ideological struggle. The movies provide an area of feminist reading, but they emphasize the constraints of the representation in the context of the patriarchal media apparatus. This critical method also exemplifies the usefulness of Fairclough model in untangling the complex, ambivalence representations of gender, power and violence in modern film.

4.4. CDA Analysis Tarantino

4.4.1. Feminist Film Theory: Knowledge on Gender Representation in Films

The feminist theory of films has also been categorical on the representation of females in the movies, particularly as the genres such as action films, crime stories and violence are the domains exclusively owned by men. Visions of the male gaze in cinema have been opposed since long ago, the big critic of the field, who argued that women were often depicted as passive objects of fantasy of the male consumer to entertain gaze^[24]. In her 1975 treatise, Mulvey claimed that the prescribed male gaze in popular cinema diminishes a female to a mere spectacle and stresses her deobjectification^[25].

This critique has evolved over Time, with feminist theorists not only examining the visual portrayal of the female but also analyzing narratives on how the female voice and subjectivity are constructed. Examples of scholars who studied the notion of gender as performative are Judith Butler, who suggested that attention should be paid to how films are produced visually, performatively, and linguistically, and how they display female identities. The notion of gender performativity, developed by Butler, will play a crucial role in understanding how female subjectivity is constructed in Tarantino's films through the violence, vengeance, and resistance of female characters^[26].

Embodied by popular movie characters such as Beatrix Kiddo in *Kill Bill* and Shosanna Dreyfus in *Inglourious Basterds*, female characters in Tarantino's movies subvert traditional depictions of female characters in film. These are not victims who have been wronged, but very active offend-

ers who use it as a weapon struggle against oppression and recontrol of their lives. The fact that such violent women violate the gender norm by engaging in aggressive and assertive strategies, which are masculine based makes the traditional plot reverse^[27]. It is probable to consider them as empowered women, yet, put in question the norms of violence and the question of female aggression as resistant.

Recent theory on postfeminism still further complicates the picture.

Postfeminist theory acknowledges women's agency and empowerment but also critiques how media may commercialize and distort these values. In Tarantino's films, female protagonists appear empowered, yet their portrayals often reflect a postfeminist contradiction—assertive female roles presented through hyper-stylized, male-directed aesthetics. Some critics argue that such portrayals reinforce traditional gender hierarchies while pretending to challenge them.

4.4.2. Violence in Tarantino's Films: Aestheticizing Female Aggression

Tarantino is often hailed as a master of violence in art, as he transforms an act of brutality into aesthetic and emotional pathos. In his films, the aesthetics of violence are also excessive and stylized: in the scenes of blood and gore, his camera angles are so deliberate that they become aesthetically elegant yet emotionally irritating. Nevertheless, the question of the relationship between violence in his films is about gender.

The character of Beatrix Kiddo in *Kill Bill* is an example of how Tarantino uses violence to empower the character. The progression of how Kiddo carries out his plan of revenge through an incessant physical battle of wits and blood defies the norms of the action movie protagonist. In contrast to male protagonists, when the violence is described as a self-seeking or justice vendetta, in the case of Kiddo, her violence is made out to be both necessary and justified revenge against the harms and wrongs that the male-led axis of assassination commission had inflicted upon her. Violence used by Kiddo is not only a matter of action, but it is a matter of taking control back and becoming a symbol of female dominance over the patriarchal order of the world^[28].

In *Inglourious Basterds*, once again, the use of symbolic violence is seen via Shosanna Dreyfus displacing the

Nazi regime through staging an intentional cinematic fire that becomes the means of vengeance on those who killed her family. In the movies, violence is not only a diversion; it also becomes a means of storytelling. Specifically, it is a literary device used to convey the inner reality and struggles of female characters. Both characters demonstrate that female violence in Tarantino cinema extends beyond physical cruelty, encompassing self-assertion and reaction^[29].

However, Tarantino has been criticized because of the aspects of female violence depicted by him. The fetishization of female violence in his movies is that, despite these female characters appearing empowered in the movies, they are still captives of masculine concepts of retribution and power. Therefore, even though the structure of agency (violence) is granted to women by Tarantino, it remains embedded in a mainstream narrative of overcoming the outsiders, which has historically always been a masculine sphere^[30].

This begs the question about concern based on feminist arguments of spectacles and fetishization. According to critics, the over-stylization of female violence has the effect of pleasing the fantasies of the male audience more, rather than representing true feminist allegories. Accordingly, although the characters in Tarantino film may contravene expectations, their violence can also be assimilated into film formulae that are focused to entertain rather than to mock political indictments.

5. Discussion

5.1. The Work that CDA has Done towards Elucidating Female Violence in the Films of Tarantino

This involves the engagement of the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) in the world of Alternation as explained by Fairclough to the works of Tarantino, particularly in *Kill Bill* and *Inglourious Basterds* wherein language seems to have a complicated relationship with violence and gender. Tarantino projects female violence as an empowering, resistant and agentive instrument using such linguistic features as the imperatives, metaphors, or framing of narration. The findings of the present interpretation show that feminine cruelty in the respective films is not a purely esthetic decision but rather a creative decision made on the narrating level in order to redefine the traditional gender values and royally

defy patriarchal principles.

This paper has succeeded in establishing language as a very important tool in creating female subjectivity by adopting CDA. To illustrate, Beatrix Kiddo's assertive nature in speech, as seen in her imperative style, makes her violence seem fair and allows her to become an empowered change agent. In a similar manner, the metaphor of violence and careful silence applied to Shosanna Dreyfus can reveal a character that, through the practices of cinema and symbolic resistance, attempts to reaffirm her identity as a survivor by opposing the ideology of Nazism.

In the context of CDA, it can be seen that neither of the characters' violent attempts to impose domination, but rather exercises it as a means to assert control and regain it. By emphasizing the language used by these characters, we have a better idea of how discourse constructs how the audience perceives female violence and, in turn, gendered power systems in the films.

5.2. Gendered Power Dynamics and Female Empowerment

Among the key questions that will be answered in this study is whether female violence in the films directed by Tarantino empowers the female characters or oppresses women. The construct of female violence, which is materialized in the language, proposes to have changed the concept of power by hinting that women are the actors rather than the victims. Nevertheless, paradoxes do not leave such empowerment.

Female protagonists are positioned as agents of violence who fight against oppression presented by males in the films *Kill Bill* and *Inglourious Basterds*. An example is Beatrix Kiddo, who occupies a normally male-dominated position of the action hero, where she uses violence to avenge the injustices against her. A violent course that she chooses is presented as a moral and righteous act because the imperatives that she uses in the conversation prove her dominance in the situation. In the same way, Shosanna exploits cinema and fire to frame resistance, thereby assuming a position of empowerment and rewriting history with the help of violence.

Regardless of the empowerment gained by these characters, the films continue to operate within a wider tradition of narrative in which the film's narrative is often framed by

male violence. Although Beatrix's violence in *Kill Bill* is justified, it is somewhat intertwined with the masculine values of revenge and justice. Similarly, Shosanna's revenge is both symbolic and artistic, yet rooted in the classic patterns of violent revenge. Therefore, although these female characters demonstrate their agency through the use of violence, their actions tend to be viewed in the context of how male power and vengeance are achieved. This questions the idea of whether the films by Tarantino ultimately culturally empower the female or resort to subjecting them to the gendered representations of violence.

Against this backdrop, CDA provides a much-needed critical insight, allowing us to watch in detail how the dressing language and dialogues used by Tarantino relate to illustrating how female violence can be both liberating and troublesome at the same time. On the one hand, the violence displayed by these women enables them to regain agency and control. In contrast on the other hand, the use of violence as the means of resistance in the films may essentially support the specific gendered assumptions regarding the power of women.

5.3. Gender and the Performance of Cinematic Violence

Gendered performance of violence is also brought up by the representation of the violence of women in Tarantino's films. Violence between a man and a woman or between two men can be a source of power, dominance, and justice as primarily performed by masculine violence, which has long been argued by feminist film theorists, whereas female violence tends to be labeled as an aberration, a disturbance. Tarantino contravenes those conventions in *Kill Bill* and *Inglourious Basterds*, however, with the idea that female violence is a badge of resistance and empowerment.

The violence by Beatrix and Shosanna shatters the gendered customs of violence that is disguised in action flicks. The violence in Beatrix has taken the form of being righteous and justified since her acts of violence are seen in the context of revenge and she is being made out as a heroine. Likewise, the violence committed by Shosanna in her movie is termed as a symbolic act of rebellion through which she is able to dominate the plot and subdue her oppressors.

However, the empowerment that such characters achieve cannot eliminate the violence caused by such char-

acters, which is still on the masculine field of action and punishment. It is a very potent power with which gender and aggressive politics placed concerns within the contemporary cinema. Are indeed the female characters as acted by Tarantino even empowered or are they just appropriating traditional role functions played by male characters?

The language in the two films, especially the use of imperatives, commands, and metaphors, to a great extent, supports a gendered performance of power that is congruent to masculine principles of violence and hegemony.

5.4. CDA's Role in Subverting Traditional Interpretations of Female Violence

Among the most brilliant features of this study is the usage of CDA as a means of contesting established explanations of women's violence in the movies by Tarantino. This paper has examined the language construction and undermining of gendered hierarchies as seen through the linguistic characteristics of the dialogues between Beatrix Kiddo and Shosanna Dreyfus. CDA enables us to realize that female violence in Tarantino movies is not merely a device of masculine power, but indeed a calculated method of reformulating a female form of agency in an otherwise male-dominated genre.

By employing the concept of speech acts, metaphors, and the use of story teller pattern Tarantino has managed to establish the third representation of female power that does not fall under the established trail of victims or side-kicks. This empowerment is not so simple though. The agency to take control using violence, retaliation literature, and the discourse of masculinity that praises justice tends to influence the actions of the women, although they find themselves enjoying the power. This battle of emancipation and entrenchment of gendered violence is one of the major themes in the Tarantino movies and this is one issue that CDA helps in enlightening.

5.5. What Does It Imply about the Feminist Theory of Film in the Future?

The paper has been able to extract some of the significant implications of feminist film theory. It demonstrates, on the one hand, that the linguistic nature of violence in gendered discourses can be studied in terms of CDA, and

as a result, linguistics not only endorses but also challenges power structures in society. Using CDA on the films of Tarantino, the study does not just assume that violence belongs to the male domain but shows how female violence can be excluded as a category of empowerment and resistance.

Second, the paper poses the significant questions of the representation of female violence in the modern films. Although Tarantino uses women as key perpetrators of violence in its films, the dependence of the films on classic masculine plots makes it difficult to comprehend the issue of female empowerment. Future research could explore how other filmmakers use violence to empower female characters and whether these portrayals challenge or reinforce gendered power structures in cinema.

This discussion synthesizes the key findings of your CDA analysis, critically reflecting on the empowerment and limitations of female violence in Tarantino's films. It also opens the door for future research into gender and violence in contemporary cinema.

6. Conclusions

This study has explored the representation of female violence and subjectivity in Quentin Tarantino's films using Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Through detailed linguistic analysis of two key films—*Kill Bill* (2003) and *Inglourious Basterds* (2009)—we have seen how Tarantino constructs his female protagonists as agents of violence, reclaiming power in a patriarchal world. By focusing on speech acts, metaphors, and narrative framing, the study reveals that language plays a pivotal role in constructing female characters' agency and resistance.

In *Kill Bill*, Beatrix Kiddo's use of imperatives and violent action transforms her into a heroine of revenge, framing her violence as justified and necessary. Her aggressive speech qualifies her as an empowered person who takes charge of her destiny. In *Inglourious Basterds*, the act of violence theatrically played through silence is an act of defiance by Shosanna Dreyfus. The silence in which Shosanna remains strategic throughout the movie, culminating in a cinematic act of justice on her part, portrays a more figurative rendition of women's violence, which, although not physical, is equally empowering and provocative.

By analyzing the use of narrative voice and language in

the films of Tarantino, we have concluded that the perceived gendered power structures that are created through their narrative strategy in combination with their language controls can be used to suggest that female violence depicted in the said filmed work cannot be criticized as being brutality but rather a way to empower herself as well as be rebuff to the patriarchal system that dominates. Nonetheless, this empowerment does not lack contradictions; after all, both Beatrix and Shosanna exist within the larger traditional context of revenge, which tends to be based on masculine definitions of justice.

6.1. Implications for Feminist Film Theory

The results of this paper will contribute to the debates in feminist film theory on female violence and agency as they are currently represented in cinema. Although feminist theorists tend to criticize the violence presented in the cinema in terms of perpetuating relationships of gendered power, the study provides evidence of female violence, as represented in the films by Tarantino, being quite a multifaceted source of empowerment. The work of Tarantino benefits through the support of linguistic means to a point that he is able to turn his female characters into agents of change thus they attain a sense of autonomy and able to repackage their subjectivity. But as this paper will show, vindication and vengeance, are language that have a more masculine discourse underlying them which lead us to believe that these acts of female empowerment would in themselves be defying gender social constructs.

Derring-Do, by contrast, evinces a temporal dialectic between female empowerment and gendered violence when it comes to the feminist film theory. It seems that violence in the Tarantino films is a reasonable resort of women, however, the problem of morality of the use of violence as a means of power seizure is also raised. Through the lens of CDA, we could get to know more about the gendered identities that language in the film has not only created but also played a role in the manner in which we seem to perceive both moral justification and agency.

6.2. Limitations of the Study

Although this paper has discussed the linguistic study of female violence in movies by Tarantino, the analysis has some limitations that can be handled in future studies. First,

this research paper has mainly focused on two movies (*Kill Bill* and *Inglourious Basterds*). Furthermore, to determine whether the aforementioned topics of female violence and agency are consistent throughout his body of work, future research could conduct this analysis on other Tarantino films, such as *Pulp Fiction* (1994) or *Django Unchained* (2012). As an added study, one could research how the audience perceives such films, i.e., whether there is any cultural conditioning on the perception of female violence as seen through the eyes of various demographics.

Second, the research carried out has revolved around linguistic characteristics in the films. Further research may also combine visual and stylistic considerations to examine how the development of female violence and gendered relations of power in films contributes to the aesthetic decisions and choices of Tarantino, particularly in terms of camera angles, lighting, and sound design. The combined linguistic and visual analyses would make it more comprehensive to examine the ways in which female subjectivity is expressed in Tarantino's cinema.

6.3. Future Research Directions

1. Following the results conducted in this paper, future investigations can be focused on diversified directions:
2. Gender and Violence in all films by Tarantino: A comparative discursive overview of all the films produced by Tarantino on the presentation of female violence could reveal whether his deliberation of female characters as violent entities are constant or they change through time. Are there any differences between the female agency in the work by Tarantino and other directors working in the violent genre, e.g. John Woo or Martin Scorsese?
3. Audience Reception and Interpretation: Understanding how different audiences interpret the violence and agency of female characters could help us assess the cultural significance of these portrayals. How do viewers from different socio-cultural backgrounds respond to female violence, and what does this reveal about our perceptions of gender and power in modern cinema?
4. Intersectionality and Female Violence: Future studies could also delve into intersectional approaches, exploring how race, class, and sexuality intersect with gendered violence in Tarantino's films. For instance, how

do the experiences of black female characters in films like *Django Unchained* differ from those of white female protagonists in *Kill Bill* and *Inglourious Basterds*? This could provide a more nuanced understanding of how multiple forms of oppression and resistance are represented.

This study has demonstrated how language in Tarantino's films plays a central role in constructing female violence as a form of empowerment and resistance. Through Fairclough's CDA, we have uncovered the ways in which discourse shapes the agency of female characters and challenges traditional gendered power dynamics. However, the films also reveal the complexities of gendered violence and the tension between empowerment and reinforcement of patriarchal narratives. By examining these films through a linguistic lens, this research contributes to broader discussions of feminist film theory and the ways in which violence can be both a source of power and a site of moral complexity.

Tarantino's films continue to provoke critical discussion, and as such, offer a rich terrain for further exploration of how female characters can both resist and redefine the gendered violence often depicted in modern cinema.

This conclusion synthesizes the key points from the paper, summarizes the contributions to feminist film theory, and suggests potential future research directions.

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