

## Toxic Femininity in “Men Explain Things to Me” by Rebecca Solnit: A Critical Stylistic Analysis

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### ABSTRACT

The current study is a critical stylistic analysis (CSA) of toxic femininity in **Men Explain Things to Me by Rebecca Solnit**. This research aims to investigate the linguistic strategies and tools by which feminist texts interpolate the ideologies of toxic femininity.

The study endeavors to answer the following question: What are the linguistic strategies contemporary feminists' writers use to validate toxic femininity as woman-empowering in their books?

The researcher uses one book written by a feminist activist as an example of female writers. Lesly Jeffries' (2010) Textual-Conceptual model for Critical Stylistics is used for analysis. Additionally, a qualitative approach is used in data analysis followed by a statistical examination to explain the relevance of the data acquired. The quantitative statistical analysis is meant to supplement the outcomes of the qualitative investigation.

Based on the findings, the study concludes that specific linguistic strategies are used by the writers to deceive women with an empowering reality for toxic feminism. The number of linguistic realizations has led the researcher to identify some negative and toxic ideologies that this feminist writer imbed in her book.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Feminism is the belief in and advocacy for gender equality in politics, economics, and society, mainly via organized engagement in favor of women's rights and interests. (Merriam-Webster, 2018). Contemporary feminism has produced several techniques for achieving the new goals, such as encouraging women in their books to break away from perceived victimization, revolting against the purported patriarchal system, and expressing authority. Krawcheck, the writer of *Own it: The Power of Women at Work*, declares that empowerment should be attained through fighting and concurring the current holder of power, that is, men. (Ellevest Network, 2017).

These actions are powered by certain ideologies that form a sort of side effect to the movement of contemporary feminism, which result in some backlash. The set of ideologies is what makes some people associate feminism with toxic behavior, hence the emergence of the concept of toxic femininity. Feminism has been studied by different scholars, however, none, to the best knowledge of the researcher, has addressed feminism from a critical stylistic perspective in terms of toxicity. Hence, the researcher argues that the increasing number of books produced by feminist writers in recent years, and the gap that has been addressed in previous studies, have

established the need for conducting such a study to investigate the style via which feminist authors disseminate their toxic femininity to the public.

## 2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

### 2.1 Critical Stylistics

Critical Stylistic Analysis (CSA) is a language study approach developed by Jeffries that combines stylistic analysis and Critical Discourse Analysis. It arose as a reaction to CDA because it does not provide a satisfactory set of analytical tools, as Fairclough (1989) acknowledges:

The present chapter is written at an introductory level for people who do not have extensive backgrounds in language study...The set of textual features included is highly selective, containing only those which tend to be most significant for critical analysis. (p.110)

Despite the fact that Fowler gives the following tools (transitivity, some syntactic changes of the phrase, lexical structure, modality, and speech actions), Jeffries believes that they do not provide comprehensive coverage of linguistic aspects. Critical stylistics recognizes the influence of CDA. As a result, critical stylistics seeks to give analytical tools for assessing how a text impacts the ideology of its recipients. Text is more than just a grammatical unit; it is also a semantic unit since it contains both form and meaning (Abdul Zahra & Abbas, 2004). According to Jeffries (2010), all works have significance and conceal a certain ideology, whether they be political texts, poetry, novels, or newspapers.

Jeffries (2010) establishes essential stylistic aims that are comparable to Simpson's (1993). Jeffries is interested in the aesthetic choices and textual analyses made by a text creator, whether purposefully or unintentionally. This type of communication transmits certain ideals that impact the text receiver. The goal of applying critical stylistics techniques is to make the text receiver aware of these ideas, whether or not they change their minds. Jefferies (2015) also makes use of Halliday's metafunctions by replicating them. She gives these metafunctions new names (textual, interpersonal, and ideational). Thus, in Jefferies' terminology, the textual meta-function mimics the linguistic meaning in that it contains the language structure and meaning, including phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics.

The ideational meta-function is referred to by Jefferies as "textual meaning," and it represents the co-textual influence through which the language system develops specific structures. It is also reflected in the way they try to offer specific ideals. It responds to the question of what text does in generating an ideational 'world.' This textual meaning is crucial to critical stylistics since it sits in the middle of language structures and language systems, as well as contextual effects and individual responses to the circumstances. Finally, interpersonal meaning in

pragmatics is entirely contextual. It has to do with what the language is doing to or with the individuals in the circumstance.

According to Jeffries (2010), how language represents the world is entirely dependent on how the author describes what he or she sees in a linguistic form. For her, all texts have an ideological foundation. She goes on to say that it is not difficult to spell out explicitly the ideas that a work builds in order for its readers to accept or reject it. To summarize, Jeffries (2010) defines critical stylistics as a way of discovering ideology in any piece of writing, whether or not you agree with it.

## **2.2 Jeffries's Framework of Critical Stylistics**

Jeffries (2007, 2010a) uses ten conceptual categories in her framework, such as identifying and describing, presenting events or states, hypothesizing, negating, equating and contrasting, and so on, to provide readers with an understanding of the sort of information each category represents. These analytical tools are illustrated in the subsections below.

### **2.2.1 Naming and Describing**

According to Jeffries (2010a), there are many ways in which texts might be considered to 'name' the world. In naming, there may be a choice between two or more methods of denoting or referring to the same object, e.g., a person's name may be changed with another that refers to the same person. She goes on to say that there are various methods of naming that may have an ideological influence in a certain situation. Furthermore, the author proposes three key ways in which naming might generate ideological meanings in texts. She believes that naming is a broad descriptive concept that encompasses a variety of linguistic concepts:

1. Choice of noun. The chosen name is to indicate a reference.
2. Noun modification. The structure of a noun phrase and modifiers can determine the quality of referent, i.e., describing.
3. The resolution to utilize a certain name not the other is expressed as a verbal process, i.e., nominalization.

### **2.2.2 Representing Actions/Events and States**

According to Jeffries (2010a), a speaker can select a lexical verb that conveys the circumstance in the manner desired; for example, a problem can be conveyed as an occurrence, an action, or a condition of affairs. The event is portrayed in the present progressive tense, the action in the present perfect tense, and the condition of things in the present simple tense. The transitivity of Halliday precisely indicates a thread of meaning. Transitivity is used here in a functional linguistic sense. According to Simpson (1993, p.88), transitivity "refers usually to how the phrase expresses meaning." Furthermore, he (1993) highlights that a speaker expresses his or her perspective of the world in language as well as how the phrase presents meaning, i.e., his or her experience of the world around him or her. Thus, transitivity is the

manifestation of Halliday's ideational meta-function, which is concerned with describing experiences in terms of "whether they reflect acts, states of thought, or just states of being" (p.88).

According to Jeffries (2015), choosing the right verb for each phrase determines transitivity. Jeffries (2014b) states that transitivity is about the verbal element of the structure or the clause because it has the ability to link actions, events, and states to specific participants, i.e., the speaker's choice of the main verb in the clause may alter the hearer's potential perception of the process.

### 2.2.3 Equating and Contrasting

According to Jeffries (2010a), a text expresses what its authors/speakers believe to be equal or contrasting. The literary conceptual function of equating and contrasting is primarily concerned with the development of oppositional and equivalent meanings. Jeffries (2007) notes in a previous statement that creating a new opposite is dependent on comprehending traditional opposites such as high/low, good/bad. Syntactic triggers, according to her (2010a), can be used to build equivalent and opposing meanings. According to Jeffries (2010), equivalence or equating triggers are mainly included in the following list:

1. Intensive relational equivalence x is y, x seems y, x becomes y, x appears y
2. Appositional equivalences x, y, z
3. Metaphorical equivalences x is y, x is like y

While for contrasting or opposition, Jones (2002), Davies (2008) and Jeffries (2007) set possible linguistic realizations as the following list shows:

1. Negated opposition x not y
2. Transitional opposition turn x into y
3. Comparative oppositions more x than y
4. Replacive opposition x instead of y
5. Concessive opposition despite x, y
6. Explicit oppositions x by contrast with y
7. Parallelism He liked x, she liked y, your house is x, mine is y
8. Contrastives x, but y

### 2.2.4 Hypothesizing

Hypothesising is founded on modality, which is defined as "the degree of commitment with which a speaker vouchs for a notion" (Fowler, 1986, p. 57). Modality can be expressed in a variety of ways, including auxiliary verbs, adverbs, and conditional structures.

Hypothesizing is an important part of textual meaning building because it allows the reader or listener to access the text producer's perspectives on what is being addressed. Jeffries (2007) remarks on this propensity for writers to

communicate with communicate with a high degree of certainty, citing the usage of very specific epistemic modality in women's books to discuss personal health issues. The examination of hypothesizing in the current study emphasizes times where writers convey their thoughts regarding the meaning of feminism, whether they are they are their views on how "feminism" should be interpreted.

### 2.2.5 Prioritizing

Prioritization considers how the structure of a clause works to highlight certain facts while obscuring others (Jeffries, 2014). According to Jeffries (2010a), there are several ways to prioritize information in English sentences, each of which has the effect of making certain portions of a phrase more apparent than others. Jeffries (2010a) focuses on three methods for prioritizing items in English: information structure organization, clause structure transformations, and subordination. The current study's annotating and prioritizing analysis is based on these three types of prioritizing. The current study investigates how prioritization is utilized to presume certain feminism-related facts.

### 2.2.6 Negating

Negating examines a literary strategy that entails the portrayal of "non-existent world versions" (Jeffries, 2010a, p. 106). Prototypically, negating attaches itself to the verb in a phrase, painting a picture of what is not the case. It is important to note that the process of negation is realized by a set of triggers, as shown in the list below:

1. Syntactically by adding the negative particle to the verb phrase either to the auxiliary or the dummy auxiliary verb. If there is not an auxiliary, the negative particle can be added to the dummy auxiliary do.
2. Another way of negating is through the use of pronouns such as 'nobody,' 'no one,' 'nothing,' 'none' etc. or by using the adjectival no to modify the noun such as 'nobody'.
3. Lexically through the semantics of certain words having negative connotations in the open-ended list that consists of nouns (lack, absence), verbs (exclude, omit, reject), adjectives (absent, scarce), adverbs (rarely, seldom).
4. Morphologically like the following negated adjectives irrational, unprofessional, or the negative verbs like 'disconnect,' 'disrespect.'

### 2.2.7 Implying and Assuming

Implication and assuming are related to the pragmatic concept of implying and the semantic concept of presupposition. Both implicature and presupposition are ways of conveying meaning that go beyond what is clearly stated in a proposition. Presupposition includes a variety of recognized triggers, whereas inference of implicit meaning is dependent on the reader or hearer's recognition that a speaker or hearer has conveyed an extra meaning by saying something that appears to be uncooperative on the surface (Jeffries, 2014).



Existential presuppositions, which come from specific noun phrases, are distinguished from logical presuppositions, which arise from a broad variety of triggers. Where the use of the definite determiner implies the presence of the referent Existential presuppositions are a particularly potent sort of naming because they not only convey assumptions about a referent but also presuppose its existence (Jeffries, 2014). Levinson (1983) gives a list of logical presupposition triggers, which include "surface structural characteristics" that give birth to assumed interpretations (p. 179).

## 2.3 Feminism

Feminism is commonly defined as a movement, an ideology, and/or a perspective concerned with women's rights and gender relations. Kelly (1982) summarizes the movement/belief/opinion perspective, defining feminism as:

- "A movement [...] in opposition to male defamation and mistreatment of women" (p. 67).
- "A belief that the sexes are culturally, and not just biologically, formed" (p. 67).
- "An outlook that transcended the accepted value systems of the time by exposing and opposing [...] prejudice and narrowness" (p. 67).

The concept of feminism as a belief and outlook—and thus something personal and individual—made it clear to writers such as Rowbotham (1972) that there is no ultimately consensual definition of feminism by all feminists and theorists, and that feminism can be traced back to women's rejections of male dominance. However, the modern definition of feminism is commonly regarded to have its origins in the 1800s "first wave" movement. Scharff (2011) discovers three commonly known stages using the wave metaphor:

- First wave, 1800s – "the fight for women's political citizenship" (p. 463).
- Second wave, 1960s – "the women's movement that gained renewed momentum" (p. 463).
- Third wave, 1990s - "young women's critical and diverse engagements with second wave feminism" (p. 463).

The struggle for suffrage is most usually connected with first-wave feminism (Mendes, 2012). This activism resulted in women gaining voting rights all around the world, laying the framework for second wave feminism. The movement's goals were expanded in the second wave in an attempt to secure greater freedoms for women, including "equal rights, pay and sexual and reproductive freedom" (Mendes, 2011a, p. 140).

According to Walby (2011), the second wave is the most identifiable since it coincided with a developing mass media that reported on feminist rallies and spread the notion of feminism throughout the Western world. During this time, media images of feminists who protested at the 1968 Miss America pageant led to what

Hinds and Stacey (2001) refer to as the mythological, and most persistent, emblem of second-wave feminism: the bra-burner. Third (and succeeding) waves are characterised by the manner in which they respond to the ideals and beliefs of the second wave by rejecting the necessity for and usage of a single, united feminist movement (Mendes, 2011a). Mendes (2011a) contends that this is the time at which the definition of "feminism" is in dispute, with significant discussion taking place inside the movement as to what the term means and who is eligible to use it in the twenty-first century.

Some academics debate the classification of feminism into waves. According to feminists such as Muriel Fox, there is no third wave because the concerns linked to the second wave of the 1960s and 1970s have not been resolved (Mendes, 2011a). Conversely, Cochrane (2013) contends that the third wave has passed, and that a fourth wave is currently visible in initiatives like *No More Page Three* and blogs like the *Everyday Sexism Project*. Moran (2011) offers one approach to coping with these opposing viewpoints, arguing that it may be better to think about feminism as "an oncoming tide" (p. 14) rather than a succession of separate waves. Other authors see a schism between feminism and "post-feminism."

Mendes (2011a) acknowledges that both accounts of post-feminism can be found in feminism coverage in newspapers, with some uses of "post-feminism" and "post-feminist" referring to "those who avidly disavow feminism" and others to "those who embrace the feminist identity but want to separate themselves from the Second Wave" (p. 8). "Post-feminism" also has implications for how people perceive "feminism": it raises the issue of where "feminism" stops and "post-feminism" starts, as well as moves emphasis away from an understanding of what "feminism" means in and of itself (Baumgardner & Richards, 2001).

Various definitions of "feminist" exist. According to Moseley and Read (2002), feminism is "never present in some pure or unmediated form" (p. 234). Difficulties defining "feminism" date back to 1913, when writer Rebecca West (2010) famously stated, "I myself have never been able to find out precisely what feminism is: I only know that people label me a feminist whenever I express feelings that distinguish me from a doormat" (p. 5).

According to the *Encyclopedia of Feminism*, which was released in 1987, "there are numerous distinct definitions of feminism, and its core meaning is under question" (Tuttle, 1987, p. 107). Many feminist writers, however, contend that the absence of a precise definition is not a flaw. Mendes (2011a), for example, says that the complexity of "feminist" reflects the fact that it is an ideology with a broad time and place span, with various objectives in different locales and times. Some feminists include this ambiguity into their definitions: Kornegger (2001), for example, characterizes feminism as "a many-headed monster which cannot be destroyed by singular decapitation" (p. 13), making a virtue of feminism's non-universality.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

The current study's data gathering method is internet-based. The evidence chosen in this regard is focused on the subject of how harmful current feminism may be.

First, the researcher looked for and chose highly ranked modern feminist literature that features toxic feminism concepts. As a result, the researcher picked a book written by feminist writer for analysis: *Men Explain Things to Me*. This book is rated as bestseller, best feminist selection, and best book of the year according to the most popular book review and book rating sites (Goodreads, Book Riot, and Bookish).

May 20, 2014, this book was published. Next, on May 5, 2021, the researcher purchased the book from Amazon, an American multinational technology corporation that specializes in e-commerce, cloud computing, digital streaming, and artificial intelligence. Following that, the researcher read the book and underlined the excerpts that were important for analysis. The researcher singled out ten scripts. Finally, based on the criteria outlined below, she reduced the number of scripts to three extracts. Data collection began on the 15<sup>th</sup> of June 2021 and was completed on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of August.

#### 4. DATA ANALYSIS OF MEN EXPLAIN THINGS TO ME BY REBECCA SOLNIT

##### 4.1 Qualitative Analysis

##### Extract 1

##### Chapter 1

##### *Men Explain Things to Me* 2008

The writer starts off her book with a chapter entitled "*Men Explain Things to Me*," which is the same as the title of the book. She tells the readers about an incident that took place at some party-like event she and her friend were invited to and had to begrudgingly accept. She describes the host as being an imposing rich man, referring to him posing as a hierarchal authority after denying them drifting out into the fresh summer night because he asked them not to leave in order to talk to them. The use of the noun modification *imposing man* and the subordinate *who'd made a lot of money* in sentence (1) implies a preliminary resentment in the writer's attitude towards the host that already paints the whole incident in a biased color. The choice of the material process verbs *kept* and *sat* in sentence (2), with the man being the actor and the pronoun *us*, as in the writer and her friend, being the goal, indicates under what light the writer projects the man, authority and control, that is.

She proceeds by implying that the man was belittling her accomplishments in writing when he asked her about her books in sentence (4). *He said, in the way you encourage your friend's seven-year-old to describe flute practice*, this description carries an assumption that the man was deaminizing her by his question. She corrects him and talks about her recent book. She then says that he *cuts her off* to talk about a similar book that has recently come out, employing another intentional material process verb that shows control and rude manner in sentence (6). According to the applications of the Big Five theory in linguistics and clinical psychology, females are generally known to be more agreeable than males. The writer sits still without trying to defend her book, while her friend is actually the one who points out that the book the host is referring to is in fact hers. She shows a high level of agreeableness and



surrender while calling the host names like "*Mr. Important*" *passive-aggressively* rather than actually saying something.

In the end, she blames such incidents on the societal view of women, using a passive structure in sentence (15), which is meant to conceal the identity of the doer and focus more on the action itself. *We were politely out of earshot*, turning a blind eye to the contribution of women themselves to this view. The writer then, in sentence (16), reacts to the incident with a verb of mental cognition, expressing her liking *Furthermore*, using verbs of events like *slither* and *having eaten* gives more prominence to her passive aggressiveness.

## Extract 2

### Chapter 2

#### The Longest War 2013

The second chapter is titled The Longest War, in which the writer compares the numbers of female victims of man-made terror, as she describes it in sentence (4), to the number of deaths from other wars. She uses long sentences, heavy with subordination, to deliver her ideas. This extract represents the whole chapter in showcasing statistics about rape, murder, and domestic violence. The writer displays her negative view of men by using these statistics as proof of men's misogyny and urges for war against these acts in sentences (1-4). In sentence (6), the writer calls for change not only in her society and nation but nearly every other nation, giving strong ideological emphasis on how men have corrupted the whole world. Then she introduces the nouns *masculinity* and *patriarchy*, the latter being a political artifact, as the culprits of these crimes in sentence (7). She reveals a sense of extremism in the overgeneralizing assumption that all men are potential criminals because masculinity and patriarchy are obviously bad.

A shift in the manner of providing information takes place in sentences (8-11). The writer bases her next judgment as well as touching upon a racial issue on *someone wrote a piece about how white men seem to be the ones who commit mass murders in the United States* in sentence (8). The use of *someone* rather than giving a reliable source is an inaccurate and unsupported statement. Then she proceeds to ascribe modifiers like *risk factor of criminal behavior* to being male and equates it with other risk factors like *exposure to tobacco smoke before birth, having antisocial parents, and belonging to a poor family* based on the piece that someone had written.

In the end, she justifies her allegations against males in general by simply saying *It's not that I want to pick on men* in general." By means of prioritizing, she directs attention to herself in an attempt to shake any extremely resentful notion off of her, but the use of the material process verb *pick on* suggests an ideologically intentional thought process. The last sentence of this extract ends it on a high note. With the writer's choice of the verb of mental cognition to express a radical view of males and females in sentence (11), *we might be able to theorize where violence comes from and what we can do about it a lot more productively*. However, the

choice of the mental verb paired with the utilization of the epistemic (likelihood) modal verb *might* create a hypothesis the writer treats as the remedy for the problem of violence in the world.

### Extract 3

#### Chapter 3

#### Worlds Collide in a Luxury Suite:

#### Some Thoughts on the IMF, Global Injustice, and a Stranger on a Train 2011

This extract is taken from the third chapter under the title "*Worlds Collide in a Luxury Suite: Some Thoughts on the IMF, Global Injustice, and a Stranger on a Train*". An analyst can already see where the writer is going with this chapter, and the extract shows the pattern, overgeneralization that is. By means of equating, intensive relational processes, as well as metaphorical attributions and existential assumptions, the writer is attributing all negative aspects to men and showing women as victims via political issues in certain countries.

The writer begins by talking about a story. She says that this story is quite well known, and she means the story of women's oppression by men. However, she goes on to talk about political issues like the one of France's invasion of Africa. *Her name was Africa* (2). *It was France* (3). The writer uses the intensive relational verbs to parallelize the possessive *her* with *Africa* and the possessive *his* with *France*. So, Africa is a woman, and France is a man. Then she uses material action processes to focus on what sort of harm the man caused the woman, ending the sentence with negation and passivation, which is meant to further accentuate the negative action that has already been attributed to this man. *He colonized her, exploited her, silenced her, and even decades after it was supposed to have ended, still acted with a high hand in resolving her affairs in places like Côte d'Ivoire, a name she had been given because of her export products, not her own identity* (4). The writer sets off with these four sentences on a journey of supposed empowerment through victimization and man-hating. Metaphorically equating Africa with all women and saying that she had no way of defending herself is saying that all men in that continent, including leaders, are subject to victimization by attribution of women. As for France, all women in France are seen to be offenders by the attribution of men.

The writer then does the same thing with Asia and Europe for the next five sentences (5–12), only here she ascribes nouns like *silence* and *poverty* to Asia and *power* and *wealth* to Europe. Again, this metaphorical concept of equating these political matters with men's and women's attributions sounds both unfair and heavy with ideological messages. In her next sentence, the writer declares that it is time for people to be aware of what outcome this story would bring to modern societies, as she almost sounds threatened by saying it will shake foundations:... *the consequences are shaking a lot of foundations, all of which clearly needed shaking* (14).

Furthermore, another employment of passivation comes around to show how much the writer is interested in focusing on actions:... *the story we've just been given* (15).

At the end, the writer brings up another powerful male figure to represent males and a helpless female figure to represent females. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) The International Monetary Fund (IMF) is an international financial institution, headquartered in Washington, D.C., consisting of 190 countries. Its stated mission is "working to foster global monetary cooperation, secure financial stability, facilitate international trade, promote high employment and sustainable economic growth, and reduce poverty around the world." First of all, the writer is saying that this financial institution, which sets out to prevent poverty, has actually caused poverty.

Then, not only did she use the head of the foundation as a representation of all powerful men, but she also stated that he had *allegedly* assaulted an African immigrant maid in a luxury hotel. So many connotations to unpack here, starting with the ethnic representations, heading over to the choice of adverbial, the choice of the material action process, and last but not least, the choice of noun modifications like *luxury hotel*.

## 4.2 Statistical Analysis

**Table 1**

*The Distribution of Tools in Extract 1, 2, and 3*

Name of Tool	Total Instances in Data	Percentage of Instances in Data
Naming and Describing	53	19.70
Implying and Assuming	83	30.85
Representing Actions/Events/States	33	12.26
Prioritizing	39	14.49
Hypothesizing	28	10.40
Equating and Contrasting	17	6.31
Negating	16	5.94
Total	269	99.99

## 4.3 Discussion of the ideological and statistical Results

The preceding table depicts the dominance of three functions with the greatest outcomes. These are actions/events/states that are named and described, implied and assumed, and represented. This indicates that the writer chooses to delegate her discourse in these passages with diverse ideas by using these functions effectively. The model offers seven functions or tools for data analysis. Each function is clarified qualitatively and quantitatively in the sections and subsections that follow.

### 4.3.1 Naming and Describing

#### 4.3.1.1 Choice of Noun

This section looks at the nouns that the writer uses to convey her ideas to the reader. Jeffries (2010a:20-1) describes three sorts of choices for naming objects. For starters, it is a representative and regional option where speakers will come into contact with various dialects, which will become a cause of bias or discrimination. Second, the choice of a name has positive or negative implications, i.e., the choice of a name refers to something and reflects the speaker's view of that referent. This sort of selection has more obvious ideological potential than others. Third, the choice involves metaphorical expression, which needs more processing by the listener/reader to understand, and this choice might incorporate ideological substance. It is important to remember that traditional metaphors are less ideological than new ones.

**Table 2**

*The Distribution of the Choice of Noun in Extracts 1, 2, and 3*

Noun Category	Frequency	Percentages
Representative and Regional	5	25
Ameliorative Connotations	3	50
Pejorative Connotations	7	
Metaphorical Expression	5	25
Total	20	99.99

According to prior findings, the category of Ameliorative and Pejorative Connotations leads other categories, with (22) instances for pejorative and only (6) occurrences for ameliorative throughout the three extracts. This outcome demonstrates the author's negativity in approaching her subjects and provides strong ideological implications.

#### 4.3.1.2 Noun Modification

According to Jeffries (2010a), noun modifications are ways where the nominal component of English sentences and clauses can use morphological and syntactic techniques to name referents and yield ideological effects. The nominal component does not form the proposition of the sentence or clause, but it labels something presupposed to exist. The presupposition is the assertion that the clause is making about the relationships between the name entities. The verb is important to the

proposition since it tells the recipient how the nominals relate to each other. Additionally, nominal has a huge potential for ideological packaging that encourages the recipient to agree with concepts that must be open to discussion, i.e., the use of modifiers in the noun phrase is to package up ideas by "cramming" a lot of different information into noun phrase.

**Table 3**

*The Distribution of Noun Modification in Extracts 1, 2, and 3*

Noun Modification	Frequency	Percentages
Personality/ Behavior	8	34.78
Quantifiers/ Numbers	5	21.73
Adverbs	4	17.39
Intensifiers	6	26.08
Total	23	99.99

The preceding table clearly shows that personality and behavior alterations outnumber other types, with fifteen occurrences in the selected extracts. The author's preference for using such adjectives over others to change the constituents of noun phrases or nouns exposes her attempts to describe the two genders; also, the numbers reflect a negative personality attribution to males. Then follow quantifiers and intensifiers with eleven instances each, indicating that the writer is deeply invested in stressing the harm done to men with as much proof as she can get her hands on. This deviates from the author's original objective for writing this book, which was to empower women.

#### 4.3.1.3 Nominalization

Another type of naming function used to convert a process to a state is nominalization. The current study's data contains fewer nominalization items than other categories of this textual conceptual function. There are a total of 10 nominal items in these excerpts. These nominal components can operate as subjects, objects, object complements, or objects of preposition depending on their location in the phrase. The writer's most common form of nominalization in the three samples is (-ty).

**Table 4**

*The Distribution of Nominal Forms in Extracts 1, 2, and 3*

Form of Nominal	Frequency	Percentages
-ty	4	40
-ence	2	20
-ment	1	10



-ice	1	10
-ent	1	10
-ion	1	10
Total	10	99.99

This survey suggests that the writer's aim in utilizing these sorts of nominalization is twofold: first, to bundle the substance of ideologies into short noun forms; and second, to conceal information about the doer of the action and lead the audience to believe that these nominal forms are facts.

#### 4.3.2 Implying and Assuming

The use of implicature and presupposition is referred to as implying and assuming. Starting with suggesting, the implicature model is based on Grice's (1975, 1978) work (as cited in Jeffries, 2010). This concept is based on Grice's four maxims and the cooperation principle. The suggesting process seeks these implicatures in order to uncover the ideological potential hidden beneath every assumed meaning. As for presumption, it is synonymous with presupposition, which refers to "the assumptions that are incorporated into the text" (Jeffries, 2010, p.94). According to the findings, this function ranks second after identifying and describing, with 83 total occurrences split between presupposition and implicature.

**Table 5**

*The Distribution of Implying and Assuming in Extracts 1, 2, and 3*

Implying and Assuming	Frequency	Percentages
Presupposition	49	59.03
Implicature	34	40.96
Total	83	99.99

##### 4.3.2.1 Presupposition

Presupposition is a sort of pragmatic inference; it refers to assumptions that are activated by grammatical structures and may thus be traced textually (Levinson 1983:167). Based on the data under consideration, the researcher discovered that presupposition appears 49 times in the excerpts. These examples are a blend of existential and logical assumptions. The writer presupposes the existence of specific traits or things by employing existential presuppositions. She presupposes the occurrence of an action with logical presuppositions, on the other hand.

##### 4.3.2.2 Implicature

Conversational implicatures, according to Grice (1989), are implicit meanings that cannot be derived from individual lexical words but are formed when the text violates one or more of the four maxims of conversation. These maxims convey

conversational conduct expectations. The writer violates the maxims (34) times in the selected excerpts.

While assumed and implied meanings have distinct formal realizations, the writer employs both to generate implicit ideologies that the reader discovers; therefore, they are not handled separately in the analysis of presupposition and implicature. However, because the writer is interested in contrasting men's attributes with those of women, as well as discussing their activities, assumption scored better than implicature.

#### 4.3.3 Representing Actions\Events and States

Jeffries presents it as one of her analytical tools in her critical stylistic approach. It is referring to transit options. In other words, it pertains to the verb choice. The choice of verbs underpins a certain point of view that is vital to each phrase, and it influences the other components of the clause. It demonstrates how language users encode their mental representation of reality and express their perception of the world around them. So far, Jeffries (2010) uses Simpson's transitivity model (1993). When it comes to processes and what they convey, the lexical verbs in this paradigm are divided into four major groups.

The table below shows the frequency and percentages of the occurrences of each category.

**Table 6**

*The Distribution of Transitivity Categories in Extracts 1, 2, and 3*

Main Category	Subcategories	Frequency	Percentages
Material Action Processes	Intention	12	51.51
	Supervention	2	
	Event	3	
Verbalization Processes		3	9.09
Mental Cognition Processes	Cognition	2	15.15
	Reaction	1	
	Perception	2	
Relational Processes	Intensive	4	24.24
	Possessive	3	
	Circumstantial	1	
Total		33	99.99

The study of representing actions, events, and states places the overall findings of the three extracts in third place, with a total of 53 occurrences.

This allows the researcher to investigate how textual meaning is formed through portrayals of how referents interact with the environment. The dominance of a specific sort of process can also provide the appearance of much or little activity, static descriptions of scenery, and so on (Jeffries, 2014, p. 413).

The statistical overviews of processes in the current study demonstrate that the purposeful material action process has the largest number of occurrences (27). This suggests that, while the other procedures are not ignored, the writer prefers to transmit her beliefs mostly through purposeful methods.

#### 4.3.4 Prioritizing

This textual-conceptual function focuses on how the author uses syntactic options to prioritize one piece of information above another in her work. The following table distributes the key three ways of prioritizing as studied in the current study's data.

**Table 7**

*The Distribution of Ways of Prioritizing in Extracts 1, 2, and 3*

Ways of Prioritizing	Frequency	Percentages
Information Structure	5	12.82
Transformation	6	15.38
Subordination	28	71.79
Total	39	99.99

#### 4.3.5 Hypothesizing

By addressing the hypothetical circumstances that modality provides, according to Jeffries (2010a:14–5), modality is one way of contributing to identifying ideologies in a text. According to Jeffries, modality is one of the key functional systems employed by Halliday (1985) in his account of language, and it has been extensively used in critical approaches. Furthermore, modality directly exposes the author's point of view on the world, which may have an influence on the readers depending on their perceptions of the author. Simpson (1993:45–6) has previously defined modality as one of the conceptual instruments of analysis that may be utilized linguistically to change the speaker's opinions. He claims that the job of modality is to indicate (un)certainly, (dis)approval, or desire with respect to text-specified propositions.

**Table 8**

*The Distribution of Modality in Extracts 1, 2, and 3*

Modality	Frequency	Percentages
Epistemic	17	60.71
Deontic	4	14.28

Boulomaic	4	14.28
Conditional	3	10.71
Total	28	99.99

This function is assigned based on the examination of the data at hand. The sixth is in terms of frequency of occurrences, with e data at hand. The sixth is in terms of frequency of occurrences, with 28 occurrences. The modality system is divided into three categories: epistemic, deontic, and boulomaic, which represent confidence, obligation, and desire, respectively. The writer's view about the (un)likelihood of anything happening is referred to as an epistemic modality, and it has (17) total occurrences. Another type of modality is desirability, which is the desirability of something happening. It is divided into two subcategories: obligation (deontic modality) and desire (boulomaic modality), each of which has four occurrences in the selected passages. Conditional structures, which have three occurrences, are another kind that gives a feeling of modality.

Modality can refer to the writer's creation of a "hypothetical universe" in order to shed light on the ideas expressed in her work and how these beliefs might be damaging, manipulative, or even compelling to the readers.

#### 4.3.6 Equating and Contrasting

According to Jeffries (2010a:51), the textual-conceptual function of equating and contrasting refers to the manner of presenting conceptions or ideas as equal or oppositional to be recognized linguistically by synonyms and antonyms. With slight adjustments, the current study used Jeffries' (2010a) model of equivalence and opposition. Analyzing the textual-conceptual function of equating and contrasting for the data under consideration indicates that the writer highlights the types of equivalence of Jeffries' model that are dispersed in the table below according to frequency and percentages of occurrence.

**Table 9**

*The Distribution of Equating and Contrasting in Extracts 1, 2, and 3*

Equating and Contrasting	Frequency	Percentages
Intensive Relational Equivalence	8	36.36
Metaphorical Equivalences	6	27.27
Parallelism	5	22.72
Negated Opposition	3	13.63
Total	22	99.99

#### 4.3.7 Negating

This function appears 16 times in the three samples from this book. The writer's significance in utilizing this instrument is to construct a view of hypothetical scenarios; in other words, to build an alternate reality that is regarded as unreal. Nonetheless, because it has persuasive power, the reader will construct this imaginary worldview. The following table depicts the distribution of negating techniques:

**Table 10**

*The Distribution of Ways of Negating in Extracts 1, 2, and 3*

Ways of Negating	Frequency	Percentages
Syntactically	5	31.25
Adjectival no/ Never	4	25
Morphologically	3	18.75
Lexically	4	25
Total	16	99.99

The syntactic form of negation is achieved by appending the negative particle to the verb phrase, either as an auxiliary or dummy auxiliary verb. It has a total of five incidences. If a text's producer attempts to persuade the receiver to picture the positive version, negation may have a significant ideological influence, and the recipient may envision a more positive version if the negated version has more information. The writer used this function in a statement in which she attempts to portray herself as a proponent of female empowerment rather than a misandrist. She states in excerpt 2: "It's not that I want to pick on males" (10).

The writer carries on using other forms of negation, scoring (4) for each of the adjectival no form and the lexical form. Lastly, the morphological way has (3) instances like in *appallingly uninterested*.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

Several conclusions are derived in accordance with the aims of the study and based on the findings of the analysis. These conclusions are meant to be answers to the question of the current study.

**What are the linguistic strategies contemporary feminists use to validate toxic femininity as woman empowering in their books?**

The researcher identifies specific linguistic strategies used by feminist writers to paint an empowering reality for toxic feminism using Jeffries' critical stylistics model. According to the findings, the implying and assuming tools have the highest rate of occurrence. Presupposition is the most commonly used strategy in this tool, but conventional implicature has also appeared frequently throughout the six selected extracts.



Right after implying and assuming, the writers makes significant use of noun modification, which is a linguistic strategy used within the tool of naming and describing. This tool lands in second position in terms of the number of occurrences. Negative attributes are commonly seen attached to nouns and noun phrases related to males in general.

The writers make an impactful use of material action processes that belong to the tool of representing actions and events as states. Although the use of the other processes does score a noticeable number of occurrences, material action processes have the most significant rate in all six extracts. Another important strategy that also make an influential return is prioritizing via subordination, which serves as a useful means for foregrounding and back-grounding noteworthy information for ideological purposes by the writers.

As for the rest of the strategies, syntactic negation, epistemic modality, intensive relational equivalence, and parallelism are all recorded as the highest within the tools of negation, hypothesizing, equating, and contrasting, respectfully. In return, these tools have somewhat of an asymptotic number of occurrences in the selected data under analysis.

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## APPENDECES

### Appendix A: Men Explain Things to Me by Rebecca Solnit

#### First Extract

#### Chapter 1

#### Men Explain Things to Me 2008

*He was an imposing man who'd made a lot of money (1). He kept us waiting while the other guests drifted out into the summer night, and then sat us down at his authentically grainy wood table and said to me, "So? I hear you've written a couple of books." (2) I replied, "Several, actually." (3) He said, in the way you encourage your friend's seven-year-old to describe flute practice, "And what are they about?" (4) They were actually about quite a few different things, the six or seven out by then, but I began to speak only of the most recent on that summer day in 2003, *River of Shadows: Eadweard Muybridge and the Technological Wild West*, my book on the annihilation of time and space and*

*the industrialization of everyday life (5). He cut me off soon after I mentioned Muybridge (6). "And have you heard about the very important Muybridge book that came out this year?"(7) So caught up was I in my assigned role as ingénue that I was perfectly willing to entertain the possibility that another book on the same subject had come out simultaneously and I'd somehow missed it (8). He was already telling me about the very important book—with that smug look I know so well in a man holding forth, eyes fixed on the fuzzy far horizon of his own authority (9). [...] So, Mr. Very Important was going on smugly about this book I should have known when Sallie interrupted him, to say, "That's her book." Or tried to interrupt him anyway (10). But he just continued on his way (11). She had to say, "That's her book" three or four times before he finally took it in (12). And then, as if in a nineteenth century novel, he went ashen (13). That I was indeed the author of the very important book it turned out he hadn't read, just read about in the New York Times Book Review a few months earlier, so confused the neat categories into which his world was sorted that he was stunned speechless—for a moment, before he began holding forth again (14). Being women, we were politely out of earshot before we started laughing, and we've never really stopped (15). I like incidents of that sort, when forces that are usually so sneaky and hard to point out slither out of the grass and are as obvious as, say, an anaconda that's eaten a cow or an elephant turd on the carpet (16).*

## Second Extract

### Chapter 2

#### The Longest War 2013

*We could talk about high-school- and college-athlete rapes, or campus rapes, to which university authorities have been appallingly uninterested in responding in many cases, including that high school in Steubenville, Notre Dame University, Amherst College, and many others (1). We could talk about the escalating pandemic of rape, sexual assault, and sexual harassment in the US military, where Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta estimated that there were nineteen thousand sexual assaults on fellow soldiers in 2010 alone and that the great majority of assailants got away with it, though four-star general Jeffrey Sinclair was indicted in September for "a slew of sex crimes against women."(2) Never mind workplace violence, let's go home (3). So many men murder their partners and former partners that we have well over a thousand homicides of that kind a year—meaning that every three years the death toll tops 9/11's casualties, though no one declares a war on this particular kind of terror (4). (Another way to put it: the more than 11,766 corpses from domestic-violence homicides between 9/11 and 2012 exceed the number of deaths of victims on that day and all American soldiers killed in the "war on terror."(5)). If we talked about crimes like these and why they are so common, we'd have to talk about what kinds of profound change this society, or this nation, or nearly every nation needs (6). If we talked about it, we'd be talking*

*about masculinity, or male roles, or maybe patriarchy, and we don't talk much about that (7). [...] Someone wrote a piece about how white men seem to be the ones who commit mass murders in the United States and the (mostly hostile) commenters only seemed to notice the white part (8). It's rare that anyone says what this medical study does, even if in the driest way possible: "Being male has been identified as a risk factor for violent criminal behavior in several studies, as have exposure to tobacco smoke before birth, having antisocial parents, and belonging to a poor family." (9) It's not that I want to pick on men (10). I just think that if we noticed that women are, on the whole, radically less violent, we might be able to theorize where violence comes from and what we can do about it a lot more productively (11).*

### **Third Extract**

#### **Chapter 3**

#### **Worlds Collide in a Luxury Suite:**

#### **Some Thoughts on the IMF, Global Injustice, and a Stranger on a Train 2011**

*How can I tell a story we already know too well? (1) Her name was Africa (2). His was France (3). He colonized her, exploited her, silenced her, and even decades after it was supposed to have ended, still acted with a high hand in resolving her affairs in places like Côte d'Ivoire, a name she had been given because of her export products, not her own identity (4). Her name was Asia (5). His was Europe (6). Her name was silence (7). His was power (8). Her name was poverty (9). His was wealth (10). Her name was Her, but what was hers? (11) His name was His, and he presumed everything was his, including her, and he thought he could take her without asking and without consequences (12). It was a very old story, though its outcome had been changing a little in recent decades (13). And this time around the consequences are shaking a lot of foundations, all of which clearly needed shaking (14). Who would ever write a fable as obvious, as heavy-handed as the story we've just been given? (15) The extraordinarily powerful head of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), a global organization that has created mass poverty and economic injustice, allegedly assaulted a hotel maid, an immigrant from Africa, in a hotel's luxury suite in New York City (16).*