NEAR EAST UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTE OF GRADUATE STUDIES

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

IDENTITY ENACTMENT IN *WHAT COMES WITH THE DUST*

MASTER THESIS

Arsalan Afrasyaw Fatah

Nicosia

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Approval

We certify that we have read the thesis submitted by **Arsalan Afrasyaw Fatah** titled "**Identity Enactment in *What Comes with the Dust***" and that in our combined opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts.

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Declaration

I hereby declare that all information, documents, analysis, and results in this thesis have been collected and presented according to the academic rules and ethical guidelines of the Institute of Graduate Studies, Near East University. I also declare that as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced information and data that are not original to this study.

Arsalan Afrasyaw Fatah

24/ 5 /2022

Acknowledgments

Abstract

Identity Enactment in *What Comes with the Dust*
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Using a discourse analysis tool (Gee, 2010) to examine identity building in discourse, this qualitative study was conducted to investigate female identity building in a selected Iraqi novel, to examine how the author constructed identities for the heroine. The selected novel is an Iraqi novel originally written in English titled *What Comes with the Dust* by Gharbi M. Mustafa (2017). Due to its remarkable representation of Iraqi women in general and Yazidi women in particular in the Iraqi context after the ISIS war, it was chosen to be the object of this study. By sampling extracts from the chosen novel, this study focused on utterances where the novelist described the heroine and dialogues that the heroine had with others. In his choice of words, word organization, use of descriptive words, positive adjectives, repetition of sounds or words and creating rhythm, the author created specific patterns of language and used them to construct identities for the heroine depending on the context. Based on the findings, the author used four main patterns of language: *victim/resistor* pattern to construct for the heroine a resisting victim identity; *stronger-than-others* pattern to reinforce her identity as a resistant; *feminine-language* pattern to portray her as a female; and *Yazidi-language* pattern to depict her as a Yazidi woman.

Key Words*:* female identity, discourse, discourse analysis, character, representation, Iraqi contemporary novel, Iraqi novels written in English.

ÖZ

What Comes with the Dust de Kimlik İnşası
Fatah, Arsalan
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Danışman: Yrd. Prof. Dr. Zeynep Akşit
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Söylemde kimlik inşasını incelemek için bir söylem analizi aracı (Gee, 2010) kullanan bu nitel çalışma, seçilmiş bir Irak romanında kadın kimliği inşasını araştırmak ve yazarın kadın kahraman için kimlikleri nasıl inşa ettiğini incelemek için yapılmıştır. Seçilen roman, Gharbi M. Mustafa (2017) tarafından yazılan *What Comes with the Dust* adlı İngilizce yazılmış bir Irak romanıdır. IŞİD savaşından sonra Irak bağlamında genel olarak Iraklı kadınları ve özelde Ezidi kadınları dikkate değer temsili göz önüne alındığında, bu çalışmanın konusu olarak seçilmiştir. Bu çalışmada, seçilen romandan alıntılar yapılarak romancının kadın kahramanı betimlediği sözler ve kadın kahramanın başkalarıyla kurduğu diyaloglar üzerinde durulmuştur. Yazar, kelime seçiminde, kelime organizasyonunda, tanımlayıcı kelimelerin kullanımında, olumlu sıfatlar, seslerin veya kelimelerin tekrarında ve ritim oluşturmada belirli dil kalıpları yaratmış ve bunları, bağlama bağlı olarak kadın kahraman için kimlikleri inşa etmek için kullanmıştır. Bulgulara dayanarak, yazar dört ana dil kalıbı kullanmıştır: kadın kahraman için direnen bir kurban kimliği inşa etmek için "kurban/direnç" model; kadın kahramanın bir direniş olarak kimliğini pekiştirmek için "diğerlerinden daha güçlü" bir model; onu bir kadın olarak tasvir etmek için "dişil-dil" kalıbı; ve onu Ezidi bir kadın olarak tasvir etmek için "Ezidi dilinde" desen.

Anahtar Kelimeler: kadın kimliği, söylem, söylem analizi, karakter, temsil, Irak çağdaş romanı, İngilizce yazılmış Irak romanları.

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Abbreviations

DA: Discourse Analysis

ISIS: Islamic State of Iraq and Syria

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

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Introduction

This chapter provides information about the background and aim of the study, details the problem statement, the research aims and its questions, as well as the importance and the limitations of the study.

Background of the Study

According to Dora (2021), over the past years, the Iraqi people have witnessed a large number of crises and wars, including economic crises, sectarian war, and the war against the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), which led to the destabilization of people, displacement, and migration. This is in addition to the pressures and problems that, according to Al-Zubaidi (2019), resulting from the patriarchal discourse that governs society, and the neoliberalism that dominated the Iraqi economy after 2003. The impact of these wars and difficulties on minorities was not less. According to studies, including a study by Goodman, Bergbower, Perrotte, and Chaudhary (2020), the ISIS attacks and recent crises have had the most negative impact on the Yezidis.

The Yazidis are a Kurmanji-speaking minority who believe in the Yazidi religion and most of them live in Kurdistan. There is dispute among scientists and within Yazidi circles as to whether the Yazidis are a distinct ethnic or religious group or a religious subgroup of the Kurds (Kreyenbroek, Rashow and Jindī, 2005). According to Allison (2017), since the beginning the Islamic conquests in the

seventh century, the Yazidis have faced persecution and Muslim clerics have usually accused their religious practices of heresy. Most recently, the Islamic State in 2014 carried out a genocide against the Yazidis in which thousands of Yazidis were killed and thousands of Yazidi women forced into sexual slavery, as well as the displacement of thousands of them (Suvari, 2018).

Wars and crises had significant negative effects on the Iraqi people in general and on Iraqi women in particular, including minorities. All these scenes were not far from the eyes of the Iraqi novelists. Iraqi literature was not only a witness to all these events but was also a mirror that largely reflected this period. Hence, due to the political events that swept Iraq and caused crises, sectarian strife, loss of security, murder, terrorism and violence, contemporary Iraqi novels turned into war literature.

The most prominent themes of contemporary Iraqi novels are the representation of contemporary Iraqi issues, such as the brutality of war, sexual abuse, the problem of minorities, the penetration of ideologies, women's difficulties, representation, and the problem of identity. Examples of these include *Frankenstein in Baghdad* by Ahmed Saadawi, *Homes: A Refugee Story* by Abu Bakr Al-Rabeeah and Winnie Yeung, *The last of the angels* by Fadhil Al Azzawi, and *I Stared at the Night of the City* by Bachtyar Ali. Among all of these themes, the representation of female identities is what this study will focus on because there are very limited studies that shed light on women's voices and women's identities in Iraqi literature. Thus, an investigation of the female identities represented in a contemporary Iraqi novel originally written in English will illustrates a lingual aspect of female identity building in Iraqi narration and help us understand how Iraqi novelists in contemporary Iraqi narratives tend to construct female identities in the current context.

By following the pattern of Gee's (2010) discourse analysis, through his analytical lens of identity construction analysis, this study will examine the author's construction of female identities in a contemporary Iraqi novel written in English, namely *What Comes with the Dust* by Gharbi M. Mustafa (2017). The reason for choosing this novel is that it is a contemporary Iraqi novel that represents the problematic contemporary issues of the Iraqi people in general and Iraqi women in particular. In addition, the selected novel is a good representation of the problems faced by Yazidi women recently.

Gharbi Muhammad Mustafa's *What Comes with the Dust* has received many positive reviews and has attracted readers from all over the world. The novel was published in 2017. It is an exciting and vigorous literary work, reflecting Iraqi culture and its dilemmas, and revealing the Yazidi genocide and the resolve for their survival. The selected text focuses primarily on women and their indomitable determination to survive in the face of unbearable hardships.

Statement of the Problem

The analysis of female identities in literary texts has been and remains important in research studies, but it has been marginalized in Iraqi literature: there is very limited scientific research on the portrayal of women and the manifestation of their identity in Iraqi literary texts. This created a prominent gap in the literature which this study aims to fill. In addition, the selected novel not only focus on women's identities but also to women within minority in the face of war. Thus, shedding light on the representation of females within a given minority in the Iraqi literature context will be essential.

Purpose of the Study

      This study aims to investigate female identities represented in a contemporary Iraqi novel originally written in English: *What Comes with the Dust* by Gharbi M. Mustafa (2017). Shedding light on the depiction of female identities illustrated by the novelist for the heroine of the selected novel is the main purpose of this study. Relying on a discourse analysis approach, following Gee's (2010) analytical lens of identities building through the use of language, the current research attempts to reveal the writer's use of specific language patterns to show how he created particular identities for the selected female character and her relationships with others.

Research Questions

- How does the author of the selected novel construct identities for the heroine?

Sub-questions:

- What identities does the novelist portray to the chosen female character?

- How does the novelist construct identities for the heroine through his description of her?

- How does the novelist construct identities for the heroine through the heroine's dialogues with others?

Significance of the Study

      Analysing female identities in literary texts was and still is significant in international research, but it has not received attention within Iraqi literature. This research will be the first of its kind within the context of Iraqi literature written in

English. The results of this research will provide a better understanding of how the contemporary Iraqi novel constructs female identities. Therefore, it will be an important source for students and researchers interested in the representation of women's identity in Iraqi fiction.

This study is significant because it sheds light on the female identities represented in contemporary Iraqi narrative, and presents aside the portrayal of women in contemporary Iraqi fiction. Thus, Iraqi women can benefit from it to understand how contemporary Iraqi narratives portray them, since, according to Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarule (1986), females are affected in their self-perception by what they read.

The chosen character that this research focuses on is the heroine of the chosen novel, a Yazidi girl who is mainly oppressed by ISIS. The results of this research will help scholars understand how contemporary Iraqi narratives represent Yazidi women and their suffering. In addition, this study will be a good resource for those researchers interested in analysing discourse and the way people use language to construct identities.

Limitations

The study was limited to identifying the female identities represented in only Iraqi novel originally written in English. The reason for this was that according to Chilton (2004), discourse analysis (DA) study should be conducted on an original language text, not on a translated text, and because this study is oriented in English, it should focus only on novels written originally in English.

Definition of Terms

Female identity: characteristics, beliefs, personality, appearance, and expressions that represent the female person (Colacurcio, 2012). This study adopts Gee's (2010) definition of identity which sees identity as "being recognized as a certain 'kind of person,' in a given context."

Character: in fiction, a character is an individual or other being in a narrative. The character may be completely fictitious or based on a real person (DiBattista, 2011).

Representation: the characterization or illustration of a person or object in a certain way (Jovchelovitch, 2019).

Discourse: is a generalization of the concept of a conversation to any form of communication. To Foucault (2005), discourse is a system of thought, knowledge, and communication that builds our experience of the world. This study adopts Gee's (2014) definition of discourse that refers to language-in-use and reflects sort of "identity kit."

Discourse analysis: is a method to analyse a written, vocal, or sign language use, or any kind of communication. (Tannen, 2012). The present study follows Gee's (2010) definition of discourse analysis which see it as analysis of spoken and written language as it is used to provoke social and cultural perspectives and identities.

Contemporary Iraqi novels: Although scientific research did not specify exactly when the contemporary Iraqi novel began, and there are different opinions about it. However, this study adopts the definition that most researchers of Iraqi literature generally agree on, which is that the contemporary Iraqi novel begins with the fall of the Baath regime in 2003. Because, as Hamedawi (2017) explains in her research, the Iraqi narration after the fall of the Saddam regime witnessed radical and

wide changes and acquired modern features completely different from what came before.

Iraqi novels written in English: novels originally written in English by Iraqi writers. With the rise of globalization, the spread of English throughout the world, the migration of Iraqis to the West and the formation of the Iraqi diaspora abroad, Iraqi novels crossed the borders of Kurdish and Arabic and a number of literary works and novels that originally written in English emerged.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter discusses the theories included in the study, discourse analysis, and the identities and relationships building tools of Gee (2010), to give readers a comprehensive understanding of the study. In addition, previous studies on female identities in novels and contemporary Iraqi narratives are reviewed, since the present study engages with those two concepts. The focus on literature limited by date of publications. According to Okoli and Schabram (2010), reviewing literature can be limited by date of publications. Therefore, in this research, the most relevant studies conducted after 2005 are ordered according to their year of publication from oldest to newest.

Theoretical Framework

This study aims to conduct discourse analysis through Gee's (2010) theoretical framework to understand how female identities were built in a selected contemporary Iraqi novel originally written in English. His framework provides an analytical lens to analyse how identities are built through the use of particular language structures.

Discourse

Jaworski and Coupland (2014) describe discourse as the use of language concerning social, political, and cultural genesis. According to them, discourse is

language that reflects social order, and it is also the language that shapes social order and shapes the interaction of individuals with society. Foucault (1984, 1989), who writes extensively on discourse, shows that discourse is produced according to social and institutional rules and arrangements that allow some types of statements to be made and prohibit others.

For Foucault, discourses provide people with ways to represent themselves and what they desire, feel and think. Moreover, Foucault's basic assumption is that people's identities, experiments, concepts, and sensations are socially constructed and that the basic position of such a construction is the discursive interchange that takes place between people using culturally available discourses (McNay, 2013). Furthermore, according to Weedon (1997), discourse is where social frameworks and mental outlooks are formed and patriarchal interests are safeguarded. Weedon proposes that to change the existing patriarchal power relations, one needs to grasp the network of discourses that underpin the significance and standards of dominant structures and the power relations between them. In addition, Weedon (1997) confirms that social structures organized by various institutions such as families, churches, legislation and pedagogical order drop into a particular field of discourse. However, this study agrees to Gee's (2014) simplification of discourse that see it as language-in-use; which is, in other words, the use of language according to the different contexts, and the combination of language with other social practices such as behaviours, values, and perspectives.

Discourse Analysis

According to Gee (2010), discourse analysis (DA) is an analysis of language-in-use, which means a set of principles, priorities, and expectancies that connect

language to context. The interest in DA is not limited to the study of formal characteristics of language. It also takes into account which languages are used in social and cultural contexts (Kamalu and Osisanwo, 2015). Therefore, discourse analysis examines the relationship between a language and the context in which it is used. The text must be perceived as coherent. According to Cook (2011), discourse does not have to be grammatically correct, it can be anything from grunts and simple taunts to short conversations and scribbled notes, novels, and long court battles. The decisive factor is not whether it complies with the rules, but the fact that it communicates and is perceived to be consistent by the recipient.

Jaworski and Coupland (2014) highlight that by examining language one can recognize social relations and how specific meanings arose and became norms in their own right. Consequently, DA considers the given details of the discursive actions that constitute predominant discourses to reveal specific systems of power and knowledge that constitute identities (Norton, 2010).

DA is a widespread method of qualitative research in many humanities and social fields. It is used to examine the language written or spoken concerning its social context. It attempts to comprehend how the language is utilized in actual conditions. Hence, the scope of the work of discourse analysis is to investigate the role of cultures, beliefs, and assumptions in language, and the intentions and effectiveness of various kinds of language (Song, 2010).

According to Carranza (2000), DA is also concerned with the non-linguistic aspects of social interaction. It deals with identity at two levels: self as a unique and the self as a member of diverse social groups. On the one hand, self-attributed to different social roles, situations, and groups is dynamic, plural, and contains conflicts. In addition, the social interactions that texts create have always been the

primary focus of attention, and in this regard, the crucial point on which discourse analysis must focus are the motives and influences that energize a person and create his or her own identity. Nevertheless, the current study adheres to Gee's (2010) version of discourse analysis that takes into account how language, both spoken and written, activates social and cultural perspectives and identities.

Identities and Relationship Building Tools

Identity is frequently described as a feeling of belonging to an individual's social group; hence, discourse analysts emphasize that language plays an intrinsic role in expressing and composing this feeling of belonging. Anthropologist Paul Kroskrity (1999) describes identity as the lingual formation of belonging to social groups.

According to Gee (2004), to have an identity is to be recognised as a certain type of person in a particular context. For Gee (2000), identities differ based on social and cultural perspectives, and he identifies four such perspectives, each of which is influenced by different forms of power. Gee (2000) describes them as four ways to formulate questions about how a particular person's identity works in a given context. The first of Gee's (2000) identity perspectives is what he calls "nature identities" which represent the kind of identities that people cannot control because they come from forces of nature, such as gender identity: being male or female. The second one is institutional identities, which refer to the identities that are determined by the authorities within the institution; for example, being a student, is an identity determined by an institution such as a school that has rules for the student to follow. The third group that Gee (2000) identifies is the "discursive identities," which refer to individual quality, such as care. Whereas the final one is "affinity identities,"

which are constructed through shared experiences as part of an affinity group, which according to Gee's (2000) definition is a group that shares specific practices. The table below illustrates the four identity types from Gee's (2000) point of view.

Table 1.

Four types of identity in Gee's (2000) theoretical framework

Identities	Sources of power	Description	Examples
Nature-Identity	Sources in nature	The condition of the individual from the physical point of view.	Gender, race, physical abilities
Institutional-Identity	Authorities within institutions	Official designations issued by institutions.	Officer, teacher, nationality
Discourse-Identity	Speech and act of/with individuals	Individual's speech with others and its content.	The use of language, vernacular, slang
Affinity-Identity	Practices of groups	Individuals engaging with specific groups and practices.	Fans of a team, friends, lovers, brothers, and sisters

In Gee's (2010) view, language is used from a contextually linguistic perspective. As there is no neutral use of language from the surrounding environment, Gee considers that meaning is socially constructed within discourse communities. Gee (2010) states that each type of discourse can have specific advantages that distinguish it from other discourses. For example, if a person in a family whose members are all working in the law field establishes a particular discourse, that discourse is most likely to be a political nature.

For Gee (2010), identities are not constant or static concepts, but they are continuously changeable and fully dynamic. Moreover, individuals might take on multiple identities depending on the different roles they have to function in the community. Therefore, based on Gee's (2010) theory, people act as multiple

identities in different contexts; they follow different ways of speaking, listening, reading, and writing; they interact, feel, think and act in different ways depending on the context in which they are in relation to time and place. For instance, one can be a doctor and a father at the same time, but the language a person uses to be defined as a doctor might be different from the language a person uses as a father.

Gee (2014) argued that discourse helps people create their own identities in a variety of situations, as well as those of others they invite to adopt. According to him, individuals utilize language to construct various identities for their own in distinct contexts; they also construct identities for others. Successively, they use the identities they build for others to reinforce the work they do to build their own. Therefore, to shed light on identities constructed in a given communication, Gee states that researchers should ask the following:

> ...what socially recognizable identity or identities the speaker is trying to enact or to get others to recognize. Ask also how the speaker's language treats other people's identities, and what sorts of identities the speaker recognizes for others' relationship to his or her own. Ask, too, how the speaker is positioning others, and what identities the speaker is 'inviting' them to take up. (Gee, 2014, p. 110)

According to Gee (2014), people utilize language to build and maintain many types of relationships: relationships with others, groups, and foundations. Because the identities that one constructs for oneself are overwhelmingly determined by how one sees and interpret one's relationship with others, social groups and cultures, the mission of constructing relationships is thus obviously linked to constructing identities. Moreover, people deal with others according to the various identities that they give to them. For example, one will speak and behave towards the other

differently if he or she views his/her relationship with the other as a fellow rather than a friend; one will even treat a person differently when communicating with that person as a fellow and when communicating with the same person as a friend. Therefore, investigating how people construct their relationships with others is another way of examining how people construct their own identities.

For this reason, Gee (2010) proposes a tool for analysing how people construct their relationships, and advises researchers interested in such an investigation to ask about any communication and how different words and grammatical devices are used to build, maintain, or change relationships of various kinds between people.

Related Research

Previous Literature on Female Identities in Novels

In a book titled *Female Identity in Contemporary Zimbabwean Fiction*, Berndt (2005) examined selected novels from Zimbabwe through the lens of postcolonial feminist theory. She chose the novels based on the space allotted to the female characters in them. Her book contains five chapters and a summary. In the first two introductory chapters, she focuses on social, historical, and literary backgrounds and building female identities in postcolonial studies, whilst the remaining three chapters focus on art genres. Guided by Homi Bhabha's notion of the "Knowing Subject," Berndt provides a comprehensive outline of English Zimbabwean novels. Her research deals with Zimbabwean English literature, focusing primarily on female characters written by men or women, and she explores what she defines as the various "identity layers" of female heroines. According to her

findings, culture layers such as cultural values, beliefs, and worldviews have a great impact on shaping female identities and crate identity layers such as "superficial layer," "personality layer" and "deep layer." What Berndt's book has in common with this research is that they both examine female identities in novels from countries where English is not the native language but the novels are written in English. While the difference is that she examines the contemporary Zimbabwean novels from a postcolonial perspective, this research examines the contemporary Iraqi novel from Gee's analytical lens. This is despite the fact that the heroine of the selected novel for this study belongs to the Yezidi minority.

Chen (2010) researched depicting women in Jane Austen's novel *Pride and Prejudice*. The researcher took adjectives and nouns into account for her primary mission in depiction, and therefore, chose adjectives and nouns that describe three main characters and separated them into two major categories: a category for those that describe exterior qualities and another that describes interior qualities. According to specific adjectives and names, various fictional portraits of three female figures have been focused on. Moreover, possible reasons affecting the author's way of depicting female characters have been discussed. According to her findings, the female characters of *Pride and Prejudice* are portrayed in a positive way. Although the three female characters have different images in the novel, it does not affect the author's formal and polite language style. Based on the collected adjectives and nouns, the researcher assumes that Elizabeth Bennet is portrayed as a beautiful, graceful and pioneering lady. Whereas for Mrs. Bennet, Austin's use of negative terms is almost equal to her positive terms. As for Charlotte Lucas, more positive terms were given than negative ones. Chen's study is similar to the present study in that it also examines the portrayal of female characters in novels. However,

her research object and her framework are different from this study, because her research object is the three characters of Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* and the framework she followed is to collect and compare positive and negative names and pronouns. While the object of this study is the heroine of Gharbi's *What Comes with the Dust* and its framework is to analyse discourse in order to find out how the heroine's identity is constructed.

Regarding female identity in Indonesian literature, Putra (2011) conducted a study to investigate the changes that occurred in the portrayal of women's identity in Indonesian literature in the twentieth century. According to the findings, there had been great changes in the way women characters were portrayed during that century; in literary works from the period of the colonial revolution, almost all female characters are pictured as incapable under patriarchal social and cultural domination, while in the contemporary literary works, female characters are portrayed as resistors and fearless. According to the writer, this transformation in representing females from oppression to resistance defies the acceptable portrait of women as submissive and sexual objects and also suggests a modernistic direction to defining the Indonesian female identity. Investigating the portrayal of female identity in the novels is one of the similarities between Putra's study and this one. The difference, however, is that his research focuses on Indonesian novels while this one focuses on Iraqi novels. He compared two periods of Indonesian novels, while this study is not comparative but presents one Iraqi novel written in English.

Al-Zubaidy and Abdulridha (2015) conducted a study to illustrate the post-colonial impact on women's representation in formerly colonial countries. This study discusses the impact of cultural variation on the conditions and identities of multicultural women. Their study is an inquisitive research study of a modern novel

titled *A Sky so Close* by Iraqi writer Batoul Al-Kadiri. The focus is on the conflict between two distinct cultures and heritages and their impact on the heroine's existence and identity. According to their findings, the identity of the heroine was shaped by Eastern and Western cultures, yet it was not fully accepted by either. This created a hybrid identity and led to the heroine's lack of belonging. The similarities of their study with this one is that they too examine female identity in contemporary Iraqi novels and consider the impact of conflicts on the construction of feminine identity. The differences, however, are that their study considers clashes of cultures rather than military, political, and economic clashes. At the same time, their research is from a post-colonial perspective, but the perspective used in this study is discourse analysis from Gee's perspective.

Another related study is a study by McCombs (2019) to explore female identities in British literature during the interwar period. The researcher examined the narratives of that period through the lens of feminist narration to investigate the narrative tools of the texts, characters and standpoints as they relate to gender. The researcher explained how to employ the feminist narrative perspective while analysing a text and linking it to understanding feminine identities. According to the finding of McCombs' study, over the interwar period, women in Britain faced inconsistent roles and identities. While the men were fighting in the war, the women who worked at home were able to go out and take on some minor roles, jobs, and leadership positions, which caused the emergence of social changes. Therefore, according to McCombs, literature written by women writers in the interwar period symbolizes the strife of female identities for voice, strength and getting rid of social injustice.

Marchyshyna and Skrypnyk (2021) conducted a study to recognize female identities in terms of independence and interdependence as stereotypical features in Anne Oakley's novels. According to researchers, Anne Oakley's fictional discourse exhibits a wide range of gender identities that reflect societal paradigms. As a result of their research, through the lexical and stylistic interpretation of the content of the texts, they discover that Oakley's female characters are energetic in building their own lives; they are powerful, crucial, facile and intent.

Previous Literature on Contemporary Iraqi Novels

Investigating contemporary Iraqi narratives, Kashou (2013) conducted a study to explore themes of war and exile in selected contemporary Iraqi novels written by Iraqi women. According to the findings, the discourse and themes of the Iraqi female narrators were the war and the tense political situation that confronted Iraq in the last decades. The researcher argued that war and exile dominated the discourse of Iraqi women and became the centre of their themes. Kashou argues that contemporary female novelists depict Iraqi people's adversity and a war story, and by that, they transfer a considerable voice. Kashou's study examines the themes of war and exile in contemporary Iraqi novels, but this research examines the construction of female identity.

Hamedawi (2017) conducted a study to investigate the background and inspirational roots of Iraqi post-colonial narratives. The researcher provided a short overview of the Iraqi novels before 2003, and she then focused on two literary periods: the period following the 2003 US infestation of Iraq, and those that followed 2014 and the events that followed. By detailing and analysing selected novels from both durations, the researcher attempts to shed light on how the post-colonial identity

of the Iraqi novels was established. Hamedawi's research focuses on the gloomy content of contemporary Iraqi novels; it also sheds light on the impact of the 2003 war and the conquest of ISIS on Iraqi narratives from various viewpoints. According to Hamedawi's study, in the pre-2003 period, there are two types of novels. One type is written inside Iraq and surrenders to the regime's discourse, while a small number of them resort to metaphor and description to express their protest. The other type is written outside Iraq and exposes the violations of Saddam Hussein's regime. As for the post-2003 period, a new wave of novels came out which deal with the radical changes brought about by the 2003 invasion.

Bilal (2018) conducted a comparative study of modern Iraqi war literature by applying Butler's notion of dehumanization and Nussbaum's notion of objectification to selected works, and the research claims that combat and despotism dehumanize Iraqi people. According to the article, art has been misused as a political arm to force other identities on the Iraqi people. The researcher found that the selected novelists Sinan Antoon and Batool Khedairi succeeded in expressing the Iraqi pains such as post-war devastation, famine, migration, and their novels painted a clear picture of the lives of Iraqis under war and dictatorship.

On the same path of examining contemporary Iraqi novels, based on chosen novels of Iraqi female writers of the twenty-first century, Maśko (2018) conducted a study to illustrate the issue of Iraqi female isolation. The first section of the research contains overall information on the innovative developments of female Iraqi novelists since the late 1990s, as well as some comments on how to portray women characters. While the second section of the study presents examples of stories about lonely women, and the third section introduces the story of Riyām, the protagonist of the Iraqi novel Riyām wa-Kafā. According to Maśko's findings, after 2003, the prose

novels written by Iraqi women writers flourished, as they were no longer constrained by state censorship. They pay special attention to women's experiences in times of war and economic sanctions. Based on the findings, Loneliness is one of the experiences that Iraqi women writers often deal with. Which, according to the researcher, reflects the real experience of women's isolation that is widespread in Iraqi society due to the loss of their loved ones who die at the war front, during bombings and explosions, or migrate. The relationship between the Maśko study and the current research is that both study the conditions of women in contemporary Iraqi novels, but the difference is that Maśko's study is concerned with presenting Iraqi female themes not Iraqi female identities.

In a different study, Jubair and bin Abu (2019) have aimed to analyse contemporary Iraqi novels. Their research reconnoitres the historical evolution of the Iraqi narrations by highlighting the most important themes of Iraqi novels over three periods: duration of Saddam's authority, duration of expatriation, and duration of after 2003. According to their findings, in the duration of Saddam's authority, literature was pointed by the regime and glorified the leaders. While in the duration of expatriation -where many Iraqis forcibly move overseas departing their land and all they owned- new experiences appeared and reflected various topics. Eventually, in the duration of after 2003, novels prospered due to the variety of themes that arise. Although their research is a study of contemporary Iraqi novels, it did not seek to investigate the way women's identities are formed in Iraqi novels, but rather outlined the general characteristics of three periods of Iraqi novels.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, the research design that was used to conduct this study is discussed in detail.

Research Design

This study adopted a qualitative method, which, according to Hennink, Hutter, and Bailey (2020), involves collecting and analysing non-numerical data to comprehend ideas, perspectives, and experiences and it is generally applied in the humanities and social sciences. This method is focused on non‑numerical data; thus, it is utilized to comprehend the beliefs experiences, manners and demeanours of a commune. According to Sherman and Webb (1990), qualitative research deals with the thought and behavior of people in a social setting and investigates and evaluates a wide range of human phenomena. They discussed that qualitative research studies human behavior holistically by delving into phenomena. According to Macmillan and Schumacher (2006), qualitative research adopts the philosophy that posits that reality is a social construct, an interactive, multi-layered social experience, interpreted by people, and it is people who derive and ascribe meanings to particular events and people. According to Creswell (1994), qualitative research extracts the meanings, experiences, and perceptions of individuals about the nature of a particular phenomenon. The main goal of qualitative research is to grasp social life and the meanings that individuals attach to daily life. From this perspective, qualitative research is concerned with comprehension, not interpretation.

Analytical Framework

Following Gee's (2010) analytical lens framework, precisely "the identities building tool" and "the relationships building tool," this study investigated the identities constructed by the author of the heroine of the Iraqi novel *What Comes with the Dust* written by Gharbi M. Mustafa.

In the modern world, sociologists view identity as a raw material for understanding individuals, institutions, and society. Identity has been assimilated in many ways in the literature. However, Gee (2000) focuses more on how people act and define themselves than on the influence of external motivations on their identities. He defines identity as an existence that is recognized as a certain character inside specific circumstances, which enables it to shift depending on situations. He provides an analytical lens for inspecting identity from various standpoints. He mentions four methods of evaluating identities. The first one is Nature-Identity, which is, according to him, a condition that arose from the powers of nature. In this case, nature, something out of control of the person and people around is the resource of power. The procedure by which this type of identity is created is the growth of a feature or a natural capacity. The second one is Institution-Identity, which is a post given by the forces inside a certain institution. In this case, the identity is derived from a position. According to Gee (2000), the various types of rules and principles of institutions are the process through which this force operates. Institutions work to ensure that the people who hold this kind of identity are known as representatives of those institutions. The third one is Discourse-Identity, which is a personal characteristic acknowledged in discourse. In this case, the speech of the people around us defines our identities. In other words, people recognize this personal identity in a particular individual and admit it in discourse. There is no need for law,

judgment, rite, or punishment. In addition, these qualities could not occur alone without the others, and they need contexts and circumferential factors. The last one is Affinity-Identity, commune expertise in kindred association's traditions. The experiences, interests, and practices of people drive the formation of affinity groups, and therefore this type of identity is formed through participation and being part of specific social activities, or by being present at events or assemblies and existing collective activities. To possess this identity, the individual must actively attempt and belong to an intimate group. According to Gee (2000), these standpoints of identity presentation are linked in many complicated ways, because they do not exist as discrete categories, and they tighten on how identities build and work for a particular individual in a particular context.

Gee developed his analytical lens framework in several articles and books, both old and new. However, the two tools on which this study relies are part of the third unit of a book entitled *How to do Discourse Analysis: A Toolkit* published in 2010. The book as a whole is a synthesis of the collection of tools proposed by Gee for conducting discourse analysis. The first unit of his book, *Language and Context*, besides a brief presentation of his theory of discourse analysis and identity formation through language, contains three tools for conducting discourse analysis. The second unit, titled *Saying, Doing, and Designing* includes two tools. The third unit, titled *Building Things in the World* contains eight tools. The fourth unit of the book, titled *Theoretical Tools* contains five tools. The identities building tool and the relationships building tool which the present research follows, are sub-categories of *Building Things in the World* category.

In *Building Things in the World* category, Gee (2010) offers eight tools to understand how people tend to build their own identities through language in

different contexts. He presents a rigorous theory of the language used, full of lengthy analyses and an organized procedure of the study. The writer practices a discourse analysis approach not only on writing, but also on speech, as he considers them two different and equal systems of communication. For this, all tools can also be used to analyse still and moving images, drawings, video games, advertisements, movies and music. Moreover, in order to engage readers in their DA, Gee provides abundant textual samples that touch on diverse public, pedagogical, and institutional affairs.

Table 2.

Gee's (2010) tools of "Building Things in the World".

Tools	Explanation
The context is reflexive tool	What speakers/writers say/write and the way they deliver their content, not only through language but also through acts, reactions and symbols.
The significance building tool	The way we use lexical and grammatical tools. In other words: what is selected to be upfront.
The activities building tool	Understanding activities that are constructed or permitted by communication, and what groups or cultures support and regulate standards for such activities.
The identities building tool	Understanding how people tend to construct their identities and how speakers/writers are trying to enact or push others to identify.
The relationships building tool	Understanding how lexical and small grammatical differences construct and boost the relationships between speakers/writers and other people.
The politics building tool	Understanding how lexical and grammatical appliances are utilized to construct social goods and how these social goods are distributed in the community.
The connections building tool	Understanding how to apply terms and rules to connect things or ignore relationships between things.
The sign systems and knowledge-building tool	Understanding how terms and rules of language distinguish or distort a particular sign system.

As explained in Table 2, the first tool of *Building Things in the World* is 'the context is reflexive tool,' with which one can understand what speakers are saying or

what writers are writing and how they transcribe, transform and alter tenor either attentively or not. Gee discusses that our cosmoses are built and reconstructed not only through language but also through acts, reactions, non-linguistic systems of symbols, matters, instruments, techniques, and ways of thinking, appreciating, feeling, and believing.

The second tool is 'the significance building tool,' which is a tool to understand how lexical and grammatical tools intensify or reduce significance. In other words, what is selected to be upfront. While another tool is 'the activities building tool,' with which one can understand what activities are constructed or permitted by communication, and what groups, institutions or cultures prop and organize standards for such activities. As for 'the identities building tool,' in which one can understand how people tend to construct their identities, Gee asks the researchers to look for the socially known identities that the speakers or writers are trying to enact or push others to identify. He also asks the researchers to look for how the speakers or the writers position others and what identities they are calling them to adopt.

In another tool titled 'the relationships building tool,' Gee asks researchers to ask how lexical and small grammatical differences construct and boost relationships between the speaker or the writer and the other people. While in another tool titled 'the politics building tool' the author urges researchers to ask how lexical and grammatical appliances are utilized to construct social utilities and how these social utilities are distributed in the community. Moreover, in 'the connections building tool,' Gee guides researchers to ask how terms and grammar are applied to bind or detach things or disregard intercourses between things. This type of connection is formed by coherent devices. Finally, Gee proposes 'the sign systems and knowledge

building tool' to understand how terms and rules of language distinguish or distort particular sign systems.

Among these tools from Gee's toolkit, I chose two to conduct my research, namely 'the identities building tool' and 'the relationships building tool.' The reason for choosing these two tools is that they are suitable tools for investigating the identities that are constructed by the author for the heroine of the chosen Iraqi novel, since these tools help to identify the different social identities that individuals build using language according to various contexts. These tools show how people use different styles of language depending on settings and purposes in order to construct different identities, and that social languages, or what Gee (2010) calls 'vernacular styles,' are language variants that one uses depending on the social identity that one chooses based on context and situation. Therefore, they provide a method for analysing the discourse of the chosen character and revealing the identities the author constructs for her through linguistic cues such as word choices, syntax, and usage.

Data Collection Tools

The procedure during data collection was first to read the novel to gain a full understanding of the text. Then, I examined the statements of the author about the main female character and the conversations of the heroine with others using two lenses: Gee's (2010) 'identities building tool' and 'relationships building tool.' Thereafter, I took out extracts from the novel and divided them into two sections according to their types: the first section for those extracts that are statements of the novelist where he described the heroine; and the second section for those extracts that are dialogues between the heroine with the other characters. For each extract, I

quoted utterance and labelled the quote with a number and the page number. I also explained the context where the dialogue/explanation took place.

Material

The novel *What Comes with the Dust* (2017) by Gharbi M. Mustafa is the primary material used in this study, and the main female character of the novel, Nazo Heydo, has been chosen as the object of the study.

This research was based on the first edition of the novel, which was published in 2017 through Arcade Publishing in New York by the writer. Gharbi M. Mustafa is a native of Iraqi Kurdistan and a professor of English at the University of Dohuk. He has personally interviewed Yazidi women who have escaped ISIS, and has extensive knowledge of Yezidi culture and traditions. His novels are characterized by themes of the brutality wars, the suffering of women, and the persecution of minorities.

The novel is a substantial literary work, that presents the persecution of the Yazidis by ISIS and shows their will for survival. The narration essentially concentrates on women and their indomitable determination to survive during intolerable hardships.

The novel is told in the third person, and the teller is an omnipresent narrator who has absolute access to the thoughts and feelings of the characters. The characters and themes of this novel represent the essence of a society that perished in war. The story begins with the heroine's wedding day: she is in the bathroom and wants to commit suicide because her parents have continued to believe in the tradition of arranged marriage and have already arranged her marriage to her cousin. This gloomy story is followed by extended and masterly recollection.

The heroine is a young girl named Nazo. Although her parents arranged for her to marry her cousin, she is in love with another young man named Azad, who is a teacher in the village school. To save their love, the two lovers decide to flee the village and head to the West, to escape the clan and patriarchal traditions and to create a better life. On the desired day, when they are scheduled to flee the village, ISIS attacks their village. ISIS members plunder villagers' money, kill their men and capture their women.

Shortly after the village was besieged, Azad was seriously wounded. In his attempt to escape from ISIS control and reach safety, Azad fell into an armed night patrol and was killed. While Nazo suffered in captivity and was persecuted by ISIS men.

By gathering actual and imaginary events, the narrator artistically depicts the tragic reality of the Yazidi people in his fictional novel uniquely. In addition to revealing the cruelty of patriarchal traditions and the oppression practiced against women, this novel focused on the conditions of the Yazidi nation and the crimes committed against them.

The reason for choosing this novel was that it was written in a high-definition language, and the novelist is known worldwide. Besides, it has two features that this study needed. The first one is that the main character is a female; since this research is focuses on female identities, the research needed a novel in which the protagonist is female. The second feature is that it is written in English language; since this research applies discourse analysis and is directed in English, it was better to work on an Iraqi novel written in English.

Data Analysis Procedures

The researcher read the novel three times; first to grasp the storyline and understand it as a whole; second, to focus on Nazo's conversations with the others; finally, to understand how did the author use language to build identities for the heroine, by focusing on how the writer used certain vocabulary and particular grammar to represent Nazo through her words with others.

After reading the novel several times and focusing on the heroine's descriptions by the author and Nazo's conversations with others, the researcher selected extracts that are representative of her identity building. After that, the researcher re-read the selected extracts in order to find out the particular vocabulary and grammar structures that were used by the author for the heroine, which helped to form an idea about how the author constructed identities for the heroine within specific contexts.

The researcher analysed the utterances made by the author on behalf of the heroine of the selected novel based on Gee's (2010) analytic lens for identity. The analysis of the data was guided by his version of discourse analysis. According to Gee (2010), identities are structured and constructed within discourse; thus, to understand people's identities, he suggests discourse analysis. Discourse analysis is an umbrella term for a group of qualitative research methods used in analysing language use in social contexts. These techniques are used to make sense of the world by investigating the implied meaning of what people express and how they express it. Often, scholars and researchers define DA as the analysis of language beyond sentences. This is in contrast with the more common types of analysis in modern linguistics, which is primarily concerned with the study of grammar, because discourse analysts study larger parts of language as it flows together.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study and discusses the results in relation to the research topic, which was guided by the main question of the present research: How does the author of the selected novel construct identities for the heroine of the novel?

The findings obtained in the study are based on extracts collected from a selected English novel titled *What Comes with the Dust* written by Gharbi M. Mustafa. The extracts were divided into two sections according to their types: extracts of the first section are utterances in which the novelist describes the heroine of his novel. For each extract, the utterance that is intended to focus on was quoted, the context of the situation and the page number from which the quote was made were indicated. Extracts of the second section are dialogues between the heroine with other characters. For each extract, as well as the extracts of the first section, the dialogue that is intended to focus on was quoted, and the page number from which the dialogue was quoted, the names of the interlocutors and the context of the dialogue were indicated. Next, the utterances and the dialogues were analysed, and by applying Gee's identities building tool and relationships building tool, the identities constructed by the author for the selected female character were searched.

Unlike all the other characters, who were described directly and in detail, the heroine was not described directly in the novel. The reader understands her

personality and her physical and psychological characteristics indirectly. The novelist built the heroine's identities in two indirect ways: once by stating the heroine's positions on the events she faces or her reactions to the phenomena around her, and another time through her words and conversations with others. For this, in both cases, the writer constructed the heroine's identity through language, once by using specific vocabulary and grammar to talk about her, and once by using specific vocabulary and grammar in constructing the heroine's conversation with others. The first type, which is the writer's sayings about the heroine, is found in the first section of this chapter; the second type, which is the heroine's conversations with others, is found in the second section.

By choosing and organizing descriptive words, adjectives, repetition of sounds, and creating rhythm, the novelist forms particular patterns of language and uses them to construct different female identities for the heroine depending on the context. According to the findings, the author uses four main language patterns to build identities for the heroine. The first pattern might be termed as *victim/resistor* pattern. In both his description of the heroine and the heroine's speech, the writer linked Nazo's victimhood status with a resistance status. In other words, wherever the author shows the heroine as a victim of any kind of oppression, at the same time he portrays her as a resister of those oppressive powers. The use of this pattern by the novelist is to build for the heroine the identity of a victim who resist. The second pattern can be called the *stronger-than-others* pattern. According to the results, the author introduces weaker characters in the same context of the heroine to show her as stronger than others and strength her identity as a resistant woman. The third pattern could be called the *feminine-language* pattern. Based on the findings, one can state that the author uses feminine vocabulary in the heroine's discourse to characterize

her as a female and divide her from the males. The fourth pattern can be called the *Yazidi-language* pattern. In many contexts, the author uses Yazidi terminology in the heroine's speech to portray her as a Yazidi woman.

Most of the identities that the author constructs for the heroine, can be categorized according to Gee's (2000) four categories of identities. Building identities for Nazo as human and female is building Nature-Identities for her, a category according to Gee (2000) that includes those identities constructed by forces of nature. While the identities that the author built for the heroine as Yezidi and Kurdish can be classified in Gee's (2000) second category which he calls Institution-Identity, in which includes the identities that social, political, and religious institutions build for people. However, her identities as a resistant and hopeful woman built by the novelist can be classified in the Discourse-Identity category, since, according to Gee's (2000) classification, this category includes those identities people build for themselves through their own discourse. Lastly, heroine's identities such as sister, girlfriend, and friend, can be classified within the category of Affinity-Identities; because according to Gee (2000), this type of identity is formed by participating in social activities, people's experiences, interests, and practices to form intimate relationships.

Section 1 - Descriptions of Nazo by the narrator

Nazo lives in a conservative community, and she belongs to the Yezidi religious minority within the Iraqi Kurdish society. According to Kizilhan (2019), the Yazidi minority, like many minorities, tries to preserve its traditions and maintain its community by not opening up and not engaging with other communities. The marriage of relatives is one of the mechanisms of maintaining their community. For

this reason, it was decided that Nazo should marry her cousin, while she was in love with another person named Azad, who was a teacher in Nazo's village and outside the circle of her relatives. In this context, the traditional marriage was arranged between Nazo and her cousin, and she was very close to entering the routine traditional life and moving away from her love that contradicts those traditions. But in her refusal to marry, she intends to end her life and set herself on fire. The following extract is from the beginning of the novel:

> Extract 1 / p. 9
>
> "Today is Nazo Heydo's wedding day, and today she will set herself on fire. Wearing her white gown, Nazo walks toward the bathroom door. In her right hand, she clutches the handle of a kerosene jerry can. Once inside, she turns and locks the door. A cold wind whistles through the broken panes of the small window. Her body shivers as she leans against the blue tile of the wall. She removes her veil and throws it on the floor. Warm tears streak her cheeks as she raises the heavy jerry can over her head. In shallow breaths, the smell of the kerosene fills her nostrils with the fumes of despair and anguish. She pours it over herself until she is soaked in it. The kerosene washes away the layers of her caked-on makeup, leaving her face pale and sheer."

According to Othman (2011), in the eastern societies in general, and the Kurdish society in particular, self-immolation (self-burning) was and still is a way for women to express their rejection of the desperate situation in which they live, which is the result of conservative patriarchal traditions. In Extract 1, the writer attempts to create an identity for his heroine as a victim of conservative traditions that have no room for women. Using a certain rhetorical technique, the author begins his paragraph with an ironic statement, and he writes: "Today is Nazo Heydo's

wedding day, and today she will set herself on fire." With words like this, the writer constructs for the heroine the identity of a victim woman who suffers so much that she intends to kill herself on a day that is probably the happiest day for other women.

The author's portrayal of the heroine in this way is at the same time building the identity of a resistant woman who is ready to sacrifice herself in order to reject the traditions imposed on her by society. In not accepting the imposed reality, she flees from the confines of a life in which she dies psychologically, and tries to send a message of rejection to society. As Spivak (2003) argued in her book "Can a Subaltern Speak?", the self-immolation of women in patriarchal societies is the words of a subaltern who cannot speak.

In Extract 2 below, the writer continues to portray the heroine as a girl who has become a victim of her conservative community. The writer portrays Nazo as a lame girl, and portrays her sister as deaf and dumb, whose deformity resulted from the marriage of relatives between their parents, as a result of this reservation followed by conservative societies. Along the same lines, the writer constructs Nazo the identity of a girl who has serious doubts about the traditions of her community, as she thinks about how following in her parents' footsteps and marrying her cousin will cause more children to be born with deformities.

Extract 2 / p. 11
"With one leg a little shorter than the other, Nazo walked with a slight limp. She was born with developmental dysplasia of the hip, a genetic disorder attributed to Nazo's parents being first cousins. Sarah, her eleven-year-old sister, was born deaf and mute. Part of her wanted to be the dutiful daughter and marry her cousin. But with every limping step,

<u>she thought about</u> the deformed children that she would bring into the world from this marriage."

In the above Extract, the writer has cleverly used an adjective commonly used in Kurdish society to describe women accepted into society. In the last lines of the excerpt, he wrote: "Part of her wanted to be the <u>dutiful</u> daughter and marry her cousin." In the Kurdish context, one can hear a lot about "dutiful wife," "dutiful girl," "dutiful sister," and "dutiful daughter." In general, the adjective "dutiful" in the Kurdish context refers to a woman who is subject to family rules, and those who do not obey these norms are rebels. In other words, the good girls are the obedient ones, and the ones who are not are the bad girls. Hence, the novelist is trying to show that if Nazo, as an example of many other Kurdish girls, wants to be an acceptable girl in the society, she must be "dutiful" and obey the rules, which means she should marry her cousin.

Although the writer portrays the superiority of men over women in a patriarchal society and portrays women as victims of this gap between men and women, on the other hand, by demonstrating Nazo's serious intentions in rejecting this marriage, or by using what one can call a *victim/resistor* pattern of language, the author portrays Nazo as resistor who reject her victimhood status. However, their rejection and resistance, as the author depicts it, is more theoretical than practical. As one can see in the excerpt, the writer wrote that she "thought about," not "act about." This indicates that, due to the occupation of all positions and sources of power in society by men, women do not have the ability to reject masculine rules in practice. But at the same time, "thought" indicates an important beginning, for every rejection

and every social change starts from thinking and doubting the imposed laws, because as Emerson (1993) says, "the ancestor of every action is a thought."

> Extract 3 / p. 14
>
> "Today she had made her first step between <u>Heaven and Hell</u>. She'd stepped onto the <u>forbidden path</u>. Her feet sank into the quicksand of illicit <u>pleasure</u>, and her soul fell into the claws of <u>guilt</u>. Yes, she had lost her <u>virginity</u>, her badge of <u>honor</u>, but did she still have her purity? Nazo wondered."

In Extract 3, by talking about the sexual relationship that Nazo had with her lover Azad outside of wedlock, the writer continues to portray the situation of the Kurdish woman and the consequences she faces when she has sex with her lover outside of wedlock. Since, many research and sources show, including a study conducted by Payton (2019), honor-based killing of women became a threatening phenomenon in the Iraqi Kurdistan region. Therefore, referring to losing "virginity" as losing "honor," the novelist creates a patriarchal society image where women are not only denied the freedom to have love and sexual relations with those they love, but they also face the danger of being killed as a response from the society for such acts. Moreover, by referring to Heaven and Hell, the author highlights the religious boundaries drawn by religions in front of individuals in general, and women especially, with regard to sexual relations, which in most religions are "forbidden" to those outside marriage. Every step towards a relationship like this is a step that brings the perpetrators closer to Hell and keeps them away from Paradise.

Furthermore, when the novelist writes, "Her feet sank into the quicksand of illicit pleasure, and her soul fell into the claws of guilt," he reminds us of an ancient

and enduring identity of women portrayed by religions, an identity that shows the woman as the one who committed guilt by pursuing pleasures and eating the forbidden fruit. Because according to Schwartz (1997), in Yazidism, as part of the general theology of monotheistic religions, there is a myth and a belief that it was Eve who committed the first crime by following her desire and eating the fruit forbidden by God.

Extract 4 / p. 35-36

"He yanked her hair and forced her head into his lap. 'If you make any more moves, I will cave your head in with the butt of my rifle,' he snapped. His voice trembled. 'You are my share of the gift that God has bestowed upon the mujahedeen, His Almighty Warriors, in the sacred war against the pagan world.'... Nazo's lower lip quivered, and she buried her face in her hands as he ripped off her clothes. Once she was naked, he yanked her off her feet and threw her on the bed. He tied her limbs to the old rusty bed with coarse rope. She swallowed a sob and braced herself for the worst. Then he knelt down in the middle of the room and prayed to God. In his eyes, what he was about to do was an act of devotion, a sacred rite that would draw him closer to his God. As he rose over her, Nazo froze like a frightened rabbit caught in the glare of headlights. He knelt down between her thighs and inserted his rigid manhood into her. Nazo's stomach clenched, and she fought back the urge to vomit. He cupped her face in both hands as he mashed his putrid mouth on hers. Then he shoved his garbage-smelling tongue into her mouth as he came inside her. As the sound of his fires waned, he rose, shuddering in disgust, and left without a word. Alone an instant later, Nazo tugged on her torn clothes. She crept to the bathroom, feeling sick. Her attacker's foul smell clung to her body and coated her mouth. She ran her fingers over her teeth and tongue until finally she threw up. She bathed several times and kept washing her mouth, but his

foul smell continued to pervade her senses. Defeated and drained, she slumped onto the tile, bending forward until her forehead touched the floor. 'O Khuda, Supreme God, blow the breath of life into me and grace me with a new soul,' Nazo pleaded."

After being raped by an ISIS man, Nazo felt like vomiting and detested herself and the condition she was in. In Extract 4 above, the writer portrays Nazo's miserable psychological and physical condition, and her sense of shame and guilt from the ISIS man's attack on her. Comparing it with the Extract 3, in which the writer depicts Nazo's condition after having sex with her lover as fear of the punishment by society due to religious beliefs, not dissatisfaction with her sexual relationship with her lover, the writer builds Nazo's identity as a civilized woman who resents her sexual relationship imposed by the ISIS man and accepts and even loves a sexual relationship acceptable by both parties.

On the other hand, the novelist depicts two different types of believers: an evil type represented by the ISIS fighter who sees rape as a gift from his Lord and a sacred act of devotion that would bring him closer to his god, and a peaceful type represented by the heroine who sees rape as a reprehensible crime forbidden by her Lord, so she pleads with her Lord and asks Him to purify her soul and forgive her. Hence, through his description, he portrays Nazo as a peaceful believer who pays for her religious identity, because her rape by a Muslim ISIS fighter is the ISIS man's reaction to Nazo's identity as a non-Muslim Yazidi woman. Furthermore, by using Yazidi's terminology in Nazo's speech, using words and phrases such as "O Khuda," "Supreme God," "blow the breath of life into me," "grace me with a new soul," or by using what one can called the *Yazidi-language* pattern, the author portrays Nazo as a Yazidi, or affirms her Yazidi identity.

One can take Extract 4 as part of the puzzle that complements the other parts a portrait drawn by the author for the chosen female character; which as a whole show that Nazo, as a representative of Iraqi women, is not only the victim of her society, but also the victim of all the religious, political and economic conflicts in the region.

> Extract 5 / p. 69
> "Nazo closed her eyes as Bushy Eyebrows rose on top of her. When he knelt down to enter her, he heard Prominent Nose cursing and yelling for him to come back. Nazo stood and ran behind him. She froze, then let out a piercing wail as she saw Soleen lying naked on the bed."

In Extract 5, as one can see in many other paragraphs, the writer continues to manifest Nazo as a woman who fell victim to her ethnicity. Here, the novelist shows how her identity as a woman and a Yazidi made her a victim in the hands of ISIS men who treated her as a sex slave.

Nevertheless, as we see in the quote, the writer mentions the two ISIS men with sarcastic nicknames such as 'Bushy Eyebrows' and 'Prominent Nose,' from which he showed their ugliness. Even in Extract 4, when he mentioned the other ISIS man, he was describing him using negative adjectives such as 'his putrid mouth' and 'his garbage-smelling tongue,' all to paint an ugly picture of ISIS men. But when it comes to the heroine, the novelist mentions her by her name, using neutral or positive adjectives. This proves what Gee (2010) says about people's biased use of language because, according to him, we use language biasedly to build identities for ourselves and others.

Extract 6 / p. 95

"She knew her life had come apart as she lost herself in bits and pieces to the circling vultures. Winter had wrapped its freezing arms around her soul. She must weave her torn parts back together as best she could. Her heart might resemble a patchwork quilt, but it could still make a warm home for her child."

In the excerpt above, the novelist constructs the heroine's identity as a resistant and hopeful woman who, despite her tragedies and wounds, still resists and is convinced that she must weave her torn pieces and look forward with hope to the future life with her son.

All in all, through the use of language and in a gradual process, the writer draws an identity for the heroine as a woman victim of both a patriarchal and conservative society in the Middle Eastern society in which women are in a secondary status, and a victim of the bad political and economic situation that has plunged the region into sectarian and political wars and resulted in emigration, starvation, and destruction. Moreover, the identity that the author builds for the heroine is, despite her misery, a resistant woman that endures her tragic life, struggles to survive, and hopes to live a dignified life, at least in the future. However, such identity almost represents the identity of the real-life women in Middle Eastern societies.

Section 2 - Nazo's dialogue with others

Gee (2010) says: "We use language to be recognized as taking on a certain identity or role. We build an identity here and now as we speak. We each act out

different identities in our lives in different contexts." For instance, a person may, at one time or at different times, act as a mother, female, Kurdish, student, a supporter of a particular sports team, Muslim, employee, and other such identities. Moreover, each of them can affect the others when implementing any of them. People are part of various cultures belonging to different social associations, and have different types of roles and relationships. In each of these positions, people have to speak and act in order to acknowledge that they have the proper identity.

According to Gee (2010), when people speak like ordinary people, they use what he calls a "vernacular style." The slang of people varies according to dialect and social and cultural group. Moreover, individuals have various kinds of slang that they employ in various contexts.

Below, I present an Extract from the novel in which the chosen female character, Nazo, expresses her feelings towards her boyfriend and her brother in separate instances, and uses different vocabulary and styles with each of them.

Extract 7 / p. 13
Addresser and Addressee: Nazo and her boyfriend Azad

1   Nazo: Don't go!
2   Azad: I must. Daesh keeps drawing nearer to our villages. I have to check on our arrangements. By sunset tomorrow, we will breathe in a safer land.
3   Nazo: But you are my safe land.
4   Azad: Tomorrow at dawn, in the backyard of your house, I'll howl like a wolf; that will be the signal.
5   Nazo: Oh, my cute wolf, I'll follow you anywhere you want me to go. With you, every corner of this world will be my Heaven.

Extract 8 / p. 30

Addresser and Addressee: Nazo to her brother Qasim

6   Nazo: Love you, brother!

Nazo used two different styles of language. The variations between these two styles are apparent in many respects. Towards her brother, she speaks in a direct language; she expresses her love for him in frank words and says to him directly, "I love you." She uses more formal terms in relation to her brother and calls him "brother" while towards her boyfriend, she speaks in a romantic language and uses words with erotic connotations and calls him "my safe land" and "my cute wolf." She even builds the identity of a faithful guard for her lover using words such as "I'll follow you," "with you," and "my heaven."

On the one hand, the author constructed an identity for Nazo as a girlfriend who pampers her boyfriend by calling him "my safe land" and "my cute wolf." On the other hand, the author portrays her communication with her boyfriend as a lover who gives her love, security, and satisfaction, and gives her joy wherever he goes. Thus, through Nazo's speech, the author constructed an identity for Nazo's boyfriend as a strong and nostalgic man who provides safety and reassurance. However, by using sisterhood language with her brother, the author created an identity for Nazo as a sister who cares about her brother and fears for him.

Besides using two different vernaculars with her boyfriend and her brother, one can observe that Nazo's uses of vocabularies such as "my safe land," "my cute wolf," "I'll follow you," and "with you" with her boyfriend, show her as a dependent character who finds safety and trust in her lover and gives him the responsibility of

protecting her. On the other hand, by calling him a "cute wolf," she stresses the fact that he is strong and protective, but at the same time, he is dear to her. She emphasizes the bond between them, and by doing so, assures the relationship. Accordingly, the author builds for the heroine an identity of a girl who needs to be protected, and shielded from the outside world, a girl who depends on her boyfriend for safety.

Our use of language to build different identities for other people is not only building identities for those we talk to or target through writing or any other linguistic means of expression, but it is also building identities for people around us or beyond. Often, we use the identities we build for others to reinforce the identities we build for ourselves. In the following, I quote utterances of the heroine to analyse how the speaker builds identities for others and uses those identities to enhance the construction of her own identity.

Extract 9 / p. 31
Addresser and Addressee: Nazo and an ISIS man

7   Nazo: She's deaf and mute. She can't hear you.
8   ISIS man: Yeah? And I'm blind.

In this context, ISIS gathered the villagers in the schoolyard, forced them to pay all their money and property, and divided the women and men into two groups. Meanwhile, Nazo and her deaf-mute sister abandon their possessions and head toward the group of women. The heroine speaks in a formal way that shows concern and fear; on the one hand, she shows care for her sister Sarah, and shows fear of the ISIS man. She uses language to show herself as a supportive and protective sister,

maintaining the sisterhood relationship with her sister Sara; on the other hand, to construct a formal and neutral relationship with the ISIS man.

Here, although the heroine does not talk to her sister but rather talks to the ISIS man, she builds an identity for her sister by talking to the ISIS man. By calling her sister "deaf and mute," Nazo builds the identity of a girl with special needs for her sister Sarah, who is a disabled girl and needs care. By building an identity like this for her sister, she reinforces and strengthens the identity she builds for herself, which is the identity of a caring, compassionate older sister who cares for her sister and is willing to sacrifice herself for her.

According to Gee (2010), one of the ways of representing identity in language is to depict the others and their identities in particular ways that match or differ with the identity one wants to represent. Thus, according to Gee's (2010) theory, a particular identity is unable to occur without others portraying themselves as possessing familiar identities. For instance, for a teacher to act and speak as a teacher, she/he needs the presence of students because, through the presence of students, she/he can create the identity of a teacher for himself. From this perspective, one can analyse the following utterance of the heroine:

Extract 10 / p. 60
Addresser and Addressee: Nazo and a Mullah

9   Nazo: Mullah, I ask for sanctuary in God's house.
10   Mullah: Are you a beggar or gypsy?
11   Nazo: No, I'm a new convert.
12   Mullah: What do you want, woman?
13   Nazo: I need shelter for the night.

14   Mullah: Daughter, a woman cannot sleep in a mosque without a
male relative.

15   Nazo: Then take me to your house. I'll leave very early in the
morning.

Nazo is trying to win the sympathy of Mullah by pointing out that she is a girl who converted to Islam after she was a Yazidi. She is trying to establish a sympathetic relationship between a believer and a clergyman, in order to obtain shelter. Through Nazo's speech, the author builds for Nazo a believer identity who is also on her part builds for the mullah a religious man identity. Thus, Nazo not only activates an identity for herself in language but also creates an identity for the man to whom she speaks. The heroine places the addressee in a particular way; through her speech, she creates an identity for the addressee to admit and speak in. By calling the man a mullah and seeking refuge from him in the mosque, Nazo gives the man the identity of a cleric with authority to shelter the faithful. At the same time, by calling herself a new convert (who recently converted from a Yazidi to a Muslim), she creates to herself the identity of a believer, a believer who needs shelter. She engages the addressee in a religious brotherly relationship, and builds for him the identity of a brother-in-faith who either has to shelter her in the house of God or his house.

Therefore, without giving the mullah's identity to the man, the heroine could not give the believer's identity to herself. In other words, being a believer is not important to any others; it is only important to others who are faithful, including mullahs in particular. Thus, Nazo gave the identity of the mullah to the other man so that she could strengthen her identity as a believer and gain his compassion.

According to the previously explained Gee's (2010) theory about how people use language differently in different contexts, a person chooses to use particular

language patterns when communicating with different people. They may also vary their language when speaking to the same person in a different context. In other words, if a father is a teacher to his son at school, as a teacher, he will use a different language when talking to his son at school than the language he would use at home. In the school context, he would use specific language patterns through which he creates for himself the identity of a teacher and creates for his son the identity of a student, while in the context of their home, his choice of words, expressions, or structures would ensure the roles of father and son. Below, I quote two dialogues between Nazo and another female character called Mirvat. The two dialogues are between the same characters, but in two different contexts. In one context, Nazo uses a language different from the language she uses in the other context.

Nazo was sold to a man who lives in Raqqa, which is a city in Syria. Two ISIS fighters deliver Nazo and Soleen to buyers in Raqqa, after raping them on the road; they deliver Nazo to the man who bought him. The man has a daughter called Mirvat, he thinks that she is possessed by the jinn. The man bought Nazo to take care of her. In the meantime, Nazo discovers that she is pregnant. Thinking that Mirvat is able to know secrets through the jinn, Nazo asks Mirvat about the colour of her child's eyes, in order to know if his beloved Azad is the child's father: if the colour of the child's eyes is blue, the child belong to Azad, if not, she thinks it belong to one of the ISIS fighters who raped her.

Extract 11 / p. 71 - 72
Addresser and Addressee: Nazo and Mirvat

16   Mirvat: You're carrying a forbidden child.
17   Nazo: Is there a way to know the colour of his eyes?

18   Mirvat: You're lucky: today's Tuesday, a good day for summoning the jinn.

19   Nazo: Could you see the colour of his eyes?

20   Mirvat: The being inside you has no eyes colour yet, but the soul of a dead person has entered you. Your child is alive and healthy, and the jinn says that is enough for now.

21   Nazo: Maybe it's the soul of my dead grandpa, who had a jinn friend.

Extract 12 / p. 76

Addresser and Addressee: Nazo and Mirvat

22   Nazo: Pity, you know when you're young, you tend to grab the bull by the horns, and you get gored.

23   Mirvat: I'm not interested in bullfighting. I wanna see the world, feel the sun and wind on my skin!

24   Nazo: Perhaps you can summon the jinn back and get some guidance?

25   Mirvat: You don't get it. First, they'd just beat me worse, but I, I was faking.

26   Nazo: What! But your eyes!

27   Mirvat: Contacts. I ordered them off the net before we left, figuring I might have some use for them.

28   Nazo: So, it was all a lie?

29   Mirvat: One of my best, though I never expected it to end like that …

30   Nazo: But what about my pregnancy and the shaking tray?

31   Mirvat: I bounced the table with my knee, and you're starting to show.

According to Brown and Gilman (1960), we usually use the pronoun "you" with people we are open to. In Extract 11, where Nazo met Mirvat for the first time,

Nazo used neutral and formal language with Mirvat. She maintained social distance with her; she did not call her by name or a pronoun. While in the second conversation, when they got to know each other and became friends, Nazo frequently addressed Mervat as "you," referring to her social partnership with her.

According to Leech (2014), to send their messages to others, especially to anonymous people, individuals use indirect language to show politeness. In the first dialogue, Nazo used expressions such as "is there a way" and "could you," which, pragmatically, shows how she tended to use indirect language to be more polite. On the other hand, in the second dialogue she spoke more openly and even impolitely, by using expressions such as "pity," "grab the bull by the horns," "gored," "what" and "lie."

In these two cases, using certain vocabulary in Nazo's speech, the author evoked two different identities for the heroine. In the first case, she speaks politely in the hope of building a friendship with Mirvat and obtaining both safety and answers to the mystery in which she lives; in the second case, she dealt with Mirvat as a close friend, and she use more open and reprehensible vocabulary.

Generally, in the first dialogue, Nazo uses formal and cautious language with Mirvat; Nazo's language demands less inference on the part of Mirvat and distances Mirvat as a listener from being socially and emotionally involved with her words, but at the same time urges Mirvat to respect her as she portrays herself as a respectable girl. On the other hand, in the second dialogue, Nazo urges Mirvat to solidarity, social and emotional participation, and participate in meaning-making.

However, Gee (2010) asserts that individuals of various social classes and cultural factions in a particular community employ various types of language and behave in different ways when they communicate in their areas of life. In other

words, a person of a higher class speaks and acts differently than a person of a lower class. To examine such an argument, I quote below a dialogue between the heroine and another character. In this context, the heroine was enslaved and was in the slave market being sold as a slave, and the man she was addressing was from a higher class want to buy a slave.

Extract 13 / p. 93

Addresser and Addressee: Nazo and an old man

32   An old man: Get up and follow me; you will belong to me from now on.

33   Nazo: I will be your obedient servant, sir, but I have a small request.

34   An old man: I have requested too, so you go first.

35   Nazo: This little girl is my sister; she is eleven and a deaf-mute. She has no one else. I want her to live with me.

36   An old man: Deaf and mute?

37   Nazo: But she's a very hard worker in the kitchen, sir.

38   An old man: Two things: will you convert to Islam and will you be my devoted wife?

39   Nazo: We will do as God wishes for us.

40   An old man: Great, then. What I hear, she already believes in Allah and not her Peacock Satan.

In this context, where Nazo, like many Yazidi girls, has been turned into a slave by ISIS men, she is acting and speaking like a slave. By using a certain type of vocabulary and grammar in Nazo's speech, such as "I will be your obedient servant," "sir" and "we will do," the author builds for Nazo and her sister the identity of slaves

who are ready to serve (to save her sister's life and protect her sister and herself from the sexual abuse that ISIS men inflict on them).

In the same way, through the same vocabulary and grammar in Nazo's speech, the author builds an identity of the master to the addressee; she is calling him "sir" and expressing her intention to obey him. If one examines the heroine's sayings in this context well, one will see that the author builds multi-identities for the heroine, as he does not only build for Nazo the identity of an obedient servant, but also the identity of a merciful sister who fears for her sister and is ready to sacrifice herself to save her sister and preserve her dignity; she expresses this frankly in the following sentence: "I want her to live with me."

In constructing the identity of a servant for Nazo's sister, the writer uses two techniques in Nazo's speech: on the one hand, she talks about her sister's health status and describes her as "deaf-mute" in order to evoke the sympathy of the master; on the other hand, she talks about her sister's ability to work hard by saying "she's a very hard worker" in order to gain the acceptance of the master. All in all, the novelist constructed for Nazo's sister, through Nazo's language, the identity of a hard-working servant who deserves kindness.

Nevertheless, returning to Gee's theory about the difference in the language of individuals according to their different social classes and cultural factions, Gee (2010) argues that despite the variation based on different contexts, people, in general, tend to speak and act like a normal person in the contexts that he calls "life world contexts." In other words, all people of different classes and cultures generally communicate and behave in normal and normative ways in the ordinary public contexts (such as: at the bus stop, on the train, etc.), especially with people we do not know.

The following Extract is a dialogue between the heroine and another character in an ordinary context, which will be analysed through Gee's analytical lens:

Extract 14 / p. 63
Addresser and Addressee: Nazo and a dark man

41   Nazo: Sir, what time will we depart for the mountain?
42   A dark man: what mountain? I bought you from that guy on the condition that you're still a virgin, and you'd better be.

A young man brought Nazo near Mount Shingal and promised her that he would hand her over to another man who would take her to safety, but the young man deceived Nazo as he secretly sold her to that dark man who Nazo believed would take her out of the borders of ISIS. Here, despite the suffering that Nazo went through, even though she belongs to the Yazidi minority and she is within the authority of ISIS, she speaks and acts ordinarily because she believes that she is in an ordinary context.

Despite the difference in her social class, gender, religion, nationality, and even the fact that she is a villager, the heroine speaks and acts in a way everyone else would speak and act as such if they were in the same context, an ordinary way that fit with the ordinary public contexts.

 Nazo addresses the man with formal words such as "sir." Through Nazo's words, the author builds for Nazo the identity of a respected ordinary woman who knows her limits and builds for the man the identity of an ordinary unknown man who has to abide by his limits.

Gee (2010) believes that people also utilize language to construct and maintain relationships of all kinds. According to him, people's use of language to construct relationships with others is a mission linked to the mission of constructing identities, because the identities that people build for themselves and others in all contexts are frequently determined by how individuals see and interpret their relationships with the others.

In other words, we deal with others in terms of the identities we build for them according to the context in which we speak and act with them. For example, a teacher talks and behaves toward a colleague differently than he speaks and behaves toward a friend, because his relationship with his colleague is different from his relationship with his friend; even the same teacher deals with a friend's teacher differently depending on the context, in the school context he communicates with him as a colleague and in the external context he communicates with him as a friend.

Therefore, building identities and building relationships are two intertwined tasks; people build their relationships with others according to the identities they build for themselves and others, and vice versa, they build identities for themselves and others according to the relationships they have with others or build them with others. From this angle, one can analyse the following dialogue between the heroine and another character:

Extract 15 / p. 39

Addresser and Addressee: Nazo and a captive woman

43   Nazo: Is there a chance that my mother's here?

44   A captive woman: The Daesh keeps the elderly women in a separate building in Talafar and uses them as servants.

In this context, the protagonist speaks formally using the phrase "is there a chance", in order to build a formal relationship with an unknown woman. It is clear that building a relationship with the other is not limited to building a relationship of friendship or love; the types of formal, informal and friendly relations are innumerable, and even the most ambiguous or formal relations are still relationships. Here, Nazo tries to build a formal relationship based on respect and decency. Through building a formal and polite relationship with the addressee, the author is building for Nazo an identity of a formal person who respects other people.

As Gee (2010) emphasizes, identities and relationships are interrelated and intertwined. However, constructing or taking identity and constructing and maintaining a relationship of a certain kind are not the same, no matter how closely related. In other words, two friends can have various relationships in various contexts or at various times in their continuous relationship. To examine such a hypothesis, I quote below two dialogues between Nazo and another character named Waleed, each dialogue taking place in a different context:

Extract 16 / p. 46 - 47
Addresser and Addressee: Nazo and Waleed

45   Nazo: <u>Thanks for what you did for Sarah</u>.
46   Waleed: Everything has a price.
47   Nazo: <u>What do I owe you, Waleed</u>?
48   Waleed: You're a Muslim now. Marry me; be my devoted wife.
49   Nazo: <u>I'll marry you</u>, but you have to pay my dowry as it is stated in Shari'a law.

50   Waleed: Do you want me to buy you a piece of gold or give you money?

51   Nazo: <u>My dowry</u> is this.

52   Waleed: You want me to take care of the mute girl?

53   Nazo: Just this once, then, <u>I'll be yours</u> forever.

54   Waleed: You mean—?

55   Nazo: Yes, <u>I want her out of here</u>, back to Kurdistan.

56   Waleed: I'll see what I can do.

Extract 17 / p. 48 - 49

Addresser and Addressee: Nazo and Waleed

57   Waleed: We will marry on Friday.

58   Nazo: <u>One last favour before we marry</u>?

59   Waleed: What is it?

60   Nazo: There's a very sick girl in the house. She is in great pain. <u>Could you</u> arrange a visit for her to the hospital?

61   Waleed: Nazo, my undercover girl, has turned into Mother Teresa.

62   Nazo: <u>Do this for me</u>, and <u>I'll be your obedient wife forever</u> after.

63   Waleed: I will look into it.

Waleed was an ISIS fighter who fell in love with Nazo. He helped Sarah, Nazo's deaf-mute sister, took her to a doctor after she fell from the stairs. The heroine tries to build a friendly relationship with the ISIS man, Waleed, who helped her sister. By using the language of courtesy and friendliness in Nazo's speech, the novelist builds for Nazo the identity of a friendly woman, ready to establish a marriage relationship.

In Extract 16, the author uses particular grammar structures and certain vocabulary in Nazo's speech that illustrate politeness in which by using words and phrases such as "thanks" and "what do I owe you," and even more by calling him by his name, the author portrays the heroine as a woman who builds a friendly relationship with Waleed. Furthermore, by using phrases such as "I'll marry you," "my dowry" and "I'll be yours," she paves the way for a marriage relationship.

Nazo stipulates her future marital relationship with Waleed on one condition, which is the expulsion of Nazo's sister from ISIS-controlled areas. For this, Nazo speaks and acts in a way that symbolizes that the success of the future marital relationship with Waleed depends on her loyalty to the sisterhood relationship with her sister Sarah. Therefore, at the same time that she establishes a friendly relationship with Waleed and promises to develop that relationship towards marriage, Nazo maintains her sisterly relationship with Sarah through words and phrases such as "Thanks for what you did for Sarah," "My dowry is this [take Sarah out of ISIS-controlled areas]," "I want her out of here."

While in Extract 17, which is another conversation between the same characters in a different context, the author uses different grammar and different vocabulary in Nazo's speech.

Nazo continues to build a friendly relationship with Waleed and uses language to build an identity for her as a future wife. In her words, she shows affection for Waleed and sympathy for a sick captive girl.

To maintain her friendly relationship with Waleed, and procrastinate and postpone her promised marital relationship, Nazo uses politer and indirect language. For instance, in line 60, she tended to be polite by employing words such as "could you?". As many research shows, such as that conducted by Nozawa (2010), people

use modal verbs such as "will you?," "can you?," "would you?," and "could you?," to show politeness.

Using specific vocabulary and specific grammar, the author uses language to build identities for Nazo. The identities he builds for the heroine differ according to the different contexts in which she is in, it also varies according to the people she communicates with. The identity that the author built for Nazo with her lover is different from the identity that he built for her when she spoke to her brother, and both are different from the identity that the writer built for her when she was with an unknown man or woman.

The novelist enacts not only various identities through language for the heroine, but also creates different identities through her speech for those around her. On behalf of the author, she places them in certain positions, and through her speech she creates identities for them to take and speak within them.

On the one hand, these two Extracts illustrate the way the author uses language to build different identities of the heroine regarding the contexts; on the other hand, it shows a continuous process initiated by the author from the beginning of the novel to build the identity of the victim woman for the chosen female character. Finally, the author affirms the slavery of women in marriage through the following words of Nazo: "I'll be your obedient wife forever after."

Comparison with other characters

In the following paragraphs, I examine how the writer constructs identities for the heroine compared to his construction of identities for other female and male characters, by drawing some dialogues between her and others, and then focusing on the similarities and differences between their identities.

In the Extract 12 below, I present a short dialogue between the heroine and another female character named Viyan, whose status is almost similar to that of the heroine; just like Nazo she is a Yazidi girl who was enslaved and raped many times by ISIS men after they killed a number of her family members.

Extract 18 / p. 43-44

Addresser and Addressee: Viyan and Nazo

64   Viyan: It wasn't just him; he gave me to four more fighters after he finished with me. Please, sister, help me to end this wretched life. Strangle me with your headscarf.

65   Nazo: You'll survive this—survive and have a good life again.

66   Viyan: They laughed at my weak body. They spat on my face each time one of them was done with me. They called me the ugly daughter of Satan. I hate myself! I hate this body!

In the captive camp, ISIS men took the Yazidi girls one by one to assault them. Viyan was one of those women who were assaulted. She was miserable and sad. Before she strangled herself in the bathroom, she asked Nazo to kill her, but Nazo refused and gave her hope.

Using the language of consolation, Nazo reassures the other captive woman, Viyan, and gives her hope. The author builds an identity for Nazo as a strong and helpful woman who is ready to help Viyan and be her friend, a woman who is strong enough to bear her misery and give hope to others. Thus, implicitly, the writer builds the identity of the resistance woman for Nazo.

Whereas, using certain vocabulary and grammar, suicidal tendencies appeared in Viyan's words, such as "end this wretched life," "strangle me with your

headscarf," and "I hate myself! I hate this body!" the author builds the identity of an exhausted, miserable and suicidal woman for Viyan, who needs help to end her miserable life. However, that need for help illustrates itself in words and phrases such as "please" and "help me;"; and, to obtain that help, by calling Nazo "sister" by Viyan, the novelist maintains a sisterhood relationship between Viyan and Nazo. A sisterhood relationship that already exists due to their connection in that they are of the same sex, religion, nationality, and region, and they are in the same time and situation.

Furthermore, in line 66, where she says "my weak body," using a negative adjective such as "weak" to describe Viyan's "body," the writer constructs for her the identity of the impotent person. This is in addition to that using phrases such as "they laughed at my weak body," "they spat on my face each time one of them was done with me," and "they called me the ugly daughter of Satan" through Viyan's language, he builds for the ISIS men identity of backward people who insulted her.

All in all, there are some differences between the identities constructed by the author for Nazo, and those he constructed for Viyan. Compared with Viyan, Nazo's identity is stronger and more willed. The author builds for Nazo the identity of a resistant woman capable of endurance, supportive of others, and hopeful. While for Viyan, he builds an identity of a person that is less powerful than Nazo, as he builds for her the identity of a suicidal, miserable woman. The novelist uses what can be called the *stronger-than-others* pattern of language. He introduces weaker character in the same context of the heroine to show Nazo as stronger and strength her identity as a resistant woman. However, the common and similar point between them is that both of them speak to each other in a sisterly, friendly language trying to build and maintain a sisterhood relationship.

In Extract 19 below, which is another dialogue between the heroine and another female character named Soleen, who also has the same status as Nazo, one can see similar strategies of building identities and relationships followed by the author for both Nazo and Soleen.

Extract 19 / p. 63 - 64
Addresser and Addressee: Nazo and Soleen

67   Nazo: Do you have someone up <u>there</u>?
68   Soleen: All I have is <u>there</u>—my elder sister, Soz, a nurse. I mean, if she made it through.
69   Nazo: I'm sure she did.
70   Soleen: How about you?
71   Nazo: My heart is <u>there</u>.
72   Soleen: With who?
73   Nazo: Dr. Azad.
74   Soleen: Oh, you have a heart problem?
75   Nazo: Yes, and he's the only one who can treat it.

Nazo found herself in a house where Yazidi women are kept as slaves. There, she found around her Soleen and Firmesk, the two Yazidi girls who had become friends in the captives' house. They were all property of an ISIS slave dealer called Abu Salma.

Nazo uses open and friendly language with Soleen, thus trying to establish a friendship with her. In the same way, Soleen also uses friendly language with Nazo to build a friendly relationship.

Through their conversation, the writer also points out two things that they have in common: they both have a loving person in "there," and they both see "there" as hope. The word "there" refers to Mount Shinjar, an area that was outside the control of ISIS. In one way or another, the writer symbolizes "there" as a safe haven, as a virtuous city in which the two women place their hopes. The writer builds the identity of a woman with hope for the two characters, who hope to reach the beloved and the promised land.

The Extract 20 below is a dialogue between the heroine and a male character named Omed:

Extract 20 / p. 20-21
Addresser and Addressee: Nazo and Omed

76   Omed: <u>Hey</u>, <u>girl</u>, one of your <u>melons</u> fell off.
77   Nazo: <u>What do you want from me</u>?
78   Omed: <u>Your melon</u>.
79   Nazo: Oh, <u>never mind</u>.
80   Omed: No. <u>let me hold your melons</u>.
81   Nazo: <u>What</u>?
82   Omed: I mean the <u>melons </u>on your head.
83   Nazo: <u>No, thanks</u>. Keep it for your dinner, or feed it to your donkey at home.
84   Omed: I don't have a donkey at home.
85   Nazo: Strange, every family has at least one donkey.
 Omed mustered the best smile he could, while he held the smashed melon close to his heart.
86   Nazo: You know; <u>you have a cute smile</u>.

Omed is a young man who lives in the village of Nazo, and he loves Nazo, though Nazo is not aware of his love for her and she loves another young man named Azad. This conversation took place between them when Omed and Nazo met each other on the outskirts of the village.

Through the use of language, the author tries to establish a friendly relationship between Omed and Nazo. He could use formal words like "hello," and "lady," but he did not use them; instead, he used informal language with words such as "hey" and "girl," to build an identity for Omed as a man who is from the same environment, not formal, trying to befriend her.

Nazo holds melons, and Omed suggests help. By using words and phrases such as "let me hold your melons," the writer builds for Omed the identity of a man who is willing to help. As always for men, the help of females by men in terms of abilities is at the same time to show respect for women and to show themselves as powerful beings. Furthermore, the author is not only trying to show Omed as a strong man who can help by carrying objects that Nazo holds and satisfy her by reducing her fatigue, but also, tries to show Omed as a man capable of holding her organs and satisfying her sexually.

According to Hassanpour (2001), many fruits in Kurdish language references to sexual organs. For example, in Kurdish culture, melon, orenge, and apple refer to the breasts and represent sexual intentions. According to Freud (1955), our sexual desires, especially those that have been suppressed, return and express themselves from the subconscious through indirect ways such as dreams, jokes and slips of the tongue. Omed's reference to "melons" and mentioning it a number of times, even if it was unconsciously and slip of the tongue, is a sign of sexual call and carries instinctive messages to Nazo.

On the other hand, in the beginning, Nazo tries to block the open relationship that Omed is trying to build, but rather tries to establish a limited relationship, as she builds barriers and tries to end the conversation by blocking Omed's address to her, using words and phrases such as "what do you want," "never mind," "what?", "No, thanks." But finally, she seems to have succumbed to Omed's cues and messages to accept an open relationship, by telling him: "you have a cute smile."

According to Gee (2000), being male or female is part of what he calls Nature-Identity that has been given by nature. Here, in this conversation between Nazo and Omed, one can see the author's respective intent to build and maintain their own nature identity. To portray Omed as a male, the writer tries to show masculine qualities for Omed such as strength, and expresses his sexual needs more directly; while to portray Nazo as a female, by using what one can call a *feminine-language pattern*, he tries to show feminine qualities for her such as complexity, pride, emotion, and feeling.

All in all, to picture Omed as a male, the author constructs for him the identity of a strong and capable man by Omed's saying: "let me hold your melons," while he builds for Nazo in return the identity of a confident woman who does not need help by Nazo's saying: "no, thanks." Omed uses sexual language by referring to her breasts by mentioning "melons" several times; while Nazo uses sensitive and sensual language by saying: "you have a cute smile." Omed uses a more open language and tries to open conversation, while Nazo uses a more complex language and tries to end the conversation.

To shed more light on the differences and similarities found in attempts to build identities for men and women, in this case, between the heroine and the male

characters, below I requote Extract 1 between Nazo and her beloved Azad, which was previously analyzed to show the difference between the language she used with her boyfriend and the one she used with her brother to express her love to them. This time, however, the aim is to show the difference and similarities between Nazo's language as a female and Azad's language as a male.

Extract 21 / p. 13
Addresser and Addressee: Nazo and Azad

87   Nazo: Azad, life is beautiful when we open our eyes and see its true colours.

88   Azad: Colours? Life here is like sitting inside four walls and watching the world on an old black-and-white TV.

89   Nazo: Can't we bring colours into our lives here?

90   Azad: Clouds of dust conceal the rainbow of colours in the sky here. Perhaps we could change the colour of our eyes, but the world we see would be the same.

91   Nazo: Never change the colour of your eyes—I see all the colours of the world through them.

92   Azad: There are so many blue-eyed men in Germany. I can't believe mine will be special anymore.

93   Nazo: Don't go!

94   Azad: I must. The Daesh keep drawing nearer to our villages. I have to check on our arrangements. By sunset tomorrow, we will breathe in a safer land.

95   Nazo: But you are my safe land.

96   Azad: Tomorrow at dawn, in the backyard of your house, I'll howl like a wolf; that will be the signal.

97   Nazo: Oh, my cute wolf, I'll follow you anywhere you want me to go. With you, every corner of this world will be my Heaven.

According to a study conducted by Joshi, Wakslak, Appel, and Huang (2020), males tend to utilize more abstract utterances, while females speak more in concrete expressions. In the above Extract, although both Nazo and Azad speak in abstract terms when they talk about the uncolorful life of their community and region, yet, Nazo uses more concrete language than Azad. When they talk about life, Nazo talks about life itself, and to see how much it is "beautiful," the only thing to do is to "open our eyes and see its true colors." But when Azad talks about life, he uses metaphors and an abstract example by referring to life as "sitting inside four walls and watching the world on an old black-and-white TV."

Furthermore, when it comes to expressing their love for each other, Nazo is more romantic than Azad and speaks in a very aesthetical way. One can even relate this aesthetical element in her language to her Nature-Identity, because, as Holbrook (1986) proves in his research, females are more esthetical than males. That is why we can see that every attempt from Azad to portray himself as a tough man has been estheticized by Nazo; for example, Azad picturized himself as a wolf by saying, "I'll howl like a wolf." but Nazo estheticizes his picture by saying "Oh, my cute wolf."

Depicting Azad himself as a wolf is one of many other steps of the author toward building for Azad the identity of a tough man who has the responsibility of protection, particularly for Nazo. Because even before portraying himself as a wolf, he shows himself as a responsible man by saying, "I have to check on our arrangements." Moreover, he tacitly refers to himself as a responsible person and a protector by giving the orders: he is the one who decides that they should leave the village, he is the one who makes the arrangements, and he is the one who decides that he will come to the backyard of Nazo's house and howl like a wolf.

Another technique followed by the novelist to build such kind of identity for Azad is to manifest him as a decisive man who wants them to leave the country without any doubt. Azad speaks decisively in an emphatic language by using such model verbs that show certainty: "I can't," "I must," and "I have to."

The author is also involving Nazo in the process of building the identity of the protector for Azad; by referring to Azad as "safe land" and "cute wolf," by stating that she will "follow" him to wherever he goes, and that with him "every corner of this world will be [her] Heaven," she constructing for him the identity of a guard who possesses the safety, love and happiness for her.

Conclusion

All in all, these results led us to the following answers regarding the main question, which was "How does the author of the selected novel construct identities for the heroine?" one can state that the author builds identities for the heroine by the use of language, once in his description of the heroine, another in constructing heroine's speech with others. The novelist chooses particular words and follows specific grammatical structures to construct for the heroine particular identities depending on the context. For example, in some contexts he builds her a sister identity, in others a girlfriend identity, or a believer identity, etc., but as a whole picture, the author portrays her an identity of a woman who is the victim of many oppressive apparatus, yet she is steadfast and resistant.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

In the present chapter, a summary of the results of the current research regarding the construction of female identity in the selected Iraqi novel will be presented. Based on these findings, recommendations will also be made for students of English language and literature and other researchers who are interested in the literary discourse analysis, Iraqi narratives, and female identity in literature.

Summary

By looking at the findings in the previous chapter, in which some extracts from the selected Iraqi novel *What Comes with the Dust* were analysed through Gee's (2010) analytical lens used to examine how the author constructs the identities of the heroine, which aimed to explore aspects of female identity building in the selected Iraq novel, one can conclude follows.

The author has built an identity for the heroine as a woman who is on the one hand a victim of the patriarchal and traditionalist community where women are in a subordinate position, and on the other hand, a victim of the poor political and economic situation that has plunged the territory into sectarianism, wars, emigration, famine, and devastation.

Through the use of language, utilizing certain vocabulary and grammar, using positive adjectives and choosing words that expressing resistance to describe the heroine and her reactions to the different contexts and different people around her, the novelist constructed an identity for the heroine as a resistant woman who, despite

her sufferance, bears her catastrophic life, fights for survival and hopes to live a new honourable life.

The author not only uses his description of the heroine to form her identities, but he also uses specific language patterns in constructing the heroine's conversations with others, to build her identities according to the different contexts and different people she encounters. For instance, in constructing the heroine's conversations with her brother and her boyfriend, by his choice of words, word organization, use of descriptive words and adjectives, the writer uses two different linguistic patterns: brotherhood language to express her feeling toward her brother on one side, and loverhood language toward her boyfriend on the other side. All to build her identity as a sister concerning her brother, and her identity as a girlfriend concerning her boyfriend. Thus, the identities he builds for the heroine vary according to the contexts in which she lives, as well as to the different people with whom she communicates.

However, the novelist not merely constructs identities for the heroine by composing her speech with others, but also strengthens her identities through other's identities using specific discourse. For example, in Extract 10, to give the heroine the identity of a believing woman, by using Islamic terminology such as mosque, mullah, house of God, the writer forms the heroine's words as a believer. Furthermore, in her conversation with the addressee, the novelist uses particular vocabulary in Nazo's speech usually used between Muslims, such as referring to a religious man as a mullah, to give the addressee the identity of a religious man, so as to strengthen the heroine's identity as a believer.

Furthermore, using different vocabulary, grammar, and language patterns with each, the author has built identities for the heroine that are different from those

he built for the other characters. For instance, in Extract 21, he uses *feminine-language* pattern of language in Nazo's speech to accentuate her feminine identity; while in Azad's discourse, the author uses adjectives, words and phrases that manifest his masculine identity.

The identities that the writer built for the heroine, can be categorized according to Gee's (2000) four categories of identities. Building identities for Nazo by the author as human and female is building Nature-Identities for her, a category according to Gee (2000) that includes those identities constructed by forces of nature. While the identities that the writer built for the heroine as Yezidi and Kurdish can be classified in Gee's (2000) second category which he calls Institution-Identity, which is, according to him, includes the identities that social, political, and religious institutions build for us. So being Yazidi is an identity built for her by her Yazidi community. However, her identities as a resistant and hopeful woman built by the novelist can be classified in the Discourse-Identity category, because, according to Gee's (2000) classification, this category includes those identities people build for themselves through their own discourse. Finally, the heroine's identities, such as sister, girlfriend, and friend, can be classified within the category of Affinity-Identities; because according to Gee (2000), this type of identity is formed by participating in social activities, people's experiences, interests, and practices to form intimate relationships.

According to the findings, four main language patterns were found to construct the heroine's identities. The first pattern can be called the *victim/resistor* pattern. During the analysis, the researcher found that wherever the author shows the heroine as a victim of any kind of oppression, at the same time he portrays her as a resister of those oppressive agencies. The author uses this pattern to construct for the

heroine the identity of a resisting victim. The second pattern can be called the *stronger-than-others* pattern. According to the results, one can argue that the author introduces weaker characters in the same context of the heroine to illustrate her as stronger than others and reinforce her identity as a resistant woman. The third pattern can be called the *feminine-language* pattern. Based on the findings, one can state that the author uses feminine vocabulary in the heroine's speech to portray her as a female and separate her from the males. The fourth pattern can be called the *Yazidi-language* pattern. In many contexts, the author uses Yazidi terminology in the heroine's speech to depict her as a Yazidi woman.

Recommendations

With reference to the findings of the current research, a few considerable suggestions and scholarly recommendations have emerged to facilitate future researchers and continue academic investigations conducting discourse analysis to examine female identity building in literary narratives.

This study was conducted to analyse the construction of female identities in an Iraqi narration. Similar studies using the same research design of this study could be conducted to analyse the construction of female identities in other narratives in the same geographical area with similar cultural traits to see if they would provide similar results with respect to represented female identities.

The object of this study was the heroine of the selected novel, to observe her discourse and the author's use of language to build her identities. Other researcher can compare Nazo's discourse to the other characters' identity building to see if similar patterns would emerge. Moreover, future research can be done on others

Gharbi M. Mustafa's novels to examine whether he used the same language patterns to build identities for his protagonist.

Since the current study was limited to one Iraqi narration, further research should be done on other Iraqi narrations in order to generalize the results of the research and to establish that the kind of language features used in this study can be observed in other similar literary works.

This study was limited to a contemporary Iraqi novel. Other studies can be conducted to compare female identity building in contemporary Iraqi novels with female identity building in classic Iraqi novels in order to show differences and similarities in the representation of women between the two periods.

Scholars can investigate the influence of culture, patriarchy, conflicts, and wars on the representation of female identities in literary works, particularly in Middle Eastern narrations.

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    factors. Archives of Suicide Research, 15(3), 238-249.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Turnitin Report

Female Identity Building - Arsalan Fatah

by Arsalan Fatah

Submission date: 15-May-2022 05:37PM (UTC+0300)
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