



# Asian Journal of Human Services

Journal homepage: <https://www.ashs-human.net/international-journal/ajhs/>  
 Online ISSN: 2188-059X / Print ISSN: 2186-3350  
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## ORIGINAL ARTICLE

### A Critical Discourse Analysis of Feminism in Drama: Susan Glaspell and Alice Childress as a Case Study

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#### ABSTRACT

This study is a critical discourse analysis of two feminist plays: *The Verge* by Susan Glaspell (1921) and *The Wedding Band: A Love/Hate Story in Black and White* by Alice Childress (1966) dealing with the representation of feminism of the heroines of the two plays. Many studies have dealt with critical discourse analysis of feminism in different literary genres, however, plays have been given less attention in this respect. This study shows the role of feminism in two different societies; it also tries to highlight the problems that women face at the time of the World War I in America, the thoughts and beliefs that society has against women and how women fight to break these traditions throughout these selected plays. Accordingly, the study hypothesizes that society and social traditions have an important role in the lives of women in the sense that both black and white women face different kinds of oppression. The model adopted for analysis is Fairclough's model (1989) and the data are analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively leading to the most important conclusions revealing that oppression is used against both black and white women and that women though of different societies face oppressions and undergo outdated social traditions; however, women differ in their way to break these traditions.

*Keywords:* Critical Discourse Analysis, black and white feminism, Fairclough's approach

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*Received:* 2023/05/07 ; *Revised:* 2023/09/06 ; *Accepted:* 2023/09/07 ; *Published:* 2023/10/30



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## 1. Introduction

The Throughout history, women take a social part which is secondary and subordinate to the part of men. This belief can be seen through the ways women are used to speak, behave and even the way people talk about them. Many studies have dealt with critical discourse analysis of feminism in different literary genres, however, plays have been given less attention in this respect. Many literary genres have been analyzed in different fields like in novels, short stories and poetry. However, this study tries to full and bridge the gap between critical discourse analysis and plays.

Women's roles dramatically expanded during the World War I as many took over traditionally male jobs while men were away fighting. This sparked new debates around women's place in society.

The selected plays are attempted to show the problems that women face at the time of World War I in America, the thoughts and beliefs that society have against women and how women fight to break these traditions. The study aims at: Identifying the textual and discursive strategies in the plays under study; finding out the social strategies used in revealing feminism and other aspects in the plays under study, showing the similarities and differences in the plays under investigation. It is hypothesized, accordingly that grammar is highly utilized as a textual strategy in the plays under study; in terms of the discursive strategies, intertextuality is more used than other elements in the two plays; freedom is the most dominant social strategy used to convey the playwright's ideologies in the plays.

This study is limited to a critical discourse analysis of feminism aspects which are presented in two plays *The Verge* (1921) by Susan Glaspell and *The Wedding Band: A Love/Hate Story in Black and White* (1966) by Alice Childress which are from different societies and cultures. The texts are selected to be analyzed by using Fairclough's three levels model (1989) description, interpretation and explanation. Both "The Verge" by Susan Glaspell and "The Wedding Band" by Alice Childress offer valuable insights into the representation of feminism through their heroines. Despite being written in different eras, both plays tackle significant feminist themes and portray strong female characters facing challenges within the social and cultural contexts of their time.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

CDA starts with the assumption that language use is always social and that discourse both 'reflects and constructs the social world<sup>1)</sup>. CDA studies examine issues such as gender, race, cultural differences, philosophy and identity, and how texts both create and represent them. It also discusses ways in which language builds and is shaped by social relationships. A critical analysis can involve a comprehensive textual analysis and transfer to a description and interpretation from there<sup>2)</sup>. See also<sup>3-5)</sup>.

There is a connection between gender, sex, sexuality and CDA. The founders and scholars of CDA who combined the movement and development with its many appearances have been conscious of work on gender in sociolinguistics and other associated fields, together with discourse analysis (DA). Working in sociolinguistics and DA normally focuses on the work and behavior of speech of male and female on the styles of conversation in communications between male and female. Concerning the work of descriptive sociolinguistics, gender is regarded as another class to classify individuals and groups together with class, race/ethnicity, socioeconomic status, educational background, religion, etc., all of which also proclaim for, and some are advanced by critical work<sup>6)</sup>.

## 2.2. Feminism

The Feminism is an important term and one of the recent beliefs to appear which tries to analyze the situation of women in society, show their obvious part in history and suggest the foundation for improvement and the development of women in parts of society. Feminists have believed that there is a central power fight between women and men, similar to the struggles about race and class which is possibly radical. Actually, this is the most ancient power struggle, the minimum forms of struggle, the greatest essential forms in its suggestions for society. Mary Wollstonecraft is a main early feminist writer who has claimed that the legal rights should be the same for women and men on the areas of equal humanity, rationality and freedom, and moral value. It is a wrong belief that women must be known by their sex which leads to ignore their educational, legal, economic and political rights. As soon as equality was recognized there would be a positive revolution in the relation between women and men<sup>7)</sup>.

## 2.3. *The Verge (1921)*

The writer of *the Verge* is *Susan Keating Glaspell* (1876 –1948), an American, is the most important woman and playwright of her time. The most consistent theme in her writings is the drive of her central character to escape the structures holding them in place; their direction is habitually toward some ill-defined but freer “outside” that has yet to be discovered. Glaspell is one of the first American playwrights, female or male, to use expressionistic techniques that she had learned in Paris, like in *The Verge* (1921), which is about a woman who tries to create or breed a new kind of plant life, “just as she wishes to create a new pattern as an independent woman,”<sup>8)</sup>. Glaspell presents tragic characters, who however untraditionally stay alive till the end, and at the same time still great victims and sufferers. The She-tragic heroines of Glaspell are encouraged to act because of the intolerable circumstances they face in their patriarchal society. Restricted, confined, controlled and oppressed by the male-controlled system, they suffer deep and strong psychological pressure, and react violently. In spite of their violent reactions, Glaspell’s protagonists are not naturally and innately criminals. What pushes them to kill is their frustration and sense of entrapment. Their efforts to break free from their cage-like domestic restraints only lead them to other forms of imprisonment— the mental asylum and the institutional prison<sup>9)</sup>.

## 2.4. *The Wedding Band: A Love/ Hate Story in Black and White (1966)*

There The writer of this play is Alice Childress (1916 –1994), an African-American playwright, actress, novelist, short story writer, journalist, essayist stretches and director. She is the only African American woman who has written, produced, and published plays for four decades. In her work, she presents themes about slavery, racial discrimination, and the history of her family<sup>10,23)</sup>.

In *the Wedding Band*, Alice Childress presents her black and white Romeo and Juliet who are the modern victims in their society. Alice in this play confirms that racism is not only practiced by whites against blacks but also by blacks against whites. she presents an image of angry women united by their suffering and need of sisterly unity and solidarity. The anger of those women is a positive rather than negative factor as it gives the heroine her freedom from the ties that make her an outcast in her own community. This play argues the destiny of two lovers who face refusal from their families and society and the following anger of the female characters whether in favor or against this romantic relation<sup>11)</sup>.

## 2.5. Related Studies and the Current Study

In the field of feminism and CDA, there are some researches that handle some kinds of genres rather than plays like O'Donnell's (2013)<sup>12)</sup>. She adapts Huckin's analytical tool for contrastive analysis of the texts of the two films. The aims of this study are to show how U.S. social discourses are characterized through film and media, how morality has become assigned to, and they have taken a critical part to ease the damage on cultural and personal identity for women and minorities. The main conclusion of this study is that social and culture messages can be presented through films; both films display the culture of the U.S. by representing main ideologies and discourses.

A PhD dissertation by Faeq (2015)<sup>13)</sup> *A critical discourse analysis of feminist language in English and Arabic Novels: A contrastive study* is another related study that compares feminism in two novels. The problem of this study is to investigate feminist novel-writing in English and Arabic languages by exploring what exact linguistic features might characterize each; and the ideologies imbued within feminist language. The study tries to show how women's treatment and roles might converge or diverge in the two different cultures. The model of analysis is Fairclough's and the study concludes that the two novels show universal features concerning women in that both cultures are dominated by the dominant-muted / center-periphery patterns and that male violence against women is one of the most visible outcomes of gender inequality and women's lack of empowerment.

The present study deals with two plays in different societies with the same temporal period (World War 1), each writer shows how the society deals with women and control their role. In the two plays the main characters fight with society that makes them more powerful than any time.

## 3. Methodology

A qualitative and quantitative analysis are meant to be used in this study. The qualitative analysis is used to understand how the language of the play is manipulated to achieve the themes and to analyze human behaviors and feelings. The quantitative analysis is used to show the results and findings that the research aims at and are represented in the form of tables and figures.

### 3.1. The Model Adopted

To accomplish this study, Fairclough's model (1989) is adopted. This model serves to investigate the hidden ideologies like racism and other aspects in relation to feminism to fulfill the ultimate aim of this research. This model includes three linguistic levels: Description (Quirk et al (1985) is adopted in this level), Interpretation, and Explanation.

#### 3.1.1. Description (Textual Analysis)

Vocabulary (types of nouns and adjectives), Grammar (transitivity, types of sentences, modality) and Text Structure (turn taking, sentence length) are the most important aspects that are dealt with here.

##### 3.1.1.1. Types of Nouns

Overwording, Rewording, Euphemism, Synonymy, Antonymy, Metaphor, Informal language.

### **3.1.1.2. *Types of Adjectives***

Descriptive Adjectives, Possessive Adjective, Indefinite Adjective, Compound Adjective.

### **3.1.1.3. *Transitivity***

According to Halliday & Matthiessen<sup>14)</sup>, there are six process types which are divided into two groups, principal and subsidiary. Material, mental, and relational are related to the principal processes, while the behavioral, verbal, and existential are related to subsidiary group. Transitivity looks at who or what is represented as the actor/agent, and this sheds light on how power and agency are linguistically framed.

### **3.1.1.4. *Sentence Types***

Declarative, Interrogative, Imperative, and Exclamatory.

### **3.1.1.5. *Modality***

Quirk et al<sup>15)</sup> present modality as “the manner in which the meaning of a clause is capable so as to reflect the speaker's judgment of the likelihood of the proposition it expresses being true”. Modality is stated by modal auxiliary verbs like can, could, may, might, must, ought, should, and also by various other formal features representing by adverbs and tense to achieve the functions of 'permission', 'volition', 'obligation', 'possibility', 'prediction', and 'necessity'.

### **3.1.1.6. *Turn Taking***

Turn-taking is an important aspect of conversational analysis and the set of practices through which conversation is prepared. Mechanisms of turn -taking may vary between cultures or languages. Turn-taking in English-speaking societies usually means that in a conversation only one member speaks at a time. The first speaker (A) speaks and stops, the next speaker (B) speaks and stops, so, there is conversational patterns which look like: A-B-A-B-A-B<sup>16)</sup>.

### **3.1.1.7. *Sentence Length and Complexity***

Sentence length can be defined as the number of words that come between the opening word which starts with a capital letter and the end punctuation mark like: question mark, full stop, or exclamation mark<sup>17)</sup>. Sentence length and complexity can reflect many merits about the character's personality (simple or complicated) in addition it may lead to the structure of action rising and falling<sup>18)</sup>.

## **3.1.2. *Interpretation (Discursive Practice)***

### **3.1.2.1. *Intertextuality***

De Beaugrande and Dressler<sup>19)</sup> define intertextuality as “the ways in which the production and reception of a given text depend upon the participants' knowledge of other texts”. Intertextuality is basically “the property texts have of being full of snatches of other texts, which may be explicitly demarcated or merged in, and which the text may assimilate, contradict, ironically echo, and so forth”<sup>20)</sup>. The idea of intertextuality points to the productivity of texts, to how texts can transform prior texts and restructure existing conventions (genres, discourses) to generate new ones, but this productivity is not in practice available to people as a limitless space for textual innovation and play: it is socially limited and

constrained, and conditional upon relations of power (ibid).

Concerning the main functions of intertextual analysis within CDA, they are two: It shows a significant role in revealing speakers' and writers' strategies in re-formulating or reinforcing ideas and beliefs; and it can reveal traces of the main ideology or evidence of ideological struggle and cultural change<sup>21)</sup>. Intertextuality can be represented through Direct quotation; Indirect quotation; mentioning of a person, document, or statements, comment or evaluation on a statement, text; or otherwise invoked voice: like: judgment on curricula. It also can be achieved via identifiable phrasing, terminology related to particular people or groups of people or particular documents; or using language and forms that appear to rebound definite ways of communicating, discussions among other people, and kinds of documents<sup>22)</sup>.

**3.1.3. Explanation (Social Analysis)**

In this level of analysis, many aspects will be discussed, feminism, freedom, identity, violence and racism in the two plays, and that will be achieved depending on the two previous levels: the textual analysis and discursive analysis. Below is the mental representation of analysis according to Fairclough's Model (Fairclough, 1989).

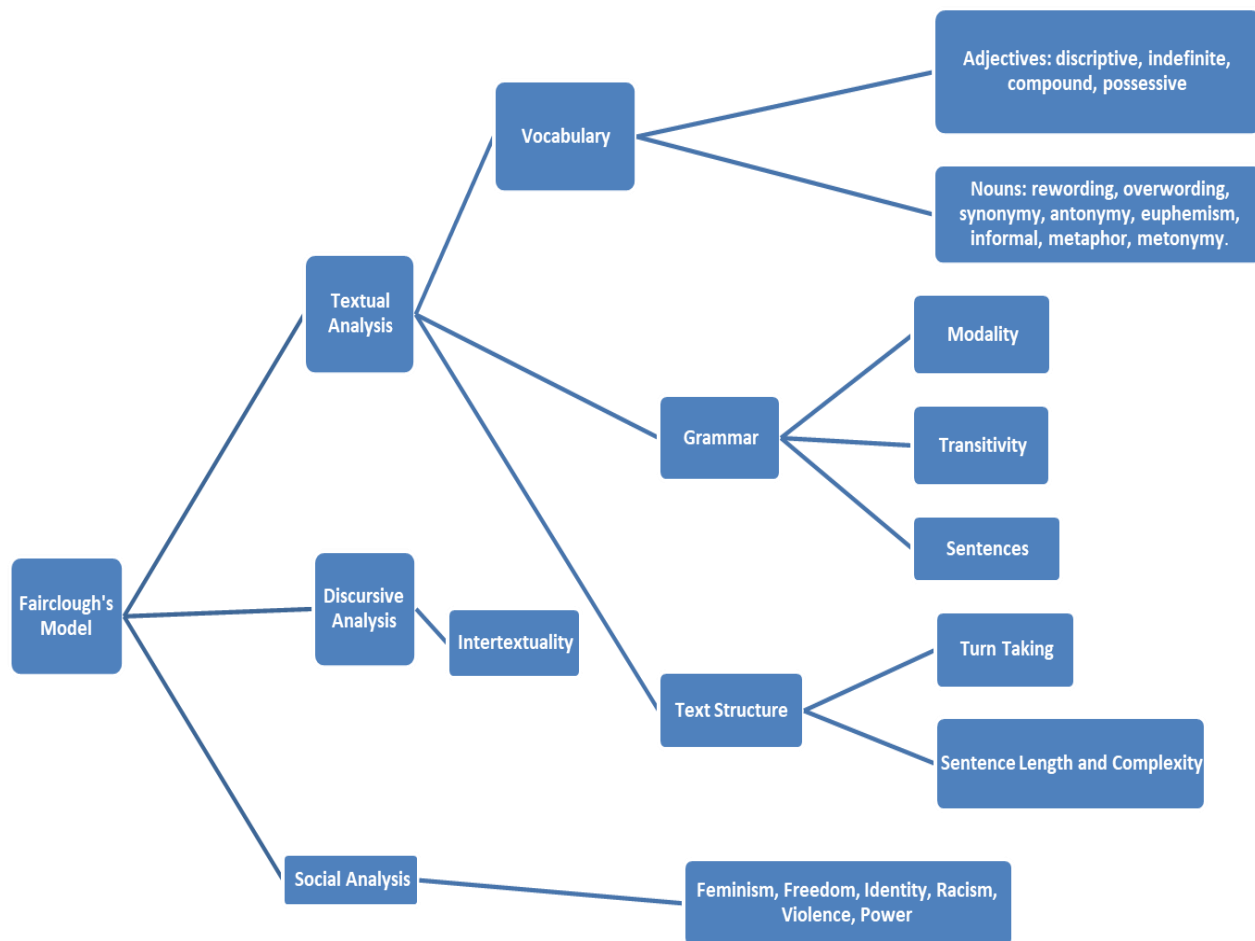


Fig 1. The Model of Analysis following Fairclough (1989)

### 3.2. A Sample of Analysis

Sixteen texts are selected to be analyzed according to Fairclough’s model, eight texts from each play. The following is a sample of analysis from *The Verge*.

“CLAIRE: No; you never mean to do that. I want to break it up! I tell you, I want to break it up! If it were all in pieces, we’d be (a little laugh) shocked to aliveness (to DICK)—wouldn’t we? There would be strange new comings together—mad new comings together, and we would know what it is to be born, and then we might know—that we are. Smash it. (her hand is near an egg) As you’d smash an egg. (she pushes the egg over the edge of the table and leans over and looks, as over a precipice)”. (p. 20)

This conversation is between Claire (heroine) and Harry (husband); Dick is in the same place but stay silent. This conversation occurs in in the greenhouse at morning. Claire tells them that she wants to get away from them, she wants to break the traditional rules. Claire is unable to fit in the normative gender roles of American society and protests upon all old values which look like a prison.

#### 3.2.1. Description (Textual Analysis)

##### 1-The Vocabulary Level

##### a- Adjectives

Table 1. Types of Adjectives

Descriptive	Possessive	Indefinite	Compound
Strange, new, mad			

Claire uses three descriptive adjectives in this text to describe the whole situation. So, it is clear that this text is descriptive.

##### b- Nouns

Table 2. Types of Nouns

Overlexicalization	Rewording	Synonymy
-There would be strange new comings together—mad new comings together, and we would know what it is to be born, and then we might know—that we are.	I want to break it up (2). Smash (2).	-There would be strange new comings together—mad new comings together, and we would know what it is to be born, and then we might know—that we are. - break up & smash.

Overlexicalization: Glaspell uses these expressions to talk about the traditional life and rules. She says that by destroying these rules, new things that are made and change will be achieved, and even human will be born again.

Rewording: the repetition is used here to reveal her inner conflict against everything. Claire uses clear words that show

her struggle and rebellion.

Synonymy: different uses of synonyms appear here; Claire refers to the new thing which will born after smashing the rules. She uses these words and adjectives to describe the new expecting life.

**3.2.2. Description (The Textual Analysis)**

1-The Grammar level

a-Transitivity Analysis

Table 3. Types of Verbs

<b>Dynamic verbs</b>	<b>Stative verbs</b>
	<b>Thoughts and Opinions</b>
break up, tell, smash, born.	Mean, want, know.

In this text different verbs are used, ranging from dynamic to stative verbs. Through her speech, Claire uses dynamic verbs to refer to herself. But when she refers to others she uses stative verbs. This is not a random use, she tries to express herself and how she has the energy and desire to do change. Her use of static verbs is to show the other's inability to change.

Sentence 1: I want to break it up.

Sentence 2: If it were all in pieces, we'd be shocked to aliveness

Sentence 3: we would know what it is to be born, and then we might know—that we are.

Sentence 4: Smash it.

Table 4. Transitivity System

Number of sentence	Actor	Process	Circumstance	Goal	receiver	identified	Identifier
1	I		to break up	It			
2		Were	all in pieces	It			
	We	Would be shocked	aliveness				
3	We	Would know	to be born	we are			
	We	Might know					
4		Smash		It			



b- Sentence Type

Table 5. Types of Sentences

<b>Declarative</b>	<b>Interrogative</b>	<b>Imperative</b>
I want to break it up.	If it were all in pieces, we'd be (a little	Smash it
I tell you, I want to break it up.	laugh) shocked to aliveness	
There would be strange new comings together—mad new comings together, and we would know what it is to be born, and then we might know—that we are	(to DICK)—wouldn't we?	

Claire uses declarative sentences because she thinks that she knows what she does. She uses an imperative sentence in the form of yes/no question. This usage shows that although Claire wants to change but she still has questions, as she is unsure about her decision.

c-Modality

Table 6. Types of Modal Verbs

<b>The modal verb</b>	<b>The sentence</b>
Would	-If it were all in pieces, we'd be (a little laugh) shocked to aliveness (to DICK)—wouldn't we?
Might	- There would be strange new comings together—mad new comings together, and we would know what it is to be born. - And then we <i>might</i> know—that we are.

The modal verb *would* in the first sentence is used as a desirable modality states probability and functions as a conditional modal verb associated with 'if'.

The modal verb *would* in the second sentence has a prediction view of what will happen after change.

The last sentence uses the modal verb *might* to express possibility. Claire talks about something that may or may not happen, she shows her own opinion about what will happen after change.

**3.2.3. Interpretation (The Discursive Analysis)**

a-Turn Taking

At this point the researcher shows who is the dominator of the conversations, who controls the situation and who has the power through speaking. This conversation is between Claire and her husband Harry. The conversation starts with Harry asking about what she wants. Claire tells him that she wants to leave them. She believes that human must not live the same life, one must do things which are different from others. She wants to smash and destroy everything and she

begins with Tom's egg. Claire is the controller of the conversation, Harry just asks short questions and she answers long answers. She controls the conversation and this means that the conversation is not equal. This thing may refer to the power and strong personality of Claire and weak side of Harry. Harry's speech is simple, about the current moments while Claire's speech is more rational and realistic. This is clear through using dynamic (Do, break up (3), born, smash (3), called, made, lock in, worked, grow, take, go, waits) more than stative verbs (Want (2), need, mean, think (2), be, shocked, know).

#### b-Sentence Length and Complexity

Glaspell uses 5 different sentence structures and types ranging from very simple, two-word and very long sentences in this text.

One of the aims of using this mix is that Glaspell tries to appropriate the style to the subject or content. Thus, wherever Glaspell wants to single something out, she uses simple sentences; but when there an exaggeration or a serious thing, the sentences change to a complex one.

### 3.2.4. Explanation (*The Social Analysis*)

The social analysis of the play is very important to discover the issues raised at the time of the plays. Within *the Verge*, four main elements are issued: *Feminism, Freedom, Identity* and *Power*.

#### 1- Feminism

*The Verge* is a feminist play which contains many feminist ideas and thoughts. Two aspects within feminism are examined in *the Verge* which are the role and image of women and patriarchy:

##### a. The Role and Image of Women

Glaspell represents Claire who is the rebellion against the old traditions and seeks freedom from society. She has rebelled against the conventional roles in order to make herself new. Claire the heroine of the play, the wife, sister, mother and friend.

##### b. Patriarchy (The Relationship between Claire, Harry, Dick, Tom and Anthony)

Patriarchy refers to the domination of men over women. Most of societies see that women should be under the rule of men. In this play the three men try to dominate over Claire each one in his own way. The three men have a weak part in Claire's life. *Harry* is Claire's husband, *Tom* the close friend and *Dick* the lover; they all tried to control her but they failed. *Harry*, the ordinary and simple character who does not want to change even his way of eating when he rejects to eat the egg without salt. *Harry* tries like all men in the world to control her but he could not and continue giving her what he thinks as support.

#### 2. Freedom

In order to get freedom Claire uses violence against others like *verbal* and *physical* while *social* violence is represented by the social rules. This play differs from any other feminist plays because here Claire the protagonist uses violence against others not the other, excepting society which strangles her.

##### a. Verbal Violence

There are many uses of verbal violence in *the verge*, Claire uses verbal violence against Elizabeth, Adelaide and Harry. *HARRY: I am convinced I am the worst thing in the world for you, Claire.*

CLAIRE: (with a smile for his tactics, but shaking her head) I'm afraid you're not. I don't know—perhaps you are. (*The Verge*, p. 62).

This text shows that Harry knows that he is not important in Claire's life but he cannot let her because he loves her. When he asks her she plays with word and at last tells him that perhaps he is, a verbal violence is used by Claire. Adelaide also faces verbal violence from Claire because Claire did not like her sister and her arrival so she uses ugly words to describe her.

#### a. Physical Violence

Claire uses physical violence in the play against *Tom's egg, the edge vine, Elizabeth and Tom*. In one dialogues, she smashes the egg as she smashes the traditions that she refuses. A physical violence towards an egg but the aim is the social rules. Another physical violence is clear in another dialogue when she destroys the edge vine because it returns to its original shape and with the edge vine she tries to strike Elizabeth but Harry stops her and takes the daughter away. Claire's violence towards Tom is the hardest one because it ends with Tom's death and Claire madness. She loves Tom but kills him because he is an ordinary person has the thoughts and traditions that all men in the world have. So Claire feels that she is in danger, if Tom still alive she will agree with what he wants because her feelings will lead her to do that. So, she kills him to protect herself and thinks that this is a gift for him to be a dead man not an ordinary man.

#### b. Social Violence

Social violence is not a very clear thing in the play but it can be inferenced through the character's speech. Glaspell has written *the verge* to show how the Victorian society and rules make women feel as they are trapped. At the time of 1921 the play was just completed and produced and females were still obliged to stay at their home and do their domestic duties as a good wife and mother who clean, prepare food, and take care of children. Women were not allowed to vote and work and this was leading to increased resistance. Many women wanted to change the situation and began to voice frustration and dissatisfaction. Also, the feminist movements began at that period. Other women rebelled through showing depression, despondency and sometimes madness just like Claire. So, Claire is the result of the social stress and hard traditions, she chooses to be mad in order to take her freedom, "*Perhaps the madness that gave you birth will burst again*"(*The Verge*, p. 106).

#### c. Identity

Identity in its two types, self-identity and social identity, is the unique characteristic or personality of a person. Self-identity can be seen in Claire's self-esteem and self-acceptance from the beginning of the play to the end. She feels that she has the regard about human life who feels responsible about them that she divorced her ex-husband and marry another one in order to make change in her life. Another opinion made by Claire through her speech with her daughter about herself is that she is useless especially with her children, i.e., she is not like other mothers. She thinks she has no benefit and no one needs her. While all of them accused her of being mad, Claire said that she is too sane, she just wants to be free from their rules.

Social identity means the other's viewpoint about an individual, the story, the society and others say about an individual. Everyone in Claire's family sees her as a mad person except her assistant Anthony who helps and encourages her. Claire as any Victorian woman at that time seeks freedom from society and family and thinks that only madness will lead to freedom. Society also regards Claire as a mad woman because she rebels against its traditions and wants to be another woman who differs from other women. Claire is considered as an extremist woman who does not obey social

traditions like others who takes care about their families and home only.

e. Power

This ideology is represented by Claire and society. The Victorian society is patriarchal and give permission for men to dominate women which leads to power abuse. Claire refuses to be controlled and performs power against her family. Claire represents the dominance of women whose concern to break old traditions and men's control.

**4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The results of the qualitative analysis are reflected in this section in the form of tables and figures in addition to some remarks.

**4.1. Description (The Textual Level)**

**4.1.1. Vocabulary**

In *the Verge*, Glaspell uses different types of adjectives (descriptive 62, 55,357%, indefinite 5, 100%, compound 4, 100%, possessive 1, 50%), which have an expressional value. The usage of descriptive adjectives is important to show the personality of the heroine, Claire. She uses this kind to describe her plants which means that Claire is an emotional person only when she talks about her plants and describes things rather than actions. In the level of vocabulary of *the Wedding Band* Childress also focuses on adjectives and nouns. She uses only two types of adjectives (descriptive 50, 44,642%, possessive 1, 50%) with an expressional value. Childress uses descriptive adjectives more than other types to show the inner conflict of her characters. Julia Herman and the others describe their situation in an emotional way so, descriptive adjectives are the suitable for that as shown in table (7) and figure (2).

Table 7. Adjectives in *the Verge* and *the Wedding Band*

Types of Adjectives	<i>The Verge</i>		<i>The Wedding Band</i>		Total	
	F	P	F	P	F	P
Descriptive	62	55.357%	50	44.642%	112	91%
Indefinite	5	100%	0	0%	5	4%
Compound	4	100%	0	0%	4	3%
Possessive	1	50%	1	50%	2	2%
Total	72	58.536%	51	41.463%	123	100%

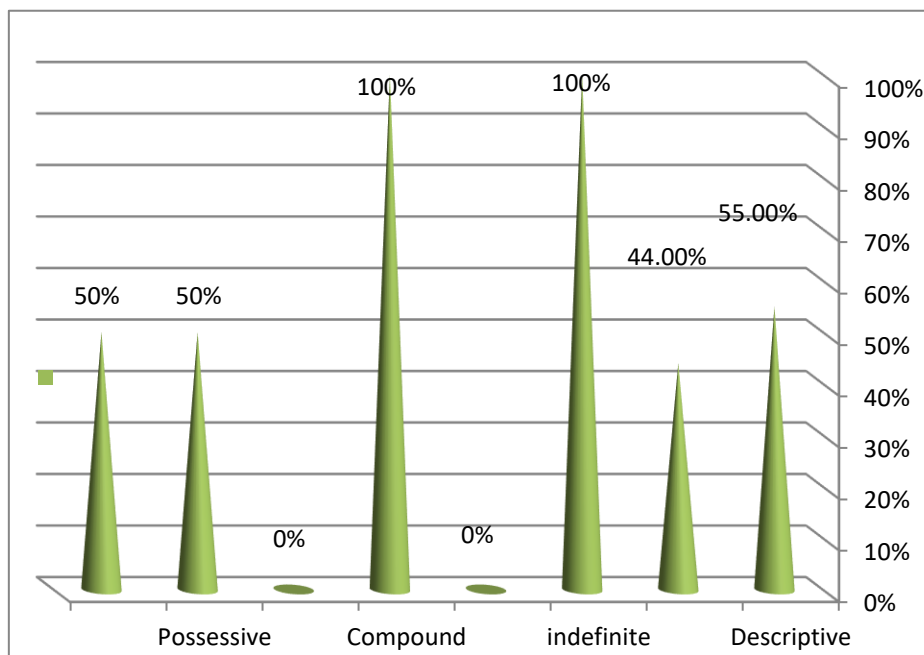


Fig 2. Adjectives in The Verge and The Wedding Band

Concerning Nouns, Glaspell uses different forms like (rewording 47, 63,513%, overwording 29, 100%, synonymy 34, 89,473%, ....). Rewording has the large usage through the play which has expressional values. The usage of rewording means that Claire wants to elaborate and paraphrase her ideas to convince people while synonymy refers to her way in repeating things in different situations and times. Antonymy also has been used in a wide range which refers to Clair's inner conflict and to show that her life is full of contradictions. Glaspell uses all these kinds in her philosophical play to emphasize and enrich her idea about feminism. In *the Wedding Band*, Childress also uses different forms of nouns like (rewording 36,468, 74%, informal 9, 90%, euphemism 5, 31,25%, synonymy 4, 10,562%, ....) as in Table (8). Here as in *the verge* rewording has the large usage which is important and useful to show how the writer tries hard to express and elaborate the struggles of her characters.

Table 8. Nouns in *the Verge* and *the Wedding Band*

Types of Nouns	<i>The Verge</i>		<i>The Wedding Band</i>		Total	
	F	P	F	P	F	P
Overwording	29	100%	0	0%	29	14%
Rewording	47	63.513%	27	36.486%	74	36%
Euphemism	11	68.751%	9	31.25%	16	8%
Synonymy	34	89.473%	5	10.562%	38	18%
Antonymy	18	92%	4	8%	25	12%
Metaphor	9	75%	3	25%	12	6%
Hyponymy	1	2,960%	0	0%	1	6%
Informal	1	10%	50	98,039%	10	5%
Total	150	75 %	25	24.154	205	100%

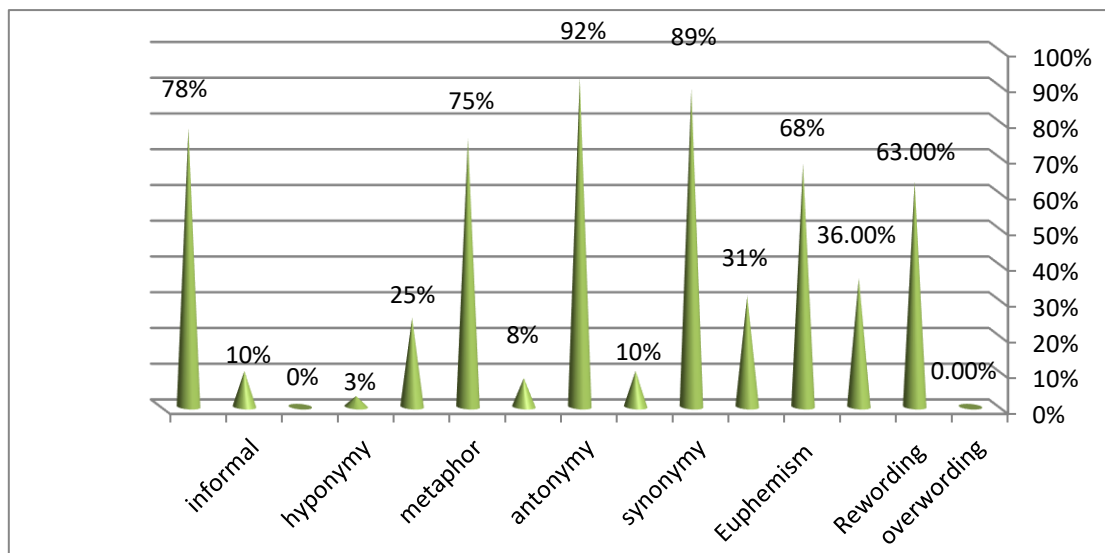


Fig 3. Nouns in The Verge and The Wedding Band

It is clear that both of the playwrights focus on descriptive adjectives in their plays. It can be summarized from this point that the most obvious themes in the two plays are to show the inner conflict of women at that time and how they will get their freedom and the result of their rebellion. Both of them try to show the bad side and the real life of their character (black and white characters) by using descriptive adjectives.

**4.1.2. Grammar**

In *the Verge*, Glaspell had used the two types of verbs but focused on dynamic verbs more than stative. She uses dynamic (106, 61,627%) and stative (30, 12,857%) verbs as in Table (9). This technique shows that Claire is a rebellion woman, when she talks about herself she uses dynamic verbs to show her power, energy and desire to change, but when she talks about others she uses stative verbs to show that others are unable to change. Regarding *Verbs in the Wedding Band*, Childress also had used the two types of verbs but focused on dynamic verbs, as in Table (9). The usage of dynamic (38, 372%) more than stative (30, 42%) means that the characters are rational and realistic when they talk about themselves. In the two plays the writers focus on dynamic verbs. They present the powerful characters, women who have the power to rebel against law, to fight to get their rights.

Table 9. Verbs in *the Verge* and *the Wedding Band*

Types of verbs	<i>The Verge</i>		<i>The Wedding Band</i>		Total	
	F	P	F	P	F	P
Dynamic	106	61,627%	66	38,372%	172	71%
Static	30	42,857%	40	57,142%	70	29%
Thoughts and opinions	21	52,5%	19	47,5%	40	17%
Sense and perception	6	42,857%	8	57,142%	14	6%
Emotions and wants	3	30%	7	70%	10	4%
Possession	0	0%	5	100%	5	2%
Existence	0	0%	1	100%	1	0%
Total	166	33,205%	146	46,794%	242	100%

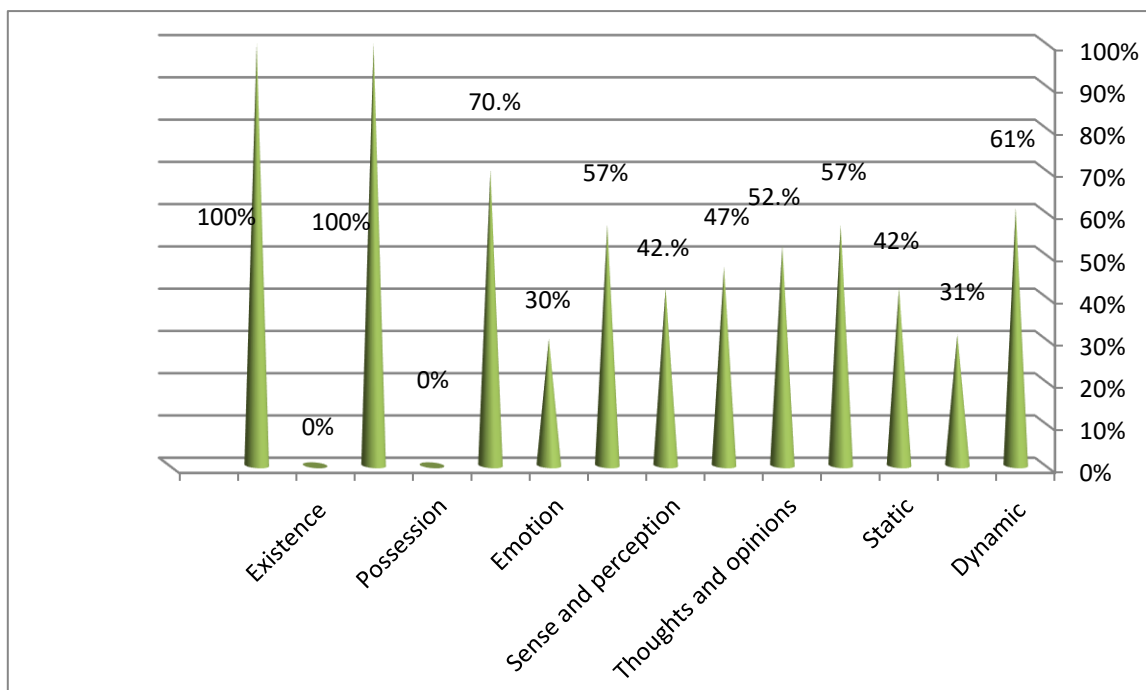


Fig 4. Verbs in The Verge and The Wedding Band

Sentences in the selected data in *the Verge* are of three types. Declaratives are the most kind that used by Glaspell. In *the Wedding Band* Childress also uses declaratives more than other types. Table (10) shows that (declaratives 38,28% interrogatives 12,903). Glaspell and Childress used declaratives in their plays because the characters’ speech contains mainly knowledge, opinions, facts and their point of view.

Table 10. Sentence Types in *the Verge* and *the Wedding Band*

Types of Sentences	<i>The Verge</i>		<i>The Wedding Band</i>		Total	
	F	P	F	P	F	P
Declarative	158	61,718%	98	38,28%	256	88%
Interrogative	27	87,096%	4	12,903%	31	11%
Imperative	5	100%	0	0%	5	2%
Total	190	100%	102	100%	292	100%

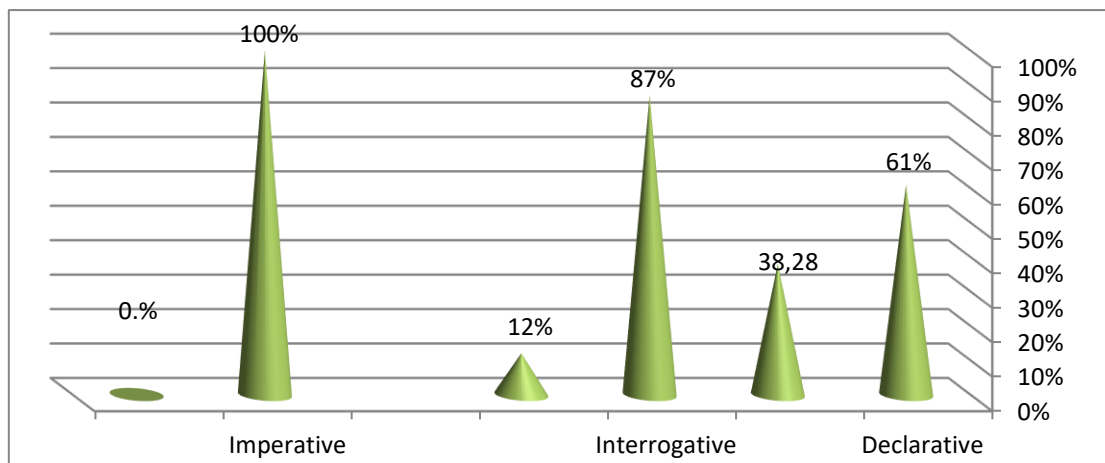


Fig 5. Sentence Types in The Verge and The Wedding Band

Modality in *the Verge* focuses on prediction (7, 87%) as in Table (11) which is widely used by Claire throughout the play. Claire uses this technique of modality when she talks about her plants and to tell others about what will happen in the future. Glaspell uses prediction to show that Claire is a dreamy person who is eager to change. Claire has the power to say what will happen and what will do in the future, she is free to say anything but not to do what she wants because she is limited by the social traditions. The usage of prediction emphasizes the idea that Claire is a rebellion, fights to get her freedom and to do what the feminist movement wants women to do. In *the Wedding Band* ability (5, 33%) is the widest used by the characters throughout the play. The technique of modality shows that the characters talk about something they may or may not be able to do. Childress's characters are ruled by patriarchy, laws, government and the white society, so, they imply ability in their speech more than other characteristics. Ability reflects Julia's strong desire to gain her rights that she may or may not get.

Table 11. Modality in *the Verge* and *the Wedding Band*

Types of Modality	<i>The Verge</i>		<i>The Wedding Band</i>		Total	
	F	P	F	P	F	P
Ability	6	23%	5	33%	11	27%
Prediction	7	87%	1	12,5%	8	20%
Certainty	4	100%	0	0%	4	10%
Advice	1	100%	0	0%	1	2%
Opinion	1	100%	0	0%	1	2%
Possibility	3	42,857%	4	57,142%	7	17%
Promise	1	100%	0	0%	1	2%
Warning	2	100%	0	0%	2	5%
Request	1	100%	0	0%	1	2%
Probability	0	0%	2	100%	2	5%
Conditional	0	0%	1	100%	1	2%
Reference to the past	0	0%	1	100%	1	2%
Intention& decision	0	0%	1	100%	1	2%
Total	26	63,414%	15	36,585%	41	100%



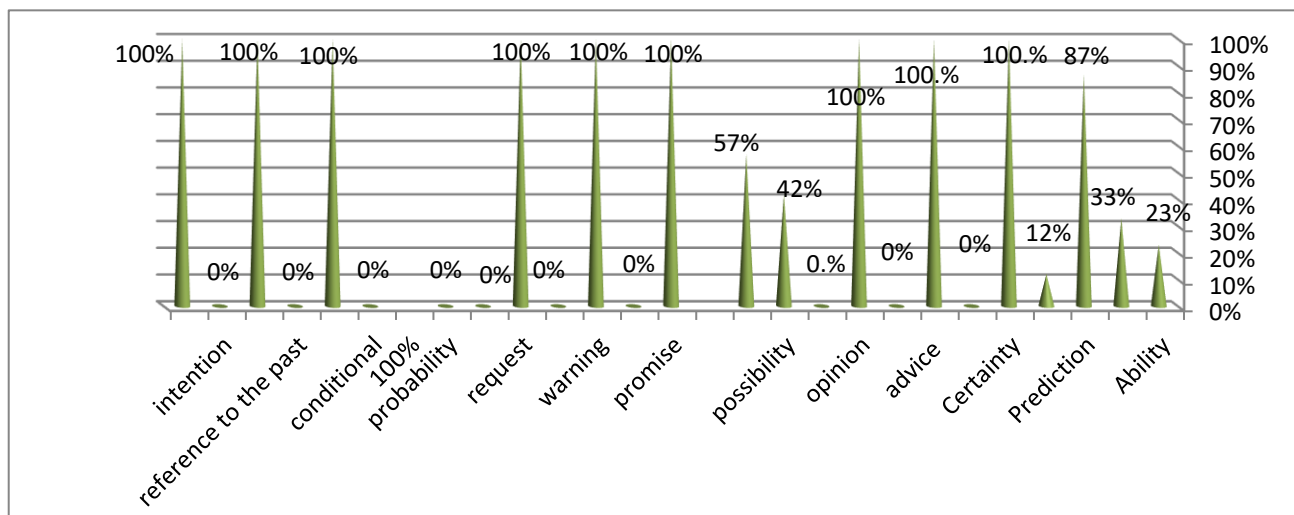


Fig 6. Modality in The Verge and The Wedding Band

Turn Taking strategy throughout *the Verge* shows that Claire is the dominator of the conversations most of the time. *The Verge* makes use of turn taking (5, 555%) more than *The Wedding Band* (4, 444%). This is the difference between *Claire* and *Julia*: *Claire* is strong, she has the power to do what she wants even when others do not like it, even at the end she takes her freedom by going mad. While *Julia* has less power than *Claire*, *Herman*, the mother, the sister and her neighbors take their turn and make her silent. *Julia* is strong in the side of her relationship with *Herman*, but weak in the side of society, she cannot tell anybody about her love and stays ten years ended with the death of her man and dream. So, *Julia* wins and loses at the same time, she loses her love and wins her freedom by the death of her love.

Table 12. Turn Taking in *the Verge* and *the Wedding Band*

Turn Taking	<i>The Verge</i>		Turn Taking	<i>The Wedding Band</i>		Total	
	F	P		F	P	F	P
Claire	4	66,666%	Julia	2	33,333%	6	67%
Tom	1	50%	Herman	1	50%	2	22%
Harry	0	0%	The neighbors	1	100%	1	11%
Dick	0	0%					
Total	5	55,555%	Total	4	44,444%	9	100%

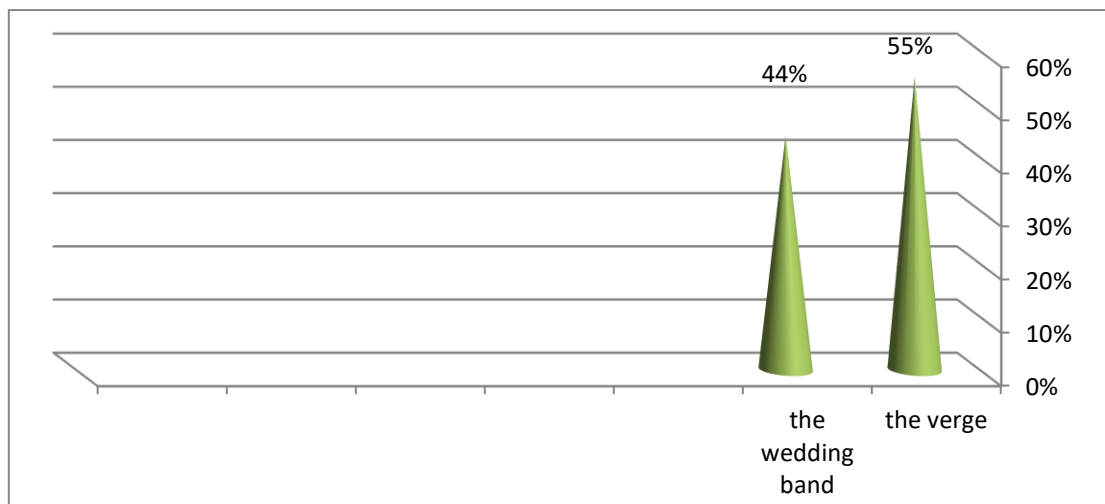


Fig 7. Turn Taking in The Verge and The Wedding Band

The above analysis shows that textual strategies are more utilized in *the Verge* than in *the Wedding Band*. This means that Glaspell tries to highlight the feminist ideologies in *the Verge* more than those used in *the Wedding Band*.

**4.2. Interpretation (Discursive Analysis)**

In this level of discursive analysis intertextuality with its two types is used heavily in *the Verge*. Glaspell uses external intertextuality (64,705%) more than internal (35,294%) as in Table (13), because her play is based on philosophical ideas, famous characters and real events which requires such a use. External intertextuality is used to show that Claire is a philosophical and educated person, while internal intertextuality shows that this character has nothing to do but remembering the past and repeats her previous events and speech. This shows that this is a powerless person. In *the Wedding Band*, internal intertextuality is used more than external. Childress wants to show how her characters are poor, little educated and weak. Intertextuality in the discursive level, is used in *the Verge* more than in *the Wedding Band* which means that Glaspell's characters are more educated than Childress's characters.

Table 13. Intertextuality in *the Verge* and *the Wedding Band*

Types of Intertextuality	<i>The Verge</i>		<i>The Wedding Band</i>		Total	
	F	P	F	P	F	P
Internal	4	50%	4	50%	8	47%
External	7	77,777%	2	22,222%	9	53%
Total	11	64,705%	6	35,294%	17	100%

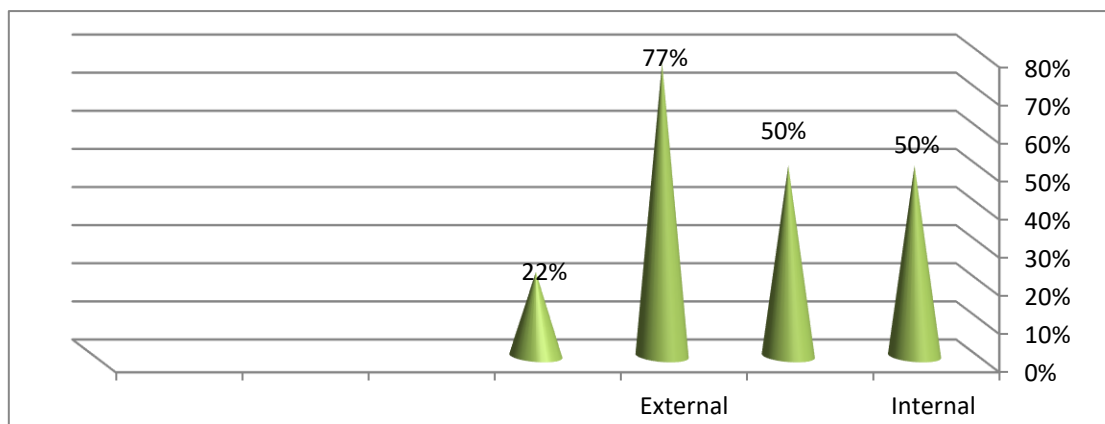


Fig8. Intertextuality in *The Verge* and *The Wedding Band*

### 4.3. Explanation (Social Analysis)

There are many aspects within this level such as feminism, freedom, violence, racism, identity and power. *Feminism* can be seen through the role of women in the play, as mentioned earlier, all the women in *the verge* have no rights, weak, and do what society obliged them to do except Claire who has the power to rebel against these traditions. She has the main role and the chance to be the new woman at her time. In *the Wedding Band* most of the women are weak, and do what society obliged them to do. Julia has the power to be in an interracial relationship but she still weak. Patriarchy also rules the women black and white, black women are not able to marry a white man or divorce even from a man who has the same color. On the other hand, white women are also controlled by the laws that a white woman cannot marry a black man, a white woman must marry a man from the same class to protect the image of her family like Annabelle, and a white woman is obliged to ignore the black even if she did not like the idea of racism.

With respect to *freedom*, Claire uses different types of violence in order to be free, she uses verbal and physical violence against others while social violence is represented by the social Victorian traditions. So, Claire is the source of violence not others and this is not an ordinary thing with feminism which represents woman as a weak, oppressed and cannot get her rights while Glaspell represents the new form of woman who has the power to change herself.

*Violence* is represented in *the Wedding Band* with its two types *verbal* and *physical* violence which are used against others. Here, society and its law is the source of violence not others, while the whites are only the instruments that obey the rules of the society. The women of Childress are weak like all the women at that time, the highest power is with Julia who dare to make an interracial relationship.

Concerning *identity* in *the Verge*, self-identity shows how Claire believes that she wants her rights through rebellion and she is insane not mad as others see her, she sees what others cannot see, she is not like other women who are trapped by social traditions. *Social identity* shows how others see Claire, her family members see her as a mad woman, society see and regard her as a rebellion woman who breaks its rules and traditions which is forbidden at that time. Self-identity in the *Wedding Band* shows how Julia believes that she wants to marry her man even if they move to another country while social identity shows how others see Julia, the society, her neighbors and the family of Herman.

*Racism* is not found as clearly in *the Verge* as in *the Wedding Band* with the black and white, Christian, Jews, Asian and other women. The people of different classes of society suffer from racial problems like Julia and Herman, Annabelle

and the sailor, Mattie and her lover. Social rules that lead to racism and people only obey these rules.

*Power* is represented in *the Verge* by Claire and society. The Victorian society is patriarchal and give permission for men to dominate women which leads to power abuse. Claire refuses to be controlled and performs power against her family. Claire represents the dominance of women whose concern to break old traditions and men's control. In *the Wedding Band* power is a clear sign, it is represented by many factors. First, the law which forbids interracial marriage like Julia and Herman and the patriarchal society. Second, the dominance and oppression of the white over the black like Herman's mother and Julia. Third, the dominance of the white and black over their race like the bad treatment of fanny with other black women, and Herman's mother with her daughter.

## 5. Conclusions

*The Verge* (1921) and *the Wedding Band* (1966) both talk about approximately the same period. The actions of the two plays revolve in the period of the World War 1 between (1914-1918) when the patriarchal society controls women with different rules and traditions. *Susan Glaspell* and *Alice Childress* present the image of women at that time, Glaspell presents the white woman and how she takes her freedom from society, while Childress presents the image of the black woman who suffers and struggles to get her rights. Both of the writers and their plays are feminist and dealt with women issues and problems in different societies. Glaspell shows how the white woman in the Victorian society suffers, struggles and finally gets her freedom by a strange tool which is madness (because society will not punish mad women). The white woman at that time is allowed to divorce like Claire but is not free to do what she wants. At the end of the play, Claire takes her freedom by killing Tom and going mad which is the way to freedom. While Childress shows how the black woman is districted by society, she is not allowed to divorce, to marry a white man and even to live like a white woman. So, it is clear that both black and white women suffer at that time in different ways, and both of them try to get their freedom in different ways.

It also be concluded that grammar and intertextuality are the most commonly utilized strategies in the two plays in relation to the textual and the discursive levels; whereas freedom, is the main social strategy of the two plays which reflects the state of feminist society at the time of writing the two plays. Other strategies that are used in conveying feminism are violence, feminism, racism, ideology and power.

Based on this study, it is recommended that CDA must be taught carefully since it is the gate to understand the language of the texts and characters and this can produce inspiring pedagogical implications.

## Acknowledgements

We would like to express our thanks to all the colleagues who support and contribute during the preparation of the current work.

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