

## POWER AND IDEOLOGY IN SCIENCE FICTION MOVIE BLACK PANTHER: A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

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### **Abstract:**

*Language is the basic feature of any society which reflects its social norms and value. Language and discourse are two-way process. Language shapes our discourse in society and in the same time discourses affect our utterances of words. These two things are inseparable. Media shapes any societies' patterns, values and ideologies. W*

*hat is portrayed through media is deemed as reality while other side of coin is disregarded. Through films, white people superiority is shown but, in this film, completely different approach is employed, where Africans supremacy is emphasized. This research employs critical discourse analysis concept of power and ideology. This research is qualitative in nature where empirical data is not being used. The finding of this research intimates us the progression of black in technology as well as their enriched culture. Africans are not second class, but they are also highly intellectual. The current study shows African- Futurism and their powerful values and traditions. Their language, technology and skills show their modern nature.*

**Keywords: Critical discourse analysis, Ideology, Technology**

### **1.Introduction:**

Discourse is embedded in a particular social context, the study of discourse means studying a social mode of stratification in relation to the language practices of its members. Linguistics phenomena are social in the sense that whatever people speak or listen, they do in ways which are determined socially and have social effects so, Language used in media influences people's perception. It is a two-way process in which language is molding personality of people or thoughts about a particular society in the ways that prefer. On the other hand, our ideologies that are shaped by those who possess power and authority, strengthen the language as well. The Black Panther is about black and white people; this is an imaginary work as it is genre of science fiction. Here, Black people are living in fictitious place, Wakanda. Wakanda is enriched with resources and technology, it possesses most valuable metal, Vibranium, and outside world is not aware of it and white men have perception and prejudice about Africans that they are third world countries.

### **1.1 Science Fictional movie:**

Science fiction is a film genre that uses speculative, fictional science-based depictions of phenomena that are not fully accepted by mainstream science, such as extraterrestrial life forms, spacecraft, robots, mutants, interstellar travel, time travel and other technologies. Science fiction films have often been used to focus on political or social issues to explore philosophical issues like the human conditions.

### **1.2 Vibranium:**

Vibranium is a fictional metal appearing in American comic books, and science fictional movies, notes for its extraordinary abilities to absorb, store and release large amounts of kinetic energy. Mined only in the fictitious kingdom of Wakanda, the metal is associated with the character Black Panther, who wears suits of vibranium and Captain America, who bears a vibranium alloy shield.

### **1.3 Wakanda:**

Wakanda is a fictional country appearing in American comic books, created by Stan Lee and Jack Kirby, the country first appeared in Fantastic Four in 1966. Wakanda is in Sub-Saharan Africa and has been depicted as being in east Africa. It is home to the superhero Black Panther.

### **1.4 Significance of the study:**

Previously a lot of movies were published that is on the conflict of White and Black people. The prevailing situation in all movies is White men idealized and portrayed as heroic character. Black men are deemed as inferior, subordinate and depicting the role of either as salvages or primitive communities. While this research is significant as it discloses Black as superior creature and their progression in technology will put them one step ahead in the race of technological advancement and obliterate the prejudice of white people.

### **1.5 Delimitations of the study:**

There are two movies of Black Panther created by Ryan Coogler. One was in released 2018 and second in 2022. But our research is delimited to 2018 movie.

### **1.6 Research questions:**

- 1: What derogatory words are used by Americans against Africans?
- 2: What ideologies are being disseminated by black people through their linguistics choices?
- 3: How concept of other is represented?
- 4: To analyze visual components regarding superiority of black people?

### **1.7 Objectives:**

- 1: To ensure that Black Africans are enriched in culture and technology.
- 2: To terminate White men ideology of inferiority of Africans.

## **2. Literature Review:**

Conversation analysis (CA) has become a powerful methodology for studying social interaction and its sequential organization in the social sciences and beyond, including sociology, anthropology, linguistics, communication, information, and computer sciences, as well as in applied linguistics. Over five decades of interactional research, the discoveries of the classical studies have been confirmed time and again. Their robustness is unusual in the social sciences and bears witness to the quality of CA's rigorous methodology. **According to (Psatha, 1995)**, CA is a way of seeing the structure of talk in interaction in which social interaction

realized in conversation is observed by identifying how speakers coordinate their conversational productions together in a sequential manner. In CA analysis, some basic assumptions serve as the basic for the inquiry of sequential organization of interaction in conversations. The assumptions cover the situatedness, orderliness and repeatability of a conversation's orientation; and formalization of structures of social action into abstract terms. According to (Agger 1992b; Rasmussen 1996), Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is a type of discourse analytical research that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context. With such dissident research, critical discourse analysts take explicit position, and thus want to understand, expose, and ultimately resist social inequality. Some of the tenets of CDA can already be found in the critical theory of the Frankfurt School before the Second World War. Its current focus on language and discourse was initiated with the "critical linguistics" that emerged at the end of the 1970s (Fowler et al. 1979; see also Mey 1985). CDA has also counterparts in "critical" developments in sociolinguistics, psychology, and the social sciences, some already dating back to the early 1970s (Birnbaum 1971; Calhoun 1995; Fay 1987; Fox and Prilleltensky 1997; Hymes 1972; Ibanez and Iniguez 1997; Singh 1996; Thomas 1993; Turkel 1996; Wodak 1996). As is the case in these neighboring disciplines, CDA may be seen as a reaction against the dominant formal (often "asocial" or "uncritical") paradigms of the 1960s and 1970s. Media discourse refers to interactions that take place through a broadcast platform, whether spoken or written, in which the discourse is oriented to a non-present reader, listener or viewer. It could be written like newspaper or spoken like radio, drama and television. According to (Dorling et.al (2015). **Fundamental Cause Theory (FCT)** research has shown that socioeconomic inequalities differentially distribute health outcomes across demographic groups, and that such differences can persist over time. Individuals with a high socioeconomic status tend to use their resources— e.g., power, knowledge, money, and prestige—to avoid risks and to protect themselves. Recent studies in FCT address how these processes result in long-term social stratification, stigma and discrimination, and structural racism and how these, in turn, affect health outcomes— e.g., by affecting people's chances to access timely and high-quality medical treatments (Dorling, 2015; Rodriguez et al., 2021; Ye and Rodriguez, 2021). According to (Williams et al., 2010) Racism, defined as beliefs, attitudes, institutional arrangements, and acts that tend to denigrate individuals or groups because of phenotypic characteristics or ethnic group affiliation, is evident in the fabric of American society. Recent social and political events have brought to light racial ideologies that have historically affected and continue to heavily affect individuals and social systems in the United States. Racial and ethnic groups continue to experience discrimination at the individual and institutional level. A recent Pew study (2019) indicates that 56% of Whites and 71% of Blacks agree that race relations in the United States are "generally bad" (Horowitz et al., 2019). Various studies report a range of 69.45%–73.62% of Blacks who reported experiencing racial discrimination (Lee et al., 2019). African Americans suffer from discrimination in multiple areas of life, including practices in hiring, health care, housing, lending, education, prosecution, and sentencing (Lee et al., 2019). But this article intimates us about new concept in which Africans are socially, economically, politically superior as compared to white man.

### **3- Research Methodology:**

It could be qualitative or quantitative.

According to Matterud (2003) "Qualitative research method involves the systematic collection, organization and interpretation of textual material derived from talk or observation" This research also employs Qualitative method as it provides in-depth analysis of film Black Panther. It discloses facts in its context and ideologies of different races can be fathom very

easily. That's reason of selecting qualitative research as its methodology. Quantitative method does not employs' here.

### **3.1 What is data:**

Data taken for this research is movie, "Black Panther". There are two movies of this film, one was released in 2018, and other is in 2022. But this article focuses on 2018 movie by Ryan Coogler.

### **3.2 Data Collection:**

Data is collected from online resource:  
Movies Nation-net-Black Panther.2018.

### **3.3 Framework for Present Study:**

#### **Fairclough 3D Model;**

- Norman Fairclough is known as one of the prominent figures in the discussion of language, discourse and society. Fairclough proposes language is a part of society. Furthermore, he also argues that language and society is related not in external sense, rather, they are related internally. In simpler terms, linguistic, according to Fairclough (1989, p.19), is a social process.
- **Fairclough (1989)** also makes distinction between text and discourse, in which he argues that text is form of product, while discourse is the process a social interaction process, where text is a part of it. Furthermore, he also proposes that language is a socially conditioned process, in which text is produced and interpreted and this process is related to the practices of the society.
- Furthermore, in view of language as discourse and social practice, and how language, ideology and identity interrelate to each other, Fairclough develops a model called Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). According to him, this model consists of three dimensional method for discourse analysis.

#### **1. Description (text analysis):**

Description stage in Norman Fairclough's 3D Model deals with the linguistic property of the text.

In description, we read out text and analysis it as well. This is the very first and easy step. In other words, we have to narrate the story of our text. As well as we need to explain the basic them and situation of the text to bring people into view about what we want to say.

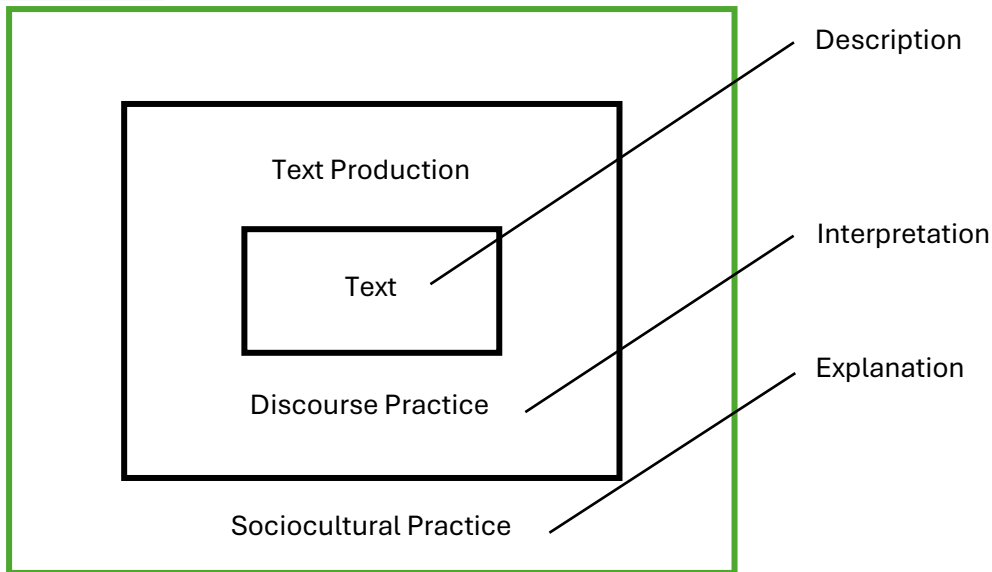
#### **2. Interpretation (processing analysis):**

This stage deals with the relationship between the discursive process of production and interpretation of the text.

In the second step, we analyze institutional practices: what is media domain and political domain, why they use such kinds of aids and its target.

#### **3. Explanation (social analysis):**

In this stage, we deal with the analysis of relationship between the processes (production and interpretation) and the social conditioning.



### **3.4 Data Analysis:**

#### **1. What derogatory words are used by Americans against Africans?**

**News: the tiny nation of wakanda is mourning the death of its king T-Chaka. The beloved ruler was one of many confirmed dead after a terrorist attack at the United States a week ago. The suspect has since been apprehended though it remains one of the poorest countries in the world fortified by mountain ranges and an impenetrable rainforest. Wakanda does not engage in international trade or accept aid. The succession of throne is expected to fall to son Prince T-Challa.**

In these lines, King T-Chaka death is confirmed after having parliamentary meeting. During that event, a news reporter is announcing on TV King T-Chaka's death who is the leader of Wakanda. The derogatory words that are used are apparent Wakanda is primitive land which is beyond the race of developed countries. Fairclough proposed model which is known as 3-Dimensional model consist of three points.

1: Description. 2: Interpretation. 3: Explanation.

Description represents text analysis while interpretation depicts process analysis while explanation shows social analysis. That is stretch of sentences beyond its level. In other words, we can say it discourse. Here description shows derogatory comments of Americans while discourse means our conception and perception of world. Perception is made through language. As it is said that there is not any reality. Reality is constructed through language. (Benjamin Lee Whorf)

So, Americans is trying to depict negative image of Africans who are beyond advancement level. These are slaves and there intellectual or mental level is beyond or lower than others who could never engrossed their selves in international trades as their economy is going to be very low. This kind of news is terminating their level of esteem.

**Klaue: What do you know about Wakanda.**

**Ross: Shepherd, textiles, cool outfits.**

**Klaue: It is all illusion. Explorers searched for it for centuries, E1 Dorado, the golden city. They thought they could find it in South America. But it was in Africa this whole time. A technological marvel, A most valuable metal, The vibranium.**

**Ross: Vibranium, the strongest metal.**

**Klaue: It is not just a metal. They sew it into their clothes. It powers their city, their technology, their weapons.**

**Ross: That's a nice fairy tale but Wakanda is a third world country.**

Here the conversion is going to take place between Americans Agent Everet Ross who is investigating a criminal Ulysses Klaue about stealing from museum. As a result, possesses innumerable power that's reason Agent Ross investigating about it. In previous analysis, we intimate about prejudiced concept of Americans / Britishers that Africans are subordinate, subservient. So, the same concept is prevailing here as well. Here Agent Ross is also the product of society and made predications that Black people could never possess something that is precarious, valuable or worthy.

**E.B White Says: Prejudice is a great time saver. You can form opinions without having to get facts.**

**2. What ideologies are being disseminated by black people through their linguistics choices?**

**Ross: Right is this Wakanda? How long a ago is Korea?**

**Shuri: Yesterday.**

**Ross: I don't think so, Bullets wounds don't just magically heal overnight.**

**Shuri: They do here. But not by magic by technology.**

**Ross: These train things are magnetic levitation right?**

**Shuri: Obviously.**

**Ross: Obviously, But I have never seen it this efficient. The light panels, what are they?**

**Shuri: Sonic stabilizers.**

**Ross: Sonic what?**

**Shuri: In its raw form vibranium is too dangerous to be transported at that speed so I developed a way to deactivate it.**

**Ross: There is vibranium on those trains?**

**Shuri; There is vibranium all around us. That's how I healed you.**

According to Fairclough 3D model of CDA, our language constructs reality. It's a two-way process language makes perception about world. That perception or concepts are then strengthening the language. Here Africans are endeavouring to shatter the concept of white people that they are primitive and devoid of any technology. As it is a science fictional movie, it depicts **William Wordsworth concept of Suspension of Disbelief** that shows that although it is unreal, but audience thought for some period of time that it is real. So here Black people are represented by Ryan Coogler as superior and advanced in technology. Shuri is the sister of T'chaka and has lab which is very lavish. Ross who is shot and she healed her overnight by using vibranium. Next day Ross is flabbergasted to look at his wound healed and his expressions are inscrutable after eyeing through lab. Shuri is intimating about vibranium transporting through train.

**My name is King T'challa son of King T'chaka. I am the sovereign ruler of the nation of wakanda. And for the first time we will be sharing our knowledge and resources with outside world. Wakanda will no longer watch from the shadows. We cannot we must not. We will work to be example of how we as brother and, sister on earth should treat each other. Now more than ever the illusion of division threaten our very existence. But in time of crisis the wise build bridges while foolish build barriers. We must find a way to look after one another as if we are one single tribe.**

T'challa is addressing in parliament that is teemed with black as well as white leaders of world. He emphasizes on equality that years of oppression on need to be abolished and equality need to be prevailed.

**Luther. M says;**

**I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.**

T'challa also incorporating this ideology to all that distinction must not be made on the basis of skin color. Here in this movie power is in hands of black people. They have platform to speak. They are not marginalized.

### 3. How is the concept of other represented?

**Queen mother: My son is killed.**

**M'Baku: It is in ritual combat. It is not a murder but defeat.**

**Ross: Your highness! The new king is.**

**M'Baku: Ho, ho, ho, ho.....You can't talk. One more world. I will feed you to my children. I am kidding. We are vegetarians. You are outside. So don't speak again.**

Fairclough text description employs that text has some kind of meaning. In these lines Africans are calling themselves are us while White man as other.

**Gayatri Spivak Concept" Can Subaltern Speak"** Where subaltern means marginalized, lower, subordinate, subservient people. Mostly colonizers are superior as compared to colonized while here colonizers are subalterns who has not given opportunity to speak. As M'Baku says not to talk in our matters as you are other.

### 4. To analyze visual components regarding superiority of Africans?



Here American agent Ross is flabbergasted to see advanced technologies of African people. And Shuri is engrossed in formulation of new devices. The ideologies that are constructed by our society that black people are primitive, conservative, backward and unable to compete with modern world is obliterated are constructed through language and makes permanent images in mind. We can take another example as well after 9/11 event, **Islamophobia** concept is prevailed Muslims are called terrorist because of their religion. Although this is not reality. Same is the case with black and white conflict. The novel **Heart of Darkness by Joseph Conrad (1899)** also depicts the negative picture of Africans. But that stereotypes are now abolished as black people are advanced in technology where American is bewildered after seeing such progressive works.



In this picture Vibranium is transported to another place and Shuri is intimating Ross about event.



**These pictures are of their lab that is advanced in technology. Vibranium is transported through train.**

### 3.5 Findings

White people are embarrassing Africans on different situations after having predetermined concept that is shaped by society that Africans are barbarians, animalistic and primitive nation. On the other hand, Africans work efficiently in advanced technologies, and they are living in future and possess most valuable metal vibranium. They disseminate these ideologies to the world. At the end, conference held in parliament where King T'challa addresses the different nations without giving them color of racism to them. There is also emphasize of otherness where White call them as "us" while Africans as "them". Same concept is prevailing in some tribes of Africans as well. And lastly achievements of Wakanda's citizens are also represented through pictures as well.

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