

دراسة أسلوبية: التناقض بين الذات القوية والضعيفة لدى الشخصيتين الأساسيتين للكاتبة  
شيلا ديلاي في مسرحية "طعم العسل"

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**Stylistic Study: The Powerful\less Self Discrepancy of Shelagh Delaney's Two Protagonists in *A Taste of Honey***

**Stylistic Study: The Powerful\less Self Discrepancy of Shelagh Delaney's Two Protagonists in *A Taste of Honey***

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**المخلص:**

تدور هذه الدراسة حول مسرحية "طعم العسل" 1958، في سالفورد، في شمال-غربي انكلترا. لكاتبة السيناريو والكاتبة المسرحية البريطانية شيلا ديلاي، وتتناول هذه الدراسة فكرة التعارض النفسي لغويا بالنسبة لشخصيات المسرحية الادبية في ما يخص حالتهم الاجتماعية بواسطة تطبيق النظرية اللغوية للكاتب ميك شورت (1996) قائمة بأنماط الكلام القوي والضعيف. هذه النظرية تعتبر دليلاً لغوياً لتحديد اي من الشخصيتين اكثر قوة واكثر عقلانية في مواجهة تحديات ومشاكل الحياة للشخصيتين في المسرحية الادبية واي منهما لديه الافضلية في موثوقية كلامه كدليل على القوة الكلامية للشخصية الادبية، والتي بدورها تعتبر مرآة واقعية للحالة الاجتماعية لشخصيات المسرحية. ومن خلال ما سبق، هذه الدراسة تهدف الى التباين اللغوي للشخصيتين، هيلين (الام العزباء)، وابنتها المراهقة التي تدعى جوزيفين التي تعتبر اكثر قوة وعقلانية في اسلوب حياتها. تتعمق هذه الدراسة اكثر في التطبيق اللغوي، لتشمل رؤية واقعية حول الشخصيات وعلاقاتهم. علاوة على ذلك، هذه الدراسة تكشف كيف الابنة تم التخلي

عنها بشكل جزئي من قبل والدتها في السادسة عشر من عمرها لتواجه مصاعب الحياة وحدها. وتبعاً لعدم الاستقرار الأمومي، جوزيفين حُتّم عليها إقامة علاقة جسدية مع رجل القوات البحرية ذو البشرة السوداء، وبعدها أصبحت حامل في عمر السادسة عشر، لتركها رجل البحرية للالتحاق بواجبه لتواجه الحياة وحدها. وهكذا، هذه الدراسة تستنتج أن شخصية جوزيفين هي تعتبر أيقونة القوة في هذا العمر من حياتها، لتثبت نفسها بنجاح في الطريق الصحيح.

### Abstract

This study tackles the play *A Taste of Honey* 1958, which set in Salford in the northwest of England, written by the British screen writer and playwright Shelagh Delaney, and examines linguistically the self-discrepancy of the characters' social status by applying Mick Short's (1996) list of powerful and powerless speech styles that provides a linguistic guideline to determine which of the characters of the play may have the precedence in earning the credibility in speech throughout achieving the most powerful speech style, which works as a realistic mirror to the powerful social status of the characters of the play. Through which this paper aims to discover which of the two characters, Helen; "who is a single mother" and her teenage daughter; "who is called Josephine" who is considered more powerful in her general life and more reasonable when it comes to critical life issues and problems. This paper goes further, in the application section, to have a vital view about the characters and their relationship. Furthermore to see how the daughter was partially abandoned by her mother at the age of sixteenth to face the odds of life alone. According to the maternal instability, Josephine is determined to do a sexual relation with a black navy sailor and later becomes pregnant at age of sixteen, who the latter went to his navy unit, leaving Jo facing her life alone. Thus this study concludes that Josephine's personality is regarded the powerful icon that, at the very age of her life, posits her successfully on the right direction.

### Introduction

Shelagh Delaney (1938-2011), the British playwright, who was born in Salford, is from a working class. She with Kennedy (2020) began writing for the stage. Additionally, Kennedy once believed that Delaney is not just a forerunner in feminism, but even more than that, she is considered the sole of woman among "Angry young men" of the post British writing (Baştan, 2022, p. 3401). A group of novelists and playwrights, mostly from working and middle class, in the 1950s known as the "Angry young men" became prominent, further they can no longer express new aspiration, new emotions, or new reasons that could saliently





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provide meanings to existence, due to their youngness and outrage against English society. (Baştan, 2022, p. 3401).

*A Taste of Honey* is Delaney's first play, has earned a complicated act to follow, and moreover none of her following works received the identical level of critical acclaim as her first play *A Taste of Honey*, although the fact that her collection brief, autobiographic stories "*Sweetly Sings the Donkey*" was pointed at as a critical success. Delaney has debuted a work depicts the environment of a working class that its individuals represent the British citizens. Delaney in fact supports social activism, further she is reluctant to her social and political regime and she is even not afraid of speaking out her true needs of structuring a realistic theatre. Accordingly becomes a fellow of the Royal Society of Literature, Delaney then has made London her home (Galens, 1998, p. 279).

*A Taste of Honey* was written in (1958) by Delaney, it is related to the setting of Salford in England in the 1950s. The play narrates the miserable story of a young girl called, Josephine and her mother Helen. Josephine is eighteen years old, who has been raised up unaware of her father's identity. The play takes the first step with the semi-whore and alcoholic mother Helen and her daughter Jo, who are going to leave their old house into wet flat and a bitterly cold and that Helen has recently rented (Soininen, 2008, p.7).

A black navy sailor who is Josephine's sweetheart named Jimmy, who has proposed marriage and offered her a ring. It becomes obvious that they move from place to place regularly. A few days later Helen becomes a wife of a man who is ten years younger than her, that's why and Helen later abandons her daughter Jo. Peter obviously explains a fact when they become married that he does not want Josephine to live with them. Josephine knows about that and she goes out to the club searching for love to compensate the maternal love she lacks, Jo makes a sexual relation for a night only with her beloved Jimmy, and then the latter goes away to work for six months and unfortunately he never comes back. Jo, after a while finds out that she is now pregnant, accordingly she starts working every day at a pub in evenings and at a shoemaker's shop in the day time. Thus, Jo has been encouraged by an art student named Geof who shares Jo's small flat. (Soininen, 2008, p.8).

Geof gives a hand to Josephine in cleaning and cooking, however their friendship goes short because Helen finds out that Geof lives up on her daughter so that the mother puts him out. Therefore Helen realizes that her daughter's child will be black, she consequently kicks Geof out of the department with a serious reaction. *A Taste of Honey* ends with



Helen's abandoning of Josephine with stragglers, further she does not realize that the flat has been left by Geof. (Soininen, 2008, p.8).

## **1.2. Statement of the Problem**

When *A Taste of Honey* took part on Broadway in 1960, nearly all the critics tackled the author's age, shedding less efforts on her play. Delaney's age is entirely reviewed, but a few have supported the inspiring success of the play that the British critics awarded. Nearly most of the New York critics, supposedly the director and cast should be praised, but in fact they praise the play's content. The critics however, realize the attitude of Delaney in her writing style as a prosperous playwright.

Hickling (2008) pointed out that the critics have praised Delaney's characters for the rightful, and reasonable voices. The play was likewise distinguished by the precise systematic regular style of the workers lives. Delaney had confidence in social challenges and had not been reluctant to highlight the needs of a more practical theatre, rather they should determine the numerous as well as the common ways of workers' life style. Furthermore, Delaney's *A Taste of Honey* is an example of feminist experience. Hickling as a theatre figure has claimed that Delaney as working class woman, is considered the first feminist playwright. Delaney's play is a work that reflects the social orientation of the 1950s in England ( Baştan, 2017, pp. 943-942)

McClain (2000) stated that the honesty of the characters is an essential part of the play. McClain further declares that her plays have not produced any further significance, rather she has an sincere dialogue simulation of her society, and also an amazing affections for the life style and customs of the society that she lives among in her Lancashire town. McClain stated a fact that although Delaney's generating of a literary technique, which is the strength in her character voices, she yet could not make up the weakness in her play's purpose, and finally it is well played to be considered a tangible experience in the English theatre. (Galens, D., 1998, p. 287)

Ibsen (1879) proclaims that the common needs of any woman like freedom, cannot be satisfied in the modern society, and this notion is applicably applied in his plays, as an essence to criticize the modern life or society. He believes that individual's common and personal lives is somehow instable. Furthermore he adds another comment on a modern life which is the person's status in a society is reflected to what s/he really is in his or her family. Further the immense power of the customs of the out society effect truly the persons' life-style inside their local home. This crisis can be sensed in Ibsen's focalizations in his plays. Throughout employing the women's destiny, Ibsen reveals the contemporary issues of





the society. (Al-Tai, 2022,p. 22) Dympna Callaghan discovers convincing evidence of a parallel between the tongue and bodily sins. Just as silence is associated with chastity and obedience, this feminine speech is associated with disobedience, sexual incontinence, and deception (Al-Tai, 2022,p. 23).

Neely (1983) has argued that even though the rough reign of the patriarchal system, it still has the feminine insurrection. Whereas New Historicists do not focus on gender concerns, they rather strengthen the connection between women's sexuality and their speech in early contemporary society of England and how women's subjugation is portrayed in early modern society. like Newman indicates that the time has been mixed by the fear of disobedient women, especially those who showed out their resistant via words, and also their speech indicate to the equivalent of exposing immodest deeds and genitals. Callaghan enlightens a fact that women's bodily obedience or sins is paralleled to their tongue, just like the silence is connected with obedience and virtue. The feminine speech is interrelated with their disobedience, deception and sexual incontinence(Al-Tai, 2022,p. 23).

Critics and researchers who have discussed Delaney's *A Taste of Honey* have mainly focused on homosexuality, depression, pre-marital sex, love and aching, racism and betrayal issues as a resistance with women. In Delaney's *A Taste of Honey*, the use of language is of importance. However, critics have not discussed this aspect thoroughly because they have focused on other aspects mentioned above. This study takes into consideration Mick Short's (1996) list of powerful and powerless speech styles in order to reveal the power status of the mother and the daughter characters in the British society and especially in 1950s which is the essential goal of this study.

### **1.3. Review of Related Literature**

This part of the paper will review the resources referred to in this study. These resources are then categorized by the topic into three subsections: 1) sources on the historical and political background of *A Taste of Honey*, 2) sources about stylistic tools, and 3) the literature on *A Taste of Honey*. In the following, these resources are briefly discussed:

#### **1.3.1. Historical and Political Background**

Delaney is considered as an unique female voice in a period of 1950s new style of writing, she is like her fellow male wrote about a working class. Her characters "Helen and her daughter Josephine" are far away of richness, social respectability and security of a middle-class, and instead they speak clearly and verify the characters of working-class of Britain's industrial North. As Delaney took disadvantaged and the ordinary

northern and working-class lives of mother (Helen) and daughter (Jo), Delaney made her characters look extraordinary by placing them as the subject of her play (Delaney, 1959, p. 1).

Delaney's play was not just about region and class, but also worked on gender to figure moreover Jo and her mother Helen as exceptional. The truth that Delaney decided to choose women's lives as a main point to her play, was overly a radical move, and also a departure from her contemporaries of the male gender who hardly ever represented women as analytical samples in their own writing, but as supporters to their needs, desires or interests of a patriarchal society. The women's lives and interests are regarded as primary topics that are written and main focused by Delaney's writings, and thus her writings are reconsidered by feminist critics as a pioneer in her plays, to modern theatre of England and further to work by other female dramatist of the 1950s (Delaney, 1959, pp. 1-2).

In Britain, 1950s was the period of complicated relations and obscure individuality of male and female both in business life and family. Womanhood began to be less allocated to the household responsibilities, women participated in workplaces while alteration have been experienced by men. This alteration violates the norms of working-class and the its life common values in general. There were more changes specifically in characteristics of genders and in workplaces such as financial stability (Ozturk, 2020,p. 14).

The written works as well as ideologies of the feminism and anti-feminism have argued that the prime responsibility of women in society is to praise their roles as mothers and wives, thus other duties and jobs should not be neglected. The ideology indeed provides a meaning to the duties of women at workplace and home. Accordingly the concept of the ideology in dedicating a part-time works to women, is to signify their main duties into the serves of their husbands and children (Ozturk, 2020,p. 14).

Women's problems at both home and workplace should be set up in cooperation to further be solved. In various aspects women have exactly the same rights of men's, though yet a common perception that those rights are dissimilar to men. The notion that gender belongs to various domains is a familiar ideology, although the circumstances of this period are overly different, and this consequently makes the ideology also different. The notion of men-resembling should not be formulated as women's prior need, though their sphere are separated. Young women at the time, can do their responsibilities as a mother and an employee, without asking the help of others. During the same year, the play does an





immense cultural leap to the US and specifically to New York; *A Taste of Honey* is not just a performance text on theatre, yet it also continues to acquire advanced revivals. The printing process of *A Taste of Honey* is still yet worldly ongoing, however through a film adaptation, the play has truly obtained its widest space as dissemination (Ozturk, 2020, pp. 14-15). In the early eighties, the play text received a real canonical level with prevailing school syllabus election. The problems of homelessness and mass-unemployment have been enlightened out once again through the gap of those two decade or what it called as a time-lag in the eighties (Borrás, 1997, p.496).

### 1.3.2. *A Taste of Honey*

Beauvoir acclaimed that women generally have the right to vote, even if they cannot provide a financial-support to themselves as a matter of independency. Although society has nearly insensible impact on women, however the women's surroundings cannot entirely be regarded unaffected unit. In accordance to this fact, the community still consider them as servants, like what they are truly at home. Thus an important factor that posits women in an fair pace with men, is to have a full-time employment, by the means of which, women can acquire the independency. Therefore, their dependency financially on men is reduced and gradually they will no longer consider men as a financial intermediary to their needs (Ahmed, 2003, p. 29).

*The Lion in Love* (1960), Delaney's second play in which, she also focused on the idea of family. In this play she portraits the notion of how unfortunate marriage could effect on the whole members of the family, and explains further the main reasons that keep people miserably in a marriage contact and also if it is compared to *A Taste of Honey*, *The Lion in Love* is regarded more conventional, therefore it does not acquire similar success (Soininen, 2008, p. 7). The writing style of Delaney in breaking up most of the sorts of racial taboos, sexual and social, and even restructuring the unit of the family, which makes *A Taste of Honey* radical. The 1950s was considered a golden period of a nuclear family, which could not be touched into *A Taste of Honey*. The motherhood is prevailed and well noticed into the play, however Helen and her daughter are extremely fatherless, so Helen and Josephine have to realize and accept the fact of motherhood. On the other hand, Geof and Josephine have created an entirely unconventional or immoral family, which obviously does not have any sexual activity. Josephine's black skinned child, which is considered inescapable fact, questions somehow the structure of the family, and sheds the light moreover on the question of

race. Thus this study tackles importantly the concept of a family into *A Taste of Honey* (Soininen, 2008,p. 8).

Delaney's *A Taste of Honey* is considered a masterpiece for different reasons "in British theatre" the first reason is the young authors have the admiration to disobey certain modern taboos. She has chosen two protagonists as working-class women, which concentrating on the significant role of women's perspectives. Second reason is that Delaney portrays the interracial relationships as acceptable and natural. Delaney creates a homosexual character as most positive character in her play. Thus, the play shows the fears and determination of a young character who was depicting a child "Jo" out of conjugal bond with a black man (Baştan, 2022, p. 3402). For the reasons above, she has established herself as skillful author, who is capable of employing a theatrical language masterfully. In an ironic tone she examines the controversial and important issues, and also tackling obviously pioneering and courageous themes. Accordingly, the young people wished for the characters to have a satisfied ending in the *A Taste of Honey*, though they are disappointed due to the real life has to move with Helen, Jo, and her child (Baştan, 2022, p. 3402). Delany in her play *A Taste of Honey* (1958) sheds light on personal relationships in Salford regarding the relationship between Helen and her daughter.

### **1.3.3. Stylistic Framework**

We as readers cannot predict, based on the provided list of powerful and powerless speech style, that the conversations follow this pattern precisely are a strict norm to that in all cases. For example, in the informal classes, sometimes the teacher speaks much more than the students themselves combined all together, while if one of those students shows some powerful conversational signs or features, later the student will be seen as pushy or even rude, and this perception which basically comes from the social norms. Particular contextual and functional circumstances for any interactional conversations, which often known as activity types, demand also a specific variation and exception from these general rules, to further regard these conversations as powerful or powerless ones (Short, 1996, p. 95).

### **1.4. Research Questions**

Q1/ How does the social and historical background effect the characters' behavior?

Q2/How do the protagonists' interactions linguistically determine the ending of the play?

Q3/ How can the findings of the linguistic analysis be connected to the socio-historical contexts of the play?





### 1.5. Methodology

This paper will analyze the language of characters in Delaney's *A Taste of Honey* (1958). The analysis will be focused on the conflicts between the two characters. The present study offers three research questions that the researcher hopes to answer throughout the investigations. To answer the first question concerning the social and historical background consequences that have affected the writer to write this play.

To answer the second question regarding the protagonists' interactions within each other, this study will present a survey concerning the social determinism in which Delaney's play was set and written to portrait an understandable linguistic framework that determines the ending of the play, in addition to that, this paper sets forwards certain facts to show up the tangible impacts of Helen's life over her daughter's to moreover form the life of Jo.

Finally, to answer the third question regarding the results of the linguistic analysis and its relation to the socio-historical background of the play, the researcher will depend on the results of the first and the second question to answer the last question. It will be stated that Jo as a realistic daughter is more powerful than her mother may look in some parts. Delaney meticulously forms the relationship between Jo and Helen, which rather becomes repulsive at some parts of the play.

### 1.6. Deterministic Powerful and Powerless Speakers

Throughout history, humans have experienced differently the power of social class in the complex of social life. The powerful have always conquered or dominated the powerless (Banerjee, 2005, p. 2) suggesting that the notion of power is simply the unequal links or relations between those with power who use it to suit their own benefits, which subsequently causes oppression on people without power (Banerjee, 2005, p. 2).

The study of differences among people in England regarding the power of their communication styles, and specifically in North West England, has received much attention in studies on social class differences; therefore, the stylistic analysis is a prominent approach in studying the interactional styles of people. The literature contains many categories of powerful and powerless styles of language, and, therefore, the literature in the stylistic domain is quite extensive. According to Hosman (1989), powerless language is typically defined as a kind of speech marked by hesitancy. When compared to powerful speech, it often contains more polite hedges, forms, hesitations, intensifiers, disclaimers, empty adjectives, and tag questions (Grob, Meyers & Schuh, 1997, p. 283). Accordingly, the powerful speech is the absence of the above mentioned indicators. Hence,



it is more dominant, assertive, and confirmative in its style. Along with the progress of stylistic studies, research on gender and powerful and powerless language use has typically linked men with powerful language and women with powerless language (Grob, Meyers & Schuh, 1997, p. 283).

Numerous studies have discovered that high power speech forms are considered more positive than low power speech forms (Hosman, & Siltanen, 2006, p. 34). Moreover, Bradac, Hopper, and Wiemann (1989) have suggested two possible explanations for such comparison. First, they posit that “controlling of the others” explains why a high power speech form is positively evaluated because it means the speaker has the total control of others. On the other hand, a low power speech form is evaluated negatively because it means the speaker does not have any control of others (Hosman, & Siltanen, 2006, p. 34). Second, they posit that “controlling of the self” is the other criteria which causes high power speech forms to be evaluated positively since such a speech form allows speakers to freely make their contributions, which in turn indicates self-control, and accordingly a low power form of speech indicates a lack of self-control (Hosman, & Siltanen, 2006, p. 34).

Finally, fictional characters often use face-attack “as linguistic strategies to gain and maintain power and control of the situation” (Bousfield, 2014, p. 129). The same is true of the characters in *A Taste of Honey*.

### **1.7. Powerful and Powerless Analysis Section**

This final section completes the stylistic analysis of *A Taste of Honey* characters' interactive discourse by discussing power relations related to social relationship in the dialogues of the two main characters. This discussion then tackles the issue of the powerful and powerless styles of speech of the main characters in their conversations. Moreover, the powerful speech style can be defined as the ability of institutions and people to have an influential effect or control on the material lives and behavior of others, which can be achieved by the use of certain linguistic strategies which have negative effects on other interlocutors (Weber, 1998, p. 114).

It is claimed that powerful speech is more precisely defined as the complete absence of powerless linguistic features within the speech itself. The word ‘control’ in the above definition has negative connotations suggesting that power can be used or exerted in a negative and a positive way (Weber, 1998, p. 114). However, this power can sometimes be given to marginalized groups for example; Jo is successful in obtaining power in her interactions with her mother Helen who is radically superior in the context of Britain's setting.





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According to Short (1996), the rules of conversational analysis are derived from discourse analysis; among which are “turn length, topic shift, and interruption” as markers of the powerful and powerless speakers (as cited in Lambrou, 2014, p. 141).

	Powerful speakers	Powerless speakers
Who has most turns?	X	
Who has the least?		X
Who has the longest turns?	X	
Who has the shortest?		X
Who initiates conversational exchanges?	X	
Who responds?		X
Who controls the conversational topic?	X	
Who follows the topics of others?		X
Who interrupts?	X	
Who is interrupted?		X
Who uses terms of address not marked for respect (e.g. first name only)?	X	
Who uses terms of address marked for respect (e.g. title + last name)?		X
Who allocates turns to others?	X	

The above list is considered the basis for the analysis of powerful and powerless speakers by means of which the dialogue can be easily examined to show how power relations function in the conversational behavior of all characters.

Helen is a racist, an attractive, uncaring woman who enjoys life without thinking about the consequences of her actions, she shows her daughter no affection at all, she seems unconcerned about what Jo does or how she will live. Helen always abandons Jo in order to go with men, her only interest in men is money. Helen is a irresponsible mother, sometimes she can be kind and caring for her daughter at the meanwhile she can be as cruel and insulting woman.

Jo is a school girl that she is only sixteen years old and many of Jo's weaknesses features have been inherited by her mother. Jo has a tendency



to drift that she has a little ambition becoming engaged to a boy, even though she knows he will never come back to her. However, she has a strong personality that her mother lacks, and she has a higher standard of personal morality. In other words, she is capable of affection and she has no prejudice to any, and she has found herself a job. Moreover, Jo has a complex relationship with her mother, constantly changing and always emotionally draining. Jo encapsulates the themes of motherhood, loneliness, attempting to be belonged while she struggles the working-class, which is a harsh environment.

The first act, scene II, concentrates literally on the radical relations of the mother and the daughter, and also the sort of interactions within each other, which overly reveals the impoverished natural situation of their lives. This scene has alternating powerful speech turns between Helen and Jo. The pregnancy matter of Jo later turns out to be an attractive icon of her relationship with her mother. However Helen commences the arguments and she mostly controls the flow of asking the questions while Jo is postulated as powerfully the responder. The maternal property of Helen sounds impotent which goes far beyond the esteemed relationship of a daughter to her mother for instance, the returning back of Jo and her friend 'Geof' from the bar to Jo's flat, where the latter intends to dwell at that flat, the maternity status of Helen impulses sentimentally certain instructions related to the inglorious inhabitation of Geof at the flat, whereas Jo shows back a defensive reaction. Accordingly the motherhood status has been thoroughly abused when Jo uses a strict respond to Helen's attendance to the flat. The following excerpt is selected from (Act II, Scene I), which captures a critical confrontation between Helen and Jo:

**Excerpt 1**

- 1)Helen: Do you think people have got nothing better to do than look at you?
- 2)Jo: Leave me alone.
- 3)Helen: She'd be better off working that living off you like a little bloodsucker.
- 4)Jo: Get out of here. I won't go out if I don't want to. It's nothing to do with you. Get back to your fancy man or your husband, or whatever you like to call him. (HELEN begins to chase her.) Aren't you afraid he'll run off and leave you if you let him out of your sight? )
- 5)HELEN: I'll give you such a bloody good hiding in a minute, if you're not careful. That's what you've gone short of!
- 6)Jo: Don't show yourself up for what you are!





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- 7)HELEN: You couldn't wait, could you? Now look at the mess you've landed yourself in.
- 8)Jo: I'll get out of it, without your help.
- 9)HELEN: You had to throw yourself at the first man you met, didn't you?
- 10)Jo: Yes, I did, that's right.
- 11)HELEN: You're man mad.
- 12) Jo: I'm like you.
- 13)HELEN: You know what they're calling you round here? A silly little whore!
- 14)Jo: Well, they all know where I get it from too.
- 15)HELEN: Let me get hold of her! 'll knock her bloody head round!
- 16) Jo: You should have been locked up years ago, with my father.
- 17) HELEN: Let me get hold of her!
- 18) GEOFF: Please, Jo, Helen, Jo, please!
- 19) HELEN: I should have got rid of you before you were born.
- 20) Jo: I wish you had done. You did with plenty of others, I know.
- 21) HELEN: I'll kill her. I'll knock the living daylights out of her.
- 22) GEOFF: Helen, stop it, you will kill her!
- 23) Jo: If you don't get out of here I'll jump out of the window (Delaney, 1959, pp. 54-55).

This excerpt has shown Jo's effective respond to Helen's attendance to the flat as if to divert and show up the realistic pure image of Helen's pretending that she cars for Jo at that moment. In order to gain the powerful position in a conversational event. The characters allocate their own turns as the first person to speak, for instance, based on Short's list (1996) of "Who[ever] controls the topic?" is the powerful speaker, initiating the conversation is regarded as a marker of power (as cited in Lambrou, 2014, p. 141). Jo does not provide regular answers to the first two questions of her mother at the opening excerpt, and thus Jo's responds allocate her own superior place of diverting the questions, by the means of which Jo has then portrait a resisting phrase, in turn 2, "leave me alone", to further stop her mother's interference into her life. Short's (1996) list of the powerful speaker in, "Who exchange the conversational direction?" obviously allocates Jo in turn (4) as a powerful speaker, based on which she exchanges the conversational direction towards her mother, when she is strictly pointed a direct command to Helen and uses the order verb phrase "Get out", though she gains her power and breaks the wrong assumption that mothers should be superior and has more powerful social status towards their children. Accordingly

Helen here is considered as a superior figure that she permits herself to take responsibility of what Jo has to do. Moreover Jo in this turn “I won't go... if I don't want to” realizably views her rigorous self-reliance when it comes solely to her volitional conducts in running out her own life.

Helen in the next turn, “I'll give ... a bloody good hiding...” tries to gain the power and respect as a mother by threatening Jo to a physical harm or beating her in a severe manner, due to Jo's harsh responds previously which reveal the powerless status that Helen has found herself committed in. Jo in turn (6) “don't show yourself up...” proves a fact that she well-realized the irresponsibility, cruelty, and hypocrisy of Helen's true nature, which has been revealed out in the same turn, “...for what you are!”. The text shows generally that Jo despises much of her mother's true attitude of life, the two women squabble constantly, refuse to help each other and score points off each other. Turn (8) “I'll get out of it...” reveals and further enhances the self-reliance that Jo does acquire in opposition to Helen's lack of confidence. Also Jo in the same turn (8) “...without your help”, announces a viewpoint that her sense of responsibility is postulated at the opposite polar to her mother's. Historically Helen represents that type of woman in 1950s, which was prevailed in the society, and due to their poverty, they are counted financially on men. The notorious notion of a patriarchal society is to acclaim the inferiority of women, furthermore the entire social rights have been formed by men and thus women socially have found their place on the margin.

The linguistic resources and choice of linguistic strategies decide which powerful or powerless speaker is in an interactional discourse. The mother-daughter interactional domain consists of a variety of determining the powerful/powerless speech in this text. Accordingly, this model of powerful/powerless speakers can reflect the power-related impact of maternity thoroughly in their interaction. Hence Helen in the turn (9) starts a reprimanding speech “You had to throw yourself at the first man you met, didn't you?” as if criticizing somehow the way of Jo's behaviors in managing her life's matter. Helen's poverty is partly due to her own lack of emotion, will-power, and sense of her own worth, which provoke Helen to further be as a semi-whore, which later affects and determines the life of her daughter. Helen should not be viewed as a semi-whore, but as an attractive woman who enjoys life without thinking about the consequences of her actions. She derives pleasure from the company of men and alcohol. The consequences of Helen's realistic actions are unconsciously viewed as a result that Jo has gradually turned to imitate her mother's personality.





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Determinism is the philosophical conviction that all incidents are determined entirely by previously existing reasons (Berofsky, 1966, p.2). Throughout the history of philosophy, deterministic theories have jumped from varied and sometimes overlapping considerations and motives. Based on the previous definition of determinism, Jo in turn (10) “Yes, I did, that's right”, obviously reveals the corresponding of her mother's life impact, which therefore portrays and reforms Jo's life to exactly imitates Helen's. The opposite of determinism is randomness or some kind of indeterminism. Determinism is often contrasted with free will (Berofsky, 1966, p. 2). Thus in the line “I'm like you” (turn 12), Jo asserts the fact that she is indeed represented the product of her mother's actual life. On one side, Jo holds thoroughly a powerful style of responding which further proposes a semi exact style of her mother's to be then revealed out to the reader, and on the other side Jo, through the concept of determinism, shows a fact that her mother is considered a model that forms consequently her life's framework.

Socially single mothers in 1950s in Britain were considered to be disgraced and automatically considered second class citizens and were often ostracized from their families and communities. Also they were seen as denoting the state of the nation, generating ‘broken homes’ and ‘families with problems’. Many women became single mothers due to divorce, rape, unmarried, and unprotected sex. Accordingly Helen, as a matter of saving her reputation, avoids many obstacles related to the society, she attempts not to be single as far as she has been fascinated by a man named “Peter” and therefore Jo becomes a sample represents her mother's young image. The analysis of powerful and powerless speakers in the selected excerpt which was a mother-to-daughter interaction in Delaney's *Taste of Honey* adds to readers' understanding the far-reaching that effects the instability in the society of Salford in the 1950s.

The driving motivation for ontological naturalism is the need to explain how different kinds of things can make a causal difference to the spatiotemporal world. Thus many contemporary thinkers adopt a naturalist view of the mental realm because they think that otherwise we will be unable to explain how mental processes can causally influence non-mental processes. Similar considerations motivate naturalist views of the biological realm, the social realm, and so on. Jo in turn (14) “they all know where I get it from” has pointed out to a mental determinable fact, that she has been affected by her mother's standards in life as being a bad woman. This mentally effect provokes consequently other tangible acts like her illegal pregnancy, to be normal, and thus Helen's accusation in turn (11), “A silly little whore” is obviously determined by the society's

vision to Jo and gradually this view, according to Jo, is derived from her mother's reality in her society. Jo's powerful status shows up the determined reality of her mother. Whereas the fact of Helen, that the society is deceived, is clarified obviously by Jo, Helen is therefore irritated in the later turns and she further does a step forward to threaten Jo by killing her.

This section concludes that Jo is more powerful than Helen. Jo has a powerful ability to adjust to her mother's precarious life as she has no other choice. Her powerfulness is structured by showing up that Helen's maternity is unreliable enough to be taken into consideration though Jo's relationship with her mother appears to be quite misleading at first, with differences and sources of anger emerging between them. Helen seems to be misusing her maternal authority against her daughter, which although a manipulated technique she is committed, Helen however still opposes her authentic reality that Jo has radically affected. In accordance to the powerless and pale status of Helen, consequently she tries to misuse her social power as a mother to take control violently over her daughter to further divert the flagrant fact that she is a bad woman.

### 1.8. Significance of the Study

The current paper gains significance because it is the first study that provides a stylistic analysis of Delaney's *A Taste of Honey*. Its importance also lies in the way it shows the social distance among the play's characters through examining their dialogues. Moreover, this study traces the notion of instability of the mother-daughter relationship.

### 1.9. Definition of Key Terms

**Powerful and Powerless:** According to Hosman (1989), powerless language is typically defined as a kind of speech marked by hesitancy. When compared to powerful speech, it often contains more polite hedges, forms, hesitations, intensifiers, disclaimers, empty adjectives, and tag questions. Accordingly, the powerful speech is the absence of the above mentioned indicators. Hence, it is more dominant, assertive, and confirmative in its style (Grob, Meyers & Schuh, 1997, p. 283).

**Determinism:** It is the philosophical conviction that all incidents are determined entirely by previously existing reasons (Berofsky, 1966, p.2). Throughout the history of philosophy, deterministic theories have jumped from varied and sometimes overlapping considerations and motives. The opposite of determinism is randomness or some kind of indeterminism. Determinism is often contrasted with free will (Berofsky, 1966, p. 2).

**Self-Discrepancy:** It is a concrete framework which provide a better understanding to the social needs. The social disparity that enables the self to seek behind the social preferences is considered the main issue in





creating a social competence. It is a mediator to the effects of constructing an qualified and independent person who in fact suffers the issue of the social dependency. (Kupersmidt, Buchele & Voegler, 1996, p. 83)

**Maternal Instability:** The maternity law is certain and monolithic, which is consolidated in an obvious and identifiable person, in other words, who is at once a social, biological, and legal parent. In contrast to maternity, the paternity regime, is construed as relative, nonobvious, uncertain, and often unclear, thus women as mothers seem to be inferior when they are compared to the men. (Cahill, 2020, p. 2222)

#### **1.10. Purpose of the Study**

The present study aims to highlight the importance of powerful/-less in forming the relationship between the two characters in Delaney's play *A Taste of Honey*. Moreover, this study endeavors to show how Delaney depicts British social status through the characters' dialogues.

#### **1.11. Anticipated Findings**

By exploring the conflicts through the lens of powerful and powerless and the determinism, the study will offer new perspectives to examine the linguistic style and behavior in *A Taste of Honey*. In a play that is concerned with mother-daughter issues, the conversational patterns of mother and daughter are proved to be different since they are based on different social constraints. Through highlighting the major conflicts in the play and studying the socio-historical background of the time of the plot, it will be shown that the social and historical advantages are forming the style of speech and dialogue of the two characters.

#### **1.12. Study Innovation**

The study will attempt to fill the gaps of the previous studies on the play which were mainly concerned with pre-marital sex, homosexuality, love and aching, depression, betrayal and racism issues as a rebellion with a female approach. Nobody has discussed it stylistically based on Short's theory of powerful-less. Therefore, the present study attempts to present a linguistic analysis of the play drawing on powerful and powerless speech styles. Through this combination, the study will view the linguistic behavior of the characters of the play in a new light as it has never been done before.

#### **1.13. Data Collection**

The data required for this thesis mainly consists of books, internet websites, comments in social networks, essays, and published or recorded interviews.

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