

**A CRITICAL PRAGMATIC ANALYSIS OF IDENTITY IN THE NOVEL
FRANKENSTEIN IN BAGHDAD**

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the different aspects of the concept of identity as represented in the novel *Frankenstein in Baghdad* by Ahmed Saadawi. The analysis is conducted by using a Critical Pragmatic Identity Analysis (CPIA) as a methodological approach to investigate how identities are constructed, deconstructed, and negotiated within the complex social fabric of the novel. The paper adopts the qualitative research approach with a particular focus on textual analysis to accurately analyze the construction and negotiation of the concept of identity in the novel, with the purpose of revealing that identity construction in *Frankenstein in Baghdad* is a complex, dynamic process shaped by the interplay of individual agency, societal forces, and language. The findings of this study have revealed that Critical Pragmatics (CP) in Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) fashion as an approach is an effective method in discovering both the explicit and implicit aspects of identity construction. Moreover, this approach provides detailed analysis tools of how language serves as both a tool for expressing identity and for navigating power dynamics.

Keywords: *Frankenstein in Baghdad*, critical pragmatics, CDA, pragmatic analysis, Identity construction and negotiation, Power dynamics.

1. INTRODUCTION

The research on the concept of identity and its construction has gained significant attention in recent years, because understanding the portrayal of this concept is important to enhance our understanding of self and society (Côté, 2016: 4). The concept of identity is important to understand our sense of self and this fact makes identity a most understood concept for each and every individual. Nonetheless, the relevance of this concept is not limited to the personal interest of each individual, but extends to touch upon the broader social dynamics that profoundly influence daily life. The research about the concept of identity asserts that there are some political issues of representation and the implications of identity are gravely important for our personal wellbeing. Additionally, the full potential of identity research, particularly in understanding how identity shapes and is shaped by daily experiences, remains underexplored.

This study aims to analyze the different aspects of the concept of identity in the novel *Frankenstein in Baghdad*. This is done by using a critical pragmatic identity analysis (CPIA) as a methodological approach to investigate how identities are constructed, deconstructed, and negotiated within the complex social fabric of the novel. This study can be well situated within the broader research on identity which views the concept of identity as relational and contextual on the one hand, and influenced by the intricate interplay of social, cultural, and historical factors on the other (Bernhard, 2014).

This study extends the traditional pragmatic analysis and use it in analyzing the concept of identity in literary texts, by doing this, the study aims to detect and analyze the different forces that shape the characters' identities, values, behaviors, and psychological states in the context of war-torn Baghdad. Having said so, the study asserts that *Frankenstein in Baghdad* is not just a simple narrative of a group of fragmented identities but it is a deep and profound exploration of how identities are both a product of and a response to the surrounding social and political turmoil.

1.1 Background of the Study

1.1.1 Overview of *Frankenstein in Baghdad* by Ahmed Saadawi

The novel *Frankenstein in Baghdad* by Ahmed Saadawi is distinct from other novels because it successfully employs the popular political satire to explore the fragmented and disturbed identity of Iraq in the aftermath of the 2003 invasion. Saadawi, a Baghdad resident, was awarded the International Prize for Arabic Fiction in 2014 for this novel, which emerged from his participation in the IPAF's "Nadwa" writing workshop for emerging Arab authors. This novel is the product of the harsh experiences that Saadawi went through during his life. Out of these experiences, there are two distinct horrible incidents can be mentioned here; the first incident involved a young man kidnapped and gruesomely dismembered by Al Qaeda, with his body parts scattered across Baghdad, a stark symbol of the country's disintegration (Hassan, 2015). The second incident happened in the turmoil of violence between the Shiites and the Sunnis, where a grieving family was told to reassemble the remains of their loved one from a pile of unclaimed body parts in a Baghdad morgue (Salah, 2016). These events were clearly represented in the novel to reflect the profound fragmentation of identity and humanity in the Iraqi society which was torn by the war (Abdul-Jabbar, 2018).

The temporal framework of the novel is set at the height of the post-invasion chaos in Baghdad in 2005. By that time, the city was a place where survival has become an arduous task amidst widespread violence, economic collapse, and social disintegration. The Iraqi state was distorted by the foreign intervention and was powerless against the onslaught of religious militias, criminal gangs, and mercenaries that now control the streets. In this dystopian landscape, Saadawi's Frankenstein emerges—a modern, Arab-Iraqi incarnation of Shelley's monster, born out of the collective suffering and fractured identity of the Iraqi people (Hutchins, 2017).

"Whatsitsname", created by "Hadi al-Attak, a junk dealer", is a composite of body parts from victims of various sectarian attacks, symbolizing the fractured identity of Iraq itself. This monster is animated by the soul of "a hotel security guard killed in a car bombing" and driven by a desire for vengeance against those responsible for the deaths of the individuals whose body parts it now inhabits (Saadawi, 2018:130). However, as the creature embarks on its mission of retribution, it comes to the grim realization that each act of revenge only perpetuates an endless cycle of violence, highlighting the futility of seeking justice in a society where no one is truly innocent.

Saadawi's choice of the name "Daniel" for the monster underscores the novel's engagement with the traditions of magical realism, while also evoking the deep psychological scars left by decades of conflict because this creature, which represents the the collective pain and fragmented identity of Iraq, becomes a metaphor for the nation itself—a land haunted by the ghosts of its past, struggling to reconcile its shattered sense of self with the brutal realities of its present (Hart, 2015).

1.1.2 Significance of Identity as a Central Theme in the Novel

Identity is one of the most important themes in the novel, as the whole novel is interested in reflecting the complex and fractured nature of Iraqi society in the aftermath of the 2003 invasion. The novel uses the motif of the Frankenstein monster—Whatsitsname—as a metaphor to represent the fragmented identity of all of the Iraqi state, and as Frankenstein was one of the most important and central characters in the novel, we can safely say that the figure of Whatsitsname is intricately woven into the fabric of the story, influencing the characters, the plot, and the broader commentary on the human condition in times of conflict (Jawad, 2020).

Frankenstein in Baghdad is particularly interested into displaying the fragmented and disjointed sense of self that has become characteristic of Iraq at that time, this monster has been constructed from the body parts of various victims of the sectarian violence, to represent the victimized and fragmented identity of the Iraqi people. According to the narrative, it was Hadi al-Attak, a junk dealer who brought this creature into life by bringing together a "composite of victims" (Saadawi, 2018:130), and this is an obvious reference to the collective suffering and the loss of a coherent national identity, reflecting the broader national trauma.

The theme of identity was also explored, apart from the Whatsitsname character, by using fantastical and historical identities —such as the wandering souls, jinn, and ghosts that are part of Iraqi cultural vocabulary (Falah, 2017). This element helps the novel to explain how the concept of identity can be affected by both historical and contemporary factors.

The significance of identity in the novel is also reflected in the different instances of engagement with the consequences of violence and revenge, this was expressed by the monster's relentless pursuit of vengeance to symbolize the destructive impact of these forces, of victimizing and vengeance, on identity (ibid). In this perspective, the novel critiques the endless cycle of vengeance that has come to define the Iraqi experience that traps both people and communities in a vicious circle of violence.

The bottom line, Frankenstein in Baghdad uses the theme of identity to make all of its readers understand the serious effects of wars and violence on the personal and on the collective identity, the novel also provides a type of commentary on the continued struggle to maintain the sense of self and community in the face of overwhelming adversity (Rahman, 2022).

1.2 Research Problem

1.2.1 The Complex Portrayal of Identity in a War-Torn Context

The central problem which is addressed by this study is to detect and analyze the concept of identity as constructed in *Frankenstein in Baghdad*. A great focus is put on the character of the Iraqi version of Frankenstein, known as Whatsitsname, as this character was the local narrative voice that captures the spectrum of horrific traumatic experiences following the U.S.-led invasion. The creation of this monster is driven by a seemingly honorable motive which is to restore dignity to the dead, as Hani did piece the victims of the war together to ensure these victims receive the proper burials they were denied. Surprisingly, the monster adopts the vengeance mission once it was brought to life and started to exact revenge on the criminals who are responsible for the deaths

of those whose body parts it comprises. The corruption actions of Whatsitsname reflects the moral decay within the Iraqi state, as the writer meant by viewing the physical decay of the monster to view the decay of the Iraq's social fabric (Hankir, 2018). The fragmented body parts of Whatsitsname symbolize the fractured state of Iraqi identity—an identity that is, paradoxically, united by a single soul yet torn apart by sectarian violence and political decay (Najjar, 2014).

1.3 Research Questions

- 1- How is identity constructed in *Frankenstein* in Baghdad?
- 2- What critical pragmatic tools does the text utilize to convey identity-related themes?
- 3- How do power, conflict, and ideology influence identity in the narrative?

1.4 Research Objectives

- 1- To explore how identity is constructed and deconstructed in *Frankenstein* in Baghdad.
- 2- To analyze the critical pragmatic aspects of language use that reflect identity formation.
- 3- To apply (CP) analysis in (CDA) fashion in order to uncover the underlying power structures and ideologies.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Critical Pragmatics and the Construction of Identity

(CP), as articulated by Mey (2001), extends beyond the traditional scope of linguistic analysis by exploring how language functions in the construction and negotiation of identity. This approach is rooted in the traditions of (CDA) and critical linguistics, as introduced by Fowler et al. (1979), but it uniquely emphasizes how language shapes and reflects individual and collective identities within specific social contexts.

Mey's framework draws on the critical language awareness tradition of the Lancaster School, particularly the work of Norman Fairclough and his colleagues, as well as the discourse theories of Teun van Dijk (Fairclough, 1992; van Dijk, 1997). Within this framework, language is not merely a tool for communication but a dynamic process through which identities are constructed, contested, and understood. (CP) focuses on how different uses of language manifest in various contexts, highlighting the role of pragmatics in shaping our understanding of self and others (Mey 2001).

Recognizing that language use in different contexts whether in everyday conversations, institutional settings, or literary narratives is an important factor that contributes to the ongoing formation and negotiation of identity, and is particularly important if we are to properly analyze and understand the concept of identity in *Frankenstein in Baghdad* through (CP), as emphasized by Mey (2001).

2.2 Pragmatics as a Tool for CDA

CDA and pragmatics are two interconnected approaches that each of them complements the other in the study of language, power, and identity. CDA provides a framework for analyzing the ways in which discourse shapes and is shaped by social power relations, ideologies, and institutions, whereas pragmatics, on the other hand, focuses on how context influences the

interpretation of language, particularly in terms of meaning, implication, and intention (Levinson, 1983; van Dijk, 2008).

CDA focuses on studying and discovering the hidden power dynamics in discourse by looking into how language perpetuates societal inequalities and serves as a tool for maintaining or challenging power. Within the context of CP, CDA becomes particularly valuable as it allows researchers to dissect the implicit and inferred meanings within a text. The use of CDA of the pragmatic tools such as implicature, presupposition, and insinuation, is often essential in political or socially charged rhetoric, and can reveal underlying prejudices or ideological stances that are not immediately apparent (Reisigl, 2004), and this is especially relevant in contexts where direct expression of certain ideologies is taboo or socially unacceptable, and thus, indirect language becomes a means of communication.

The application of CP in CDA approach involves several stages, the first of which, it requires an understanding of the broader historical, social, and political context in which an utterance occurs. For example, in *Frankenstein in Baghdad*, the socio-political turmoil in post-invasion Iraq is crucial to understanding the narrative's exploration of identity. By situating the text within this context, one can analyze how the language used by characters and the narrative voice reflects, reinforces, or challenges the complex identities of the Iraqi people during this period (Wodak, 2000).

Furthermore, this approach emphasizes the importance of context in meaning-making processes. In this method, not only the immediate linguistic environment (co-text) is significant, but also the broader socio-political context. This approach is necessary to uncover the latent meanings and ideological underpinnings of discourse, for example, in analyzing the coded language or metaphorical references in the novel, a researcher might explore how these linguistic choices serve to critique or expose the realities of sectarian violence and the fragmentation of national identity (Reisigl, 2004).

In sum, combining the detailed linguistic focus of pragmatics with the socio-political awareness of CDA can be of great benefit for scholars in order to analyze the detailed ways in which identity is negotiated, contested, and constructed through discourse (Wodak, 2000: 186).

2.3 Theories of Identity Construction: Social Identity Theory and Postcolonial Identity

Social Identity Theory focuses on the dynamics of group membership and the different and variant relationship within these groups and offers a perspective on how identities are constructed based on the social categories to which individuals belong. According to this theory, the very concept of identity is a social construct that can be traced back to the parameters of group affiliations such as nationality, gender, race, or political affiliation. These identities contribute significantly to an individual's self-concept, conferring self-esteem and status as part of the social group (Hogg et. al. 1995). Social identity theory suggests that individuals derive their sense of identity from the groups to which they belong, and this leads similar individuals to adopt similar behaviors that reinforce the group's norms and distinctions from other groups, for example, depersonalization, which is a key process within this theory, occurs when individuals are viewed and behave according to the stereotypical attributes of their group, rather than as unique persons

(ibid). This process can lead to different conflicts at the boundaries of each group because as individuals strive to align their behaviors with group expectations, sometimes at the expense of their personal identity (Tajfel and Turner, 1979).

Postcolonial Identity Theory examines the complex process of forming the distinct identity under the colonial and postcolonial experience, this theory, as framed by scholars like Edward Said and Frantz Fanon, explores the profound effects of colonialism on the identities of the colonized, highlighting how the colonial encounter disrupted traditional identities and imposed new, often oppressive, frameworks for self-understanding (Ashcroft et al. 1989). Fanon, in particular, argues that colonialism instilled a sense of inferiority among the colonized, leading them to internalize the values and cultural norms of the colonizers, a phenomenon he described as wearing "white masks" (Fanon 1967). This internal conflict creates a crisis of identity because the people who have been colonized will be torn between their indigenous and original identity on the one hand, and between the new identity that is imposed on them by the colonial powers on the other hand. This is why the postcolonial identity is thus marked by a struggle for self-definition and the reclamation of a cultural identity that has been marginalized or suppressed (Bhabha, 1994). Said's concept of "Orientalism" further elucidates how the West constructed a distorted image of the East, which in turn shaped the identity of colonized peoples in opposition to these stereotypes (Said, 1978).

2.4 The Role of Language in Constructing and Negotiating Identity

Language plays a crucial role in the construction and negotiation of identity because it can serve as both a tool for expressing individual identity and as a medium through which social identities are communicated and contested. Identity is mainly produced through the use of language in everyday conversations, and this means that people engage in "identity work" in their conversations because they are always either navigating or adhering to the expectations that are associated with their particular social roles (Gee, 2014; Bucholtz & Hall, 2005). In this same line, McAdams (1995) proposes that the construction of identity through language occurs directly in interaction, where people use talk to produce and maintain their identities, and discursively, through media and other forms of communication, and this process is particularly evident in situations where individuals face identity struggles, such as managing stigmatized statuses. likewise, Goffman (1963) discusses how different people employ various linguistic strategies to cope with the stigma of social inequalities and that they use language either to deflect or embrace their stigmatized identity.

Moreover, language is a flexible resource that allows individuals to adapt and shift their identities according to the particular social context. For this reason, Antaki et. al. (1996) highlight how identities can change dynamically during conversations, and this is the result of the fact that identity is not a static attribute but rather a fluid and responsive one that is related to the ongoing interaction. This perspective aligns with Verkuyten's (1997) ideas in which he criticized the social identity theory. Verkuyten proposes that different individuals from the same ethnic minority can change their identity by the use of particular forms of language to navigate and redefine their social positions rather than adhering to fixed categories.

Additionally, Hermans (1996) asserts that the use of language in constructing identity must be analyzed in relationship to other related factors such as power dynamics and social hierarchies, for this reason, Hermans emphasizes the importance of collective voices such as social dialects and professional jargons in shaping identity, pointing to the broader societal structures that influence individual identity work.

2.5 Application to *Frankenstein in Baghdad*

All of the above mentioned ideas about the role of language in identity construction can be applied within the context of *Frankenstein in Baghdad* to understand how characters, particularly the Whatsitsname, use language to navigate their fragmented identities.

The theories of social identity and postcolonial identity are applied to understand the complex layering of both the individual and collective identities within the postcolonial context in Iraq at that time, because the theory of Social identity highlights how the characters in the novel, especially the central figure of the Whatsitsname, embody the tension between personal and social identities, as the very process of the creature's formation from disparate human body parts can be seen as a metaphor for the fragmented identity imposed by war and occupation, which aligns with Tajfel and Turner's ideas of social categorization and depersonalization. The identity of Whatsitsname, just like those of individuals in postcolonial societies, is shaped by the violence and chaos of a society in flux, struggling to reconcile the remnants of its past with the realities of its present.

The Postcolonial identity theory, as articulated by scholars like Fanon and Said, is expected to be effective for the purposes of this study because it can be handy in providing deep insights into the exploration of the concept of identity in this novel, as the Whatsitsname's creation and subsequent quest for vengeance can be interpreted as a manifestation of the postcolonial subject's struggle with the legacy of colonialism, echoing Fanon's notion of identity crises stemming from colonial oppression and the internalized inferiority complex. The settings of this novel in the war-torn Baghdad is purposely meant to view the postcolonial reality in which the identities are constantly contested and reconstructed amidst the debris of cultural and political upheaval. Thus, the identity crises depicted in *Frankenstein in Baghdad* can be critically understood through the lenses of social identity theory and postcolonial theory, providing a rich framework for analyzing the novel's portrayal of the fractured and hybrid identities born out of conflict and colonization.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 CP Studies

The field of CP encompasses more than one approach, but the common interests of all of the approaches within the field share the same interest in the area of intersection between language, power, and social action. The field of CP has not been widely disseminated as other fields in pragmatics, but it has seen significant contributions from influential theorists like Habermas (1984), Mey (2001), and Korta and Perry (2011).

One of the most prominent figures in social theory is Habermas (1984) who is recognized for linking pragmatics with the concept of power through his work on "universal pragmatics", especially for his distinction between "communicative discourse," which is understanding-

oriented, and “strategic discourse,” which is power-oriented, highlights how linguistic constraints in institutional settings can distort communication due to power and inequality. The theory of Habermas is built upon three validity claims which are: truth, normative rightness, and sincerity—with proposing that these claims do underlie all communication and are rooted in his conceptualization of reality as divided into three worlds: the objective, social, and subjective.

Mey (2001) extends the scope of critical pragmatics by integrating concepts from the field of CDA. His critical perspective emphasizes the relationship between power and social struggle in communication. Although Fairclough, a key figure in CDA, critiqued Mey's approach for its focus on textual analysis rather than ideological aspects, Mey's work remains foundational in exploring how language shapes and is shaped by social power dynamics.

Korta and Perry (2011) have taken a different approach, rooted in the philosophy of language. Their work focuses on the semantics-pragmatics interface, particularly through the concepts of “language as action” and “reflexive versus referential truth conditions.” Unlike Habermas and Mey, Korta and Perry prioritize communicative intentions and how language users derive meaning in specific contexts, marking a shift from critical theory to the study of communication as a philosophical inquiry.

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1. Research Design

This study adopts a qualitative research approach, emphasizing textual analysis as the primary method for investigating the construction and negotiation of identity in *Frankenstein in Baghdad* as it is widely acknowledged that the qualitative research is particularly suited to exploring complex social phenomena such as identity. It allows an in-depth examination of the ways in which language and discourse shape and reflect the identities of characters within the novel. The use of qualitative approach can be fruitful in providing a detailed analysis of how identity is constructed, contested, and transformed through narrative techniques, character interactions, and the broader sociopolitical context depicted in the novel.

4.2. Data Collection

The data of this study consists of a group of key passages from the novel, these passages are selected on the basis of their relation to the concept of identity and its portrayal in the novel. Furthermore, the passages are chosen based on their relevance to the research questions, specifically how characters in the novel navigate their identities amidst the chaos and fragmentation of war-torn Baghdad. The selection process of the designated passages starts by a close and cautious reading and re-reading of the entire novel while paying attention to the moments in which characters explicitly or implicitly engage in identity work. The next step is to collect these passages while considering the particular contexts in which they are uttered. Then, these passages are analyzed to uncover the linguistic and discursive strategies used to construct and negotiate identity, as well as to explore how these strategies reflect the broader social and political dynamics at play within the narrative.

4.3 Analytical Framework

The analysis process for the selected passages, according to the criteria explained in Section 4.2, is performed by applying the CP framework, which incorporates Fairclough's (2001) approach of CDA. This is because Mey's (2001) CP explicitly integrates the tenets of CDA, providing a robust framework for examining how language shapes and reflects identity within specific social contexts.

This analysis focus on two key dimensions of identity as expressed in the novel: The first considers the manner by which identity is structured within the interactions between the fragmented society of Baghdad and the central character, the Whatsitsname, who symbolizes the collective trauma and fragmented identities of the city's inhabitants. The second dimension is related to the question of how the language used by characters in their interactions serves as a tool for negotiating individual identities amidst the chaotic social landscape.

Critical analysis is a multidisciplinary approach that can be considered one of the best methods for addressing social problems, especially those related to the concepts of power, ideology and identity (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997: 271-280), within this broad notion, the core tenets of this analysis, according to them, include:

- Addressing social problems: It looks at how identities are constructed, challenged, or reinforced through discourse and how this impacts individuals and groups in society.
- Power relations are discursive: Identities are shaped and negotiated through language, which reflects underlying power dynamics. The way people talk about themselves and others can either reinforce or challenge power structures that influence identity, such as gender, ethnicity, or class.
- Discourse is interpretive and explanatory: Analyzing discourse involves interpreting how identities are constructed and explained through language. It seeks to uncover the deeper meanings and implications of how identities are portrayed and understood in different contexts.

Discourse is a form of social action: Language use directly impacts identity. Through discourse, people actively shape their own identities and those of others, influencing how they are perceived and treated in society. This can include reinforcing, challenging, or redefining identities through language.

These principles are essential to this study, particularly in analyzing how identity is constructed and contested within the novel. As Oni (2010) notes, the most important object in this kind of analysis is to detect the connections between discourse and social practices on the one hand, and the social structures, especially those that may be opaque to readers, on the other. This enables the analysis to have the tool for exploring implicit ideologies surrounding identity.

Fairclough (2001) draws heavily on Hallidayan functional linguistics. Fairclough's approach, which includes a cognitive dimension referred to as members' resources (MR), is particularly relevant to this study. MR encompasses the internalized knowledge, beliefs, values, and assumptions that individuals draw upon when producing or interpreting texts (Fairclough, 2001:

20). These resources, which are socially generated, are crucial for understanding how characters in *Frankenstein* in Baghdad navigate and construct their identities.

5. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

5.1. Identity Construction in the novel *Frankenstein in Baghdad*

In the novel, identity is intricately constructed and fragmented, often reflecting the chaotic environment of a war-torn society. The passage about the family dreaming of Hasib exemplifies how fragmented and collective identity takes shape through shared memory and loss. The family's dreams of Hasib re-create a "dream body" to complete his soul, metaphorically representing how individual identities in the novel are often pieced together from collective experiences and trauma as discussed by (McAdams, 1995). The use of language to describe the stitching together of dreams mirrors the novel's overarching theme of fragmented identities shaped by war, as seen in the *Whatsitsname*, whose body is similarly composed of disjointed parts.

Hadi's determination to find the real killer of Hasib (Saadawi, 2018:143), even after recognizing the Sudanese suicide bomber's involvement, illustrates how identity becomes entangled in unresolved guilt and responsibility. This quest for closure is linked to Hasib's soul, signifying a cultural belief in the importance of giving the dead peace through justice. Hadi's role becomes that of an investigator, constructing his identity around this pursuit. Hadi's need to exploit situations to his advantage also reflects the identity of a survivor, using manipulation as a tool to cope with an unstable environment.

Identity is shown to be shaped by collective trauma and "It has created a death machine working in the other direction because it's afraid of the Other" (p. 137). This fear becomes a unifying yet destructive force, where groups protect themselves by constructing identities in opposition to each other, creating an endless cycle of violence. Here, identity is not just a personal construct but a communal one, shaped by fear and the need for survival in a conflict-driven society. This example aligns with the concept of group identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), where individuals define themselves based on their group's stance against perceived threats.

Elishva's refusal to "leave her home and move to a place she knew nothing about" (p. 74), despite the encouragement of Father Josiah highlights her identity as tied to place and tradition. Her identity is constructed through resilience and a deep connection to her Assyrian heritage. The tension between Father Josiah's religious argument and Elishva's personal attachment to her home reveals the ways in which religious, cultural, and personal identities intersect. Elishva's struggle reflects the broader theme in the novel of how war and displacement challenge traditional identities.

Hadi's transformation after Nahem's death, (p. 32), also shows a shift in identity caused by trauma. His dual nature outwardly jovial but inwardly despondent demonstrates how identity can fracture under the weight of loss and violence. Hadi's two-faced identity mirrors the fragmented state of Baghdad itself, where people mask their inner turmoil to survive in a broken society. This aligns with Erikson's (1968) theory of identity crisis, where trauma leads to a fractured sense of self.

This fragmented identity can be further examined through the lens of social identity theory. The *Whatsitsname*'s existence as a creature formed from the body parts of multiple individuals

symbolizes the fractured identity of a society in conflict, mirroring the postcolonial struggles of Iraq (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). His constant search for a sense of belonging and recognition echoes the collective trauma experienced by Baghdad's inhabitants, where personal and social identities are under siege, influenced by violence and external pressures.

Elishva's perception of the Lord as an old friend contrasts with Father Josiah's authoritative and domineering view, (in chapter 5), emphasizing how individual identity is shaped by personal belief systems. Elishva's identity is tied to a sense of faith, not in the abstract, hierarchical deity, but in a more intimate, humanized relationship. This aligns with Hermans' (1996) idea that identity is constructed within the interplay of personal experience and cultural narratives, as Elishva's unique belief system differentiates her from others within her religious community.

In the case of Mahmoud, his self-perception as "stupid" reflects the way he internalizes failure and chaos as part of his identity, shaped by a lack of control over the outcomes in his life. This resonates with Goffman's (1963) theory of the "presentation of self," where individuals manage their self-image in response to life events, this means that the identity of Mahmoud is built on the random outcomes of his life rather than any deliberate, rational decision-making, emphasizing how identity can be shaped by circumstances beyond one's control.

The Whatsitsname, in Chapter 9, reflects on how people reacted to him due to his grotesque appearance: "His horrible face was an incentive for them to attack him, they didn't know anything about him, but they were driven by that latent hatred." (p. 144). This passage shows exactly how the type of identity can be imposed on some individuals on the basis of their external perceptions "his horrible face", because the beggars react with hostility not because of the Whatsitsname's actions but because his appearance challenges their notions of normalcy. This is an accurate reflection of the manner by which a particular society constructs identities based on appearance, reinforcing the idea that identity is often shaped by others' perceptions rather than by intrinsic qualities (Fairclough, 2001).

The Whatsitsname provides a direct commentary on his own identity by stating: "I represent the impossible mix that never was achieved in the past. I'm the first true Iraqi citizen" (p. 160-1). This statement is important in showing that the identity of Whatsitsname is a composite of Iraq's diverse cultural, ethnic, and social fragments, because his body, which is made of "parts of people from diverse backgrounds," symbolizes a utopian vision of an inclusive Iraq. One that transcends historical divisions. This passage emphasizes the fact that the concept of identity in this novel is linked to the different types of tensions whether they were national or ethnic, and suggests that the Whatsitsname's fragmented body represents the fragmentation of Iraq itself, and that identity is both a product of historical forces and a potential solution to Iraq's divisions, reflecting how collective identity is shaped by historical trauma (Habermas, 1992).

The discussion of criminality adds another layer to the process of constructing an identity because the figure of Whatsitsname is concerned about the legitimacy of the body parts used to repair him, asking: "But who's to say how criminal someone is?" This passage explores the fluidity of identity, questioning whether a person's criminality is fixed or contextual. On the same line, we can consider that the response of the magician "Each of us has a measure of criminality"—further complicates the notion of a stable identity, and this suggests that identity is shaped by both past

actions and societal judgments, aligning with Foucault's (1977) theory that power structures define criminality and morality, thus shaping how identities are constructed and understood.

Chapter 16 (p. 284) continues to explore the fluidity of identity and describes how “people who had returned from long journeys with new names and new identities” or those who had “survived many deaths” found their identities challenged or altered by changing political realities, and this reflects the instability of identity in post-dictatorship Iraq, where individuals are forced to adapt to new social and political contexts. These examples emphasize how identities are continually reconstructed in response to external circumstances, aligning with Giddens' (1991) theory of identity as a reflexive project, where individuals constantly negotiate their sense of self in relation to societal changes.

5.2. Pragmatic Tools in the Novel

The pragmatic tools in the novel highlight the complexities of identity through conversational implicature and speech acts that reveal deeper societal tensions. In Chapter 10, the Whatsitsname's description of himself as “the first true Iraqi citizen”, (p. 161), carries a pragmatic implicature that critiques the failure of the Iraqi state to produce a unified national identity. His statement is not just a declaration of his own identity but a critique of the fragmented nature of Iraqi society. By presenting himself as the embodiment of what Iraq could have been, the Whatsitsname uses irony to comment on the country's inability to reconcile its diverse populations.

The Magician's discussion of criminality in Chapter 10 also employs pragmatic implicature to complicate notions of innocence and guilt. When he says, “Someone who's been killed through no fault of his own might be innocent today, but he might have been a criminal ten years ago,” (p. 161), he is not only commenting on the fluid nature of morality but also on the arbitrary nature of justice in post-war Iraq. This implicature challenges the notion of fixed identities, suggesting that criminality—and by extension, identity—is constantly being renegotiated depending on context and history.

The spokesman for the Baghdad city authorities uses a declarative speech act to assert control over the archaeological site: “We do not take half measures. We're going to preserve these remains for future generations” (p. 332). This speech act is a performance of authority, using pragmatic language to legitimize the government's decision to repave the street. The city's decision to cover the site rather than preserve it publicly reflects broader themes of erasure and control over historical narratives. The statement, framed as an act of preservation, pragmatically hides the city's disinterest in addressing the complexities of Iraq's past. This linguistic strategy reflects pragmatic repetition, where language reinforces the social reality it describes, echoing how fear shapes identity and behavior in Iraq.

Elishva's monologues with herself, or with other women in the church, reveal how speech acts function as coping mechanisms. Her arguments about not leaving her home serve as acts of resistance, both to external pressure and to the internal fear of losing her identity. The performative nature of her speech—reaffirming her decision to stay—reinforces her identity as someone deeply rooted in tradition and personal history.

Mahmoud's repeated statement "Be positive. Be a positive force and you'll survive" demonstrates a speech act where language is used to reinforce his psychological survival in a war-torn environment. The obsessive repetition of the phrase, even when the batteries in the recorder die, indicates a disconnect between the idealistic belief in positivity and the harsh reality of his circumstances. This mirrors how speech acts in pragmatic theory (Austin, 1962) can fail or lose their power when divorced from context, which in Mahmoud's case underscores the fragility of identity in the face of trauma and uncertainty.

Hasib's detachment from the explosion scene also carries implicature. His sense of calm, as he watches the destruction from high in the air, suggests a pragmatic distance from violence—his identity is no longer tied to the physical realm but to a more ethereal or detached state. This detachment reflects how trauma can alter one's perception of self, as Hasib's identity becomes split between the physical and the mental, mirroring the fragmented identities of the novel's other characters.

5.3. Power, Ideology, and Identity

Power relations and ideological forces are central to the shaping of identity in *Frankenstein in Baghdad*. The repeated references to fear—whether it is fear of death, fear of the "Other," or fear as a driving force behind violence—highlight how identity is constructed in response to power dynamics. As Mahmoud reflects on the tragic cycle of violence, he notes how fear drives groups to form militias and justify their actions, reinforcing Tajfel and Turner's (1979) theory that group identities are formed in opposition to perceived threats. In this sense, the novel portrays how power structures, such as the occupation forces and militias, shape identities by dictating who belongs to the "in-group" and who is marginalized.

Power and ideology deeply influence the construction of identity in this novel. The Whatsitsname's reflection on being an "impossible mix" (p. 161) highlights the ideological tensions at play in post-war Iraq, where ethnic and sectarian divisions continue to shape national identity. His existence as a composite of different bodies is a metaphor for the nation's fragmented identity, and his claim to be "the first true Iraqi citizen" (ibid) reflects an ideological critique of the state's failure to unify its people. This critique aligns with Althusser's (1971) theory of ideology, where the state imposes identities that reflect its own interests rather than the reality of its citizens' diverse experiences.

The Baghdad city authorities' decision to fill in the archaeological site rather than preserve it reflects the power dynamics of historical erasure. The authorities' control over the site and their justification that "future generations" (p. 332) will decide how to deal with it reflects an ideological attempt to control historical narratives. The city effectively erases a significant part of Baghdad's past by repaving the street, and this symbolizes exercising power over how history is remembered and how identities are constructed in relation to that history.

The conversation between Hadi and the Whatsitsname about Hasib's killer highlights the power dynamics at play in determining justice. While Hadi tries to assign responsibility to someone, the Whatsitsname's insistence on finding the "real" killer suggests a critique of superficial or arbitrary justice. This tension reflects how power structures (e.g., the hotel management, the government)

often obscure the truth and complicate the process of seeking accountability, echoing Foucault's (1972) theory of how power and knowledge shape discourse.

Power relations and ideology are also effective in shaping the identity of the characters in the novel, for example, Mahmoud's realization that "terrorist" is a cover term that is used to refer to any forces that are against the current government reveals how power structures manipulate language to control narratives and identities. This goes in line with Foucault's (1972) theory of discourse and power, where those in authority dictate the terms under which each individual should be described and the social identity is defined by the criteria of the authority which defines who is a "terrorist" and who is a "patriot." Mahmoud's identity, like that of many characters in the novel, is shaped by these broader ideological forces, where power dynamics impose labels and categories on individuals and groups.

5.4. Critical Reflection

The application of CP and the aid of CDA in the analysis is proved to be effective in uncovering the layers of meaning behind the characters' identities. The focus on the type of language and the linguistic expressions used construct the identities of the characters provided accurate insights into how individuals in postcolonial contexts like Iraq navigate their fragmented, hybrid identities. Fairclough's CDA framework is particularly useful in showing how the discourse, particularly in the context of the Iraqi war, is important in understanding the construction of social identities and revealing the underlying power dynamics at play.

The effectiveness of CP and CDA in analyzing this novel is evident in revealing the different and multi layered complexities that are relevant to the concepts of identity, power and language in the novel. This was proved when the analysis in this study revealed that implicature, speech acts, and repetition were heavily used to express the identities of the characters in a context of war, faith, and personal trauma. CP is also proved to be effective in revealing how different characters' use language to express internal struggles, while CDA exposes the broader power dynamics that shape these identities.

5.5 Results and Discussion

The analysis reveals that construction of identity in *Frankenstein in Baghdad* is a complex and dynamic process that is affected by a lot of factors that include language, societal forces and individual qualities. The use of pragmatic tools revealed that identity is not fixed but constantly negotiated through discourse and this goes in line with Antaki et al.'s (1996) and Hermans' (1996) theories on the fluidity of identity.

The novel also highlights how power and ideology are efficient factors in determining and shaping identity, particularly in the context of the Iraqi war, as the novel repeatedly deals with the theme of fear and visualizes it as driving both individual and collective actions and influencing how identities are formed and contested. CP, particularly Fairclough's approach, proves effective in uncovering the hidden ideologies behind these identity constructions. Moreover, it provides a detailed analysis of how language serves as both a tool for expressing identity and for navigating power dynamics.

6. CONCLUSION

The analysis reveals that this novel is deeply interested in the themes of fragmentation, power, and the human struggle to define the identities of the characters in the chaotic and war-torn Iraq. Along the entire novel, identity is continuously portrayed not as a stable or innate quality but as something constructed, negotiated, and constantly evolving, influenced by external forces such as fear, violence, trauma, and historical memory.

The novel heavily used the pragmatic tools such as speech acts and implicature to present different characters who navigate their identities in a landscape defined by power imbalances and ideological conflicts. These pragmatic elements revealed that identity is shaped by both personal experiences and broader societal forces, emphasizing the relational and contextual nature of self-conception in a post-conflict society.

The novel portrays how power and ideology intersect to shape the individual's sense of self to the degree that reduces them to mere pawns in the larger ideological struggles. Consequently, identity becomes not just a personal journey but also a site of resistance, survival, and complicity within the power structures that govern Iraq's social and political reality.

Finally, the use of CP with the help of CDA is effective unpacking the complex portrayal of identity, and in examining how the characters use language to construct their identities in response to trauma, conflict, and social expectations.

6.1. Contributions to Literature

It is expected that this study can make a significant contribution to the fields of Iraqi literature, identity studies, and CP by offering a detailed analysis of *Frankenstein in Baghdad* in relation to the concept of identity which in turn is driven by the power dynamics. It is so expected, since this study can contribute to deepening our understanding of contemporary Iraqi narratives and their engagement with themes of displacement, violence, and memory.

The analysis proves the fluid and dynamic nature of identity, showing how language, power, and fear shape self-perception and collective identity. These findings are important to enrich the discussions on how identity is influenced by external forces, particularly in post-conflict societies.

Additionally, this approach enriches the understanding of how CP tools can be used on a works of literature to convey deeper meanings related to power, ideology, and selfhood.

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