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CHOOSING A THIRD LANGUAGE: POWER, DISTANCE AND NEGOTIATION IN SOUEIF'S *THE MAP OF LOVE*

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Abstract

This article explored how language becomes a third-space or mediation tool in Ahdaf Soueif's *The Map of Love.* It used the theoretical framework of Pierre Bourdieu's concept of linguistic capital and Robert Phillipson's theory of linguistic imperialism. The article worked out that language is more than a communication tool as it controls the government, enforcing institutes, and even private relationships. The article used textual analysis to show how Soueif has used English as her primary narrative language but she also has used Arabic to give her text cultural depth. English is a dominant language that is used as a strong tool for historic documentation, institutional power dynamics and political rightfulness. In cross-cultural relationships, the shared language doesn't serve well as a communication tool, thus it creates social, emotional, and epistemic distance leading to more complications for negotiation. The paper argued that considering a negotiable communicative language known as a "third language," Soueif challenges binaries of linguistic dominance and resistance. This third language is an ethical way of participation in the form of translations, narrative conciliation, and silence rather than a neutral compromise. In the book, translation is portrayed as a political action. It revealed the boundaries of direct linguistic equivalency. It also casts doubt on the notion that the dominant language is neutral or completely obvious. The story emphasised negotiation as the key to meaning rather than depending on language authority. Relationships, not authority, are the source of meaning. According to this study, *The Map of Love* offered an intercultural communication paradigm that takes historical power disparities into account. It permitted connection without eliminating distinction at the same time. Language is rethought as a dialogic and morally upright activity. The study also elaborated how language influences identity, history, and intercultural understanding by emphasizing linguistic mediatory grounds.

Keywords: *Linguistic Capital, Linguistic Imperialism, Postcolonial Negotiation, Third Language, Translation*

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1. Introduction

Language being a powerful tool shapes the identities, ideologies, and authority of the social bodies. It shapes how we live, think, interact and respond to certain situations. Historical power dynamics depending on the dominant language also influence how peoples communicate their cultures and experience. This is why language is a most sensitive tool in colonial and postcolonial contexts. The predominance of colonial languages, especially English, has also been influencing the colonial identities, histories and relation of these societies with the outer world. Because of this language is considered an instrument of inclusion and exclusion power (Iqbal, Yasin & Sabiri, 2025).

The unequal power relations are frequently discussed in postcolonial texts. They highlight how linguistic exchanges are shaped by power dynamics and how language separates people and societies on emotional, cultural and societal levels. But on these grounds, the communication is barely neutral, rather it reflects a continuous struggle between resistance and power. Literature, however, continues to offer the arenas where analyze how people negotiate language inequalities in challenging circumstances. *The Map of Love* provides a rich narrative framework for this analysis because it is set in both contemporary Egypt and colonial Egypt in 20th century. It combines human connections with political history and emphasizes the imbalance between English and Arabic through its code shifting and multi-layered narrative style. It demonstrates how characters negotiate power, distance, and belonging across historical and cultural barriers through language.

2. Background of the Study

The Map of Love is a documentation of historical events in colonial Egypt as with globalization it changed its forms but remains in charge of the country. Its historic framework is the major operational force that drives the narrative. In colonial Egypt, Arabic language was the language of culture and daily communication, where English acquired the status of authoritative language being the language of administrating institutes and power. This creates a language hierarchy which Phillipson refers to as “linguistic Imperialism,” where institutional and political frameworks retain the dominance of a colonial language (Phillipson, 1992). Language becomes a sign of inclusion and exclusion in such situations. When people are fluent on dominant language it means, they are exposed to the power while who don’t, they are marginalized. Pierre Bourdieu explains this idea in the term “linguistic capital”. He demonstrates that languages are values more by the administrating institutions and to its users, it gives symbolic power (Bourdieu, 1991). This hierarchical power leans to unequal communication in colonial settings which are directly reflected in Soueif’s *The Map of Love.*

Arabic language has old and has rich historic continuity and a whole millennium in the book but its major drawback is, it lacks institutional authority. While, English on

contrary functions as legitimate and powerful language. Both of these languages come into the contact in cross cultural interactions. Although language has the power to unite people, it may also lead to miscommunication and estrangement. Language as a key site of power and negotiation has received little attention in research, despite the fact that *The Map of Love* has been addressed in other postcolonial contexts. By putting language at the center of analysis, this work fills that gap. It looks at how linguistic hierarchies in colonial societies create distance and how inequality leads to the emergence of third language. The study illustrates how language affects power dynamics and intercultural communication using the frameworks of linguistic imperialism and linguistic capital.

3. Literature Review

"No-one today is purely one thing", with these words, Edward Said talks about the fluidity and hybridity of human identity. (Said, 1994) Identities are not born, they are shaped and formed through different elements: religion, race, culture, language, history, different social structures and most importantly by political structures. (Hall, 1990) These are called metanarratives created by the power systems. They influence one's identity and worldview by providing them a readymade framework. (Lyotard, 1984) These narratives can be redirected by what Walter Mignolo calls epistemic delinking. According to him, you become conscious of what who, why, how and for what, power defines you. Through this awareness, you can simply detach yourself from these forced identities. This conscious approach is possible through what he calls border thinking (Mignolo, 2007). Similarly, Bhabha proposes the idea of third space which is a zone of creativity, transformation and negotiation. This is where we find space to accept the old and the new, the indigenous and the modern. He says, you can be both the old and the new at the same time by choosing this third space. (Bhabha, 1994)

Taking these ideas in Ahdaf Soueif's Novel *The Map of Love*, where she chooses the mix of languages; English and Arabic. This border thinking or third space is a power tool, it's a pure resistance. Albakry and Hancock analyzed Soueif's code switching in post-colonial perspective of her novel *The Map of Love*. The deliberate use of languages: English, Arabic and occasional use of French strengthens the narratives. Though the major narrative is presented in English but the use of Arabic phrases and expressions represent linguistic and cultural norms of Egyptian society. It not only navigates two different cultures but also reflects hybrid identities. They further argued that her careful incorporation of Arabic in her writing is multi-faceted. It has various forms: lexical borrowing, culture-bound references, translational transfer and dialectal variations. Her discourse strategies are analyzed through Kachru's framework on contact literature. He proposed these strategies for the occurrence of literary code switching in cultural and linguistic process. Soueif broadly adopts the traditional honorific titles such as *Basha, Abeih, Bey* etc., references to customs and traditions, historic references, daily used word

along with inter-lingual dialectic variation are of profound importance. Hence, this strategic use of codes challenges the dominance of English and preserves cultural identities. It exposes new readers to a different cultural context. (Albakry & Hancock, 2008)

Dealing with the themes of self and others, Mohamed El-Feky talked about the narrative technique of the novelist in *The Map of Love*. He discovered how narrative techniques become a source of discovering the self and other in postcolonial settings. Through his narratological reading of the novel, he highlighted that Soueif has used both third- and first-person narrator very tactfully because this way she resolves all the ambiguities and guides the readers not just through telling the facts but making her readership to identify the difference between political record of history and the original facts and figures on their own. El-Feky further suggested that Soueif's use of first person created an emotional side in the novel. The novel starts with the perspective of the character Amal who is experiencing everything first-handedly. The novel is not only a record of the historical events but also it enriches the reader with the understanding of the historical and contemporary settings of the novel. Through his narratological reading, El-Feky brought to the attention that Soueif also used different narrative devices including direct address to the reader, monologues, frequent time shift between past and present and epigraphs. She did provide an oral account of the events but she relied on the resources such as letters and diaries which further authenticated her narration. Her use of free indirect speech gave psychological depth to the novel without breaking the third-person narrator. He further argued that through such a layered narration leads to the discovery of self and other. By "Other", he meant culture, historical period, power systems or simply another person. He explained it via Anna and Isabel's lives as they visited Egypt just to discover the other, but they ended up discovering their own selves. In the similar way, Amal found her renewed sense of self during the reconstruction of the story of her uncle Sharif. Thus, El-Feky concluded that this text is polyphonic in nature, it offers a detailed exploration of identity, memory and culture. (El-Feky, 2012).

The Map of Love serves as a palimpsest that contains multiple layers of personal and national histories. Considering the postcolonial themes of hybridity, history and memory, the novel not only presented the colonial history of Egypt from (1898-1913) but also the neo-colonial era where globalization is the modern-day phenomenon and America has emerged as the world super power. Soueif asserted that colonialism is not a historical phenomenon but it is a modern-day approach adopted by the Western world to take control of the world's economic resources. Çırçır, in his paper, commented on how past was never erased but it continued to shape the futures of the colonized peoples. He argued that the novel's dual narrative destabilized the Western hegemony. He used Edward Said's theories to demonstrate that Soueif has deconstructed the orientalist vision by documenting the

lived realities of the people. She also showed how nationalist and imperial forces collide to shape the fate of the countries. He further talked about the role of women when it comes to the resistance, how they struggled to manage their national identity and to retain their values during the continually fluctuating times. He commented that when it comes to the women, the struggle gets double in intensity. He concluded with the argument that the colonial past is complicating the contemporary sense of liberation because it continues to affect the identities, politics and cultural memory of the nation (Çırçır, 2019).

As concerning to the concept of multilingualism, the modern texts are less interested in contesting the colonizers instead, they are more focused towards the cross-cultural negotiations. Dina Hassan in her article, analyzed *The Map of Love* in socio-pragmatical context. She argued how language shift functions in social and economic settings other that serving for identity as the text is the major example of contemporary literary multilingualism. She reevaluated the previously existing concept that inserting English in Arabic is assertion of the Arab or Muslim identity. She says, this code switching should now be understood in the terms of contextual and interaction choices. This is how characters maintain intimacy, solidarity and distance across cultures. Code-switching also creates a positive impression largely in monolingual Western societies and counters the ideologies that nurture English-only attitude. Further, it adds clarity and authenticity to the cultural practices that can be misunderstood or flatten by English only. Mix registers show the cultural presence inside the English text, also Creates realism in these modern texts. (Hassan, 2018).

4. Theoretical framework

In postcolonial studies, language plays a crucial role as a medium for the creation, maintenance, and challenging of power relations. Language is never neutral in colonial and postcolonial nations because it is intricately linked to histories of cultural negotiation, resistance, and dominance. Languages were imposed by colonial governments as administrative instruments and ideological messengers. The perception and understanding of colonial nations were influenced by these languages. Language consequently emerged as a crucial area for conflicts over political power and cultural values. According to postcolonial theorists, power dynamics are still affected by the language hierarchies established during colonial era. Indigenous languages are marginalized through its connection with indigenous cultures and people's feeling and their regional lives. On the other hand, English is portrayed as a language of modernity, science and global access.

Phillipson and Bourdieu argue that this conscious hierarchy results unequal communication. The current work views language as a place of power, distance and negotiation. When we combine these different areas, they provide theoretical framework of how language functions as a powerful tool of dominance and negotiation at the same

time. This theoretical foundation offers the idea of third language as a challenging force to linguistic inequality.

4.1. Linguistic Imperialism: Robert Phillipson

Robert Phillipson provides the theoretical grounds with his idea of linguistic imperialism to comprehend the dominance of English Language in colonial or post-colonial perspective. The dominance of English language is directly connected to the imperial history of British and America. According to Phillipson (1992), it has been a primary source of ideological control in the historic expansion of the imperial powers. The actions by which political, economic, educational, and cultural institutions give preference to one language is continuously given preference over others are referred to as linguistic imperialism.

Phillipson argues over the pre-existing notion that dominant languages are neutral and universal while indigenous languages are portrayed as insufficient. He contests over the idea that English is a universal language and how its supporters argue that it provides access to opportunities and information. This is how they justify the marginalization of indigenous languages and justify linguistic inequality (Phillipson, 1992).

Additionally, Phillipson highlights how linguistic imperialism is structural. Institutions like educational systems, legal or administrative bodies and cultural practices contribute to the continuous dominance of the language. These organizations decide which languages are used in official discourse and which have authority. Therefore, in order to fully engage in any of the institutions the speakers of marginalized languages are forced to acquire the dominant language. Language selection is never a simple process of communication rather it is an important choice that reflects the dominant ideologies on the social systems. Language imperialism highlights how colonial and postcolonial texts depict choice of language is characterized by dominance, exclusion, and resistance.

4.2. Sociolinguistics of Power and Linguistic Capital: Pierre Bourdieu

Pierre Bourdieu's theory of linguistic capital provides a micro-level examination of how power functions in common language practices, whereas Phillipson concentrates on macro-level systems of linguistic dominance. According to Bourdieu (1991), language is a type of symbolic capital whose worth is determined by institutional legitimacy and social acknowledgment rather than by its intrinsic attributes. Linguistic exchanges take place in what Bourdieu refers to as a "linguistic market," where various speech patterns have distinct values. The language which is backed by the power institutions like government or educational institutes is called “legitimate language.” While other linguistic expressions which are not approved by the power institutions despite their linguistic richness and cultural expressiveness are devalued. The mastery of legitimate language gives its speakers a symbolic status, authority and social mobility (Bourdieu, 1991).

The article's framework helps understand that linguistic imbalance doesn't exist natural rather it is fabricated through power and control. This creates unequal language capital leading to asymmetric communication among the speakers. This is evident through the communication when one language is considered dominant and valued while the other is considered inferior. This is called distancing through social, emotional and cultural estrangement because meaning is not allowed to delivered in its full and direct form. At this point, Bourdieu's theory explains why people frequently strategically adopt dominant languages in unequal linguistic circumstances. Such adoption is a reaction to institutional factors that dictate whose speech is valued rather than just a matter of preference. Thus, by demonstrating how structural domination is internalized and replicated at the level of individual behavior, linguistic capital supports Phillipson's theory of linguistic imperialism.

4.3. Power and Distance in Linguistic Relations

knowledge language interactions in colonial and postcolonial contexts requires a knowledge of the concepts of power and distance. While distance results from differential linguistic legitimacy, power is shown through the institutional dominance of some languages. This gap may be intellectual, cultural, emotional, or social. Favor to one language can cause distance and misunderstanding. It becomes more difficult to express one's cultural experiences, histories and feeling in dominant language. The indigenous languages are a rich source of cultural depth and the marginalization of indigenous language leads to a phenomenon known as linguistic alienation (Phillipson, 1992).

How distance is maintained is further explained by Bourdieu's idea of symbolic power. Even within their own cultural contexts, speakers of other languages are viewed as outsiders when one language is accepted as valid. This gap is structural as well as interpersonal, ingrained in organizations that control which voices are heard and which are disregarded (Bourdieu, 1991). It is referred to as silences and miscommunications of incomplete translation of literary descriptions. This leads to moral and emotional consequences of linguistic hierarchy or inequality along with the limitation of dominant languages.

4.4. Negotiation as a Linguistic Strategy

This study examines and argues that language and linguistic choices in texts and interactions should not further be considered the tool for resistance instead, it should be considered as tool of negotiation. To maintain the balance between self-expression and social validity, negotiation provides non-violent solutions in the modern times. This is how the speaker not fully rejects or accepts the language rather it balances two things. It is about the recognition that the power lies in the dominant language while rejecting its full authority. This entails that the speakers internalize that by adopting dominating language they can get access to the power while maintaining their self-expression and identities

(Bourdieu, 1991). Phillipson calls negotiation a type of resistance that functions within the structure instead of outside. He further argues that instead of rejecting the dominant languages, speakers can reshape and repurpose them (Phillipson, 2009).

In postcolonial context, total rejection of a dominant language leads to societal and institutional isolation but negotiation is especially relevant in such context. Negotiation requires consistent conscious efforts to choose and not to choose the certain aspects of the dominant language. One must critically aware of the ideological consequences of dominant languages while strategically using them.

4.5. Choosing a Third Language

Languages are frequently discussed in constraints of binaries of marginalized and dominant which gives birth to the concept of third language. Languages carry ideologies and use of language in the binary constraints leads to distancing. So, third language is an ethical realm where ideas are shared, listened and contextual sensitivity shapes the conversation. Here the focus shifts from favoring one language to understanding the other person. Choice of third language isn't a neutral compromise rather it is a ground where one recognizes power imbalances. It challenges that notion that a single language system can contain entire meaning. The study argues that instead of relying on a single language system for the meaning, we can perceive meaning through discourse and interpretation.

By valuing language beyond official or institutional approval, the idea of the third language questions who gets to decide what counts as acceptable speech (Bourdieu, 1991). It also challenges the belief that only a dominant language is inherently complete and contains all the meaning (Phillipson, 1992). This is how, language choice becomes a political decision that is shaped by power, distance, and ongoing negotiation.

4.6. Translation as a Site of Negotiation

The study further argues that translation is essential as it is a place of negotiation but it is also affected by the power systems. It doesn't allow the transparent transmission of the meaning. Translation reveals the gap between the language and the perfect interpretation is impossible. Translations continues to convey the idea that the meaning can be easily assimilated into them through the dominant language. However, However, a negotiated approach to translation comes with responsibility, choice, and loss (Phillipson, 1992). It is understood that interpretation is a part of every translation process and certain meanings are difficult to convey.

Translation is an ethical discipline and it honors the language diversity rather than destroying it. This interpretation of translation gives birth to the idea of third language. This theoretical paradigm is drawn on the ideas of Robert Phillipson and Pierre Bourdieu. The idea of third language leads to central point where power, distance, and then negotiation occur. While linguistic capital shows internalization of authority in daily communication. (Phillipson, 1992; Bourdieu, 1991). This framework offers a discrete

understanding of language as a dynamic and disputed activity by adding the idea of a third language.

5. Data Analysis

Phillipson's theory of linguistic imperialism shows that language plays an important role in maintenance and exercise of colonial power. He argues that supremacy of English language is closely connected to the imperial expansion as it is a strong ideological tool that controls the epistemology. *The Map of Love* shows that language is a powerful tool that controls knowledges and government. Throughout the book, it is evident that power discourse, diplomacy, and history are all dominated by English. It is the choice of the words which portray, depict, and describe colonized Egypt in a strive to justify colonial tactics. Phillipson says, such linguistic hierarchy represents the structural differences between indigenous and dominant languages.

Such disparity is well illustrated by Anna Winterbourne's first visit in Egypt. She found a clear difference how literature in dominant language portrayed Egypt and it's first-hand experience are both at great distance. Travelogues, historical narratives, and colonial scholarship—have impacted her perception of the nation. At first, Egypt is not a complex social realm, but rather an object of study for Anna. By progressively exposing Anna's developing realization that English is unable to adequately capture the nuances of Egyptian life, Soueif highlights the shortcomings of this viewpoint (Soueif, 1999). By doing this, the book questions the ideological tenet of linguistic imperialism, which holds that the dominant language is capable of full and transparent representation.

5.1. Linguistic Capital and Legitimacy Politics

Pierre Bourdieu's idea of linguistic capital Provides a key framework to comprehend how language works as a symbolic force in the novel. According to Bourdieu (1991), there is no innate characteristic that can cause dominance of certain language. Language gains power through the social acknowledgement and institutional approval. Likewise comes with the marginalized languages though they have cultural richness but they are not bestowed as the other languages.

Sharif Pasha is the person who most exemplifies this dynamic. Because of his fluency in English, he is able to express Egyptian nationalist issues in a language that imperial authorities recognize and function within colonial political spheres. As a result, Sharif can be heard within prevailing power structures thanks to English's useful language capital (Bourdieu, 1991). This access is conditional, though. Sharif is a major political personality and his choice of language strengthens its dominance. His choice for English is essential for his political legitimacy but it causes further marginalization of Arabic language.

During the colonial era, English was chosen to be institutional language in Egypt, but Soueif portrays Arabic as a language of history, memory, and ethical depth. This

supports Bourdieu's claim that the acceptable forms of speech are determined by prevailing linguistic markets (Bourdieu, 1991). Sharif's situation exemplifies the paradox of colonial resistance: the colonized subject must first obtain the colonizer's language capital in order to oppose imperial power. In this way, the very mechanisms that resistance aims to challenge limit it and make it linguistically mediated.

5.2. Emotional Distance and the Boundaries of the Colonial Language

In *The Map of Love,* language determines emotional intimacy in addition to political relationships. The majority of Anna and Sharif's connection takes place in English, which is emotionally aloof for Sharif and ideologically fraught given the colonial setting. English makes communication easier, but it also restricts the expression of emotions, especially for the colonial subject whose worldview is structured by a foreign linguistic and cultural tradition. English cannot adequately convey Sharif's inner life, which is based on Arabic cultural and emotional codes. His silences frequently highlight the emotional losses which are visible in his verbal domination by signifying what is yet untranslatable. Gradually, Anna becomes aware of this difference and understands that their same language does not imply mutual comprehension (Soueif, 1999).

In contrast, Arabic has cultural familiarity and emotional relevance, yet it initially rejects Anna, further solidifying her outsider status. Therefore, an equal or completely personal relationship cannot be maintained by either Arabic or English alone. Soueif uses this tension to show how linguistic hierarchies affect the most personal relationships. Also, this causes unequal share of power between the partners from different cultural backgrounds.

5.3. Translation as Awareness and Ethical Responsibility

Translation serves as both a theoretical intervention and a narrative device. The implications of language hierarchies and role of language as mediator are shown by Amal's work as a translator. In *The Map of Love,* translation is shown as an act of interpretation influenced by authority, responsibility, and choice rather than as an impartial or transparent procedure. According to linguistic imperialism, it is proudly considered that English can convey meaning with all ease. (Phillipson, 1992). Soueif not only highlights these presumptions but also challenges them in her novel. Amal understands that no translation can accurately capture and convey the original meaning because it is embedded in cultural, historical, and emotional circumstances (Soueif, 1999). Arabic and English both cause emotional and intellectual distancing which brought the idea of third language to the light. This third language is a realm of ethical and symbolic negotiation. According to Bourdieus, this third space is an alternative language where validity is created through relationships rather than institutions (Bourdieu, 1991). Meaning is co-created by communication rather than forced by dominant language. This challenges the idea that dominant language is always a source of truth and authority (Phillipson, 1992).

5.4. Linguistic Resistance and Strategic Hybridity

Sharif's political involvement serves as an example of how strategic hybridity is frequently used to resist language imperialism. According to Phillipson (2009), underprivileged speakers often adapt dominant languages in order to subvert the related power systems. This tactic is demonstrated by Sharif's use of English to express nationalist demands.

Soueif does not, however, portray this hybridity as simple or liberating. The psychological and emotional consequences of navigating unequal linguistic spaces are made clear by Sharif's continuous self-translation. His struggle supports Bourdieu's idea that power works both from within people and through outside pressure (Bourdieu, 1991). Even when people use English to resist authority, it still influences the interaction between them because English remains a dominant language.

This proves that using the dominant language as tool for resistance is not an approved solution. Negotiation is continuous process that requires a conscious understanding of how power works. Soueif suggests that it is process of balancing and finding ways to authority that is non-violent and careful in its approach. Only this can prevent both cultural isolation and linguistic domination.

5.5. Language, Memory, and Historical Reclamation

The Map of Love is a detailed documentation of history and memory where language serves an important medium to convey the meaning. But the truth is, when colonial histories are written in dominant language, it ignores the struggles of the colonized because dominant language maintain the power structure through histories. Soueif challenges this by not relying on a single voice rather she uses evidences and historical records to show the struggles of her nation. This supports Phillipson's (1992) idea that linguistic imperialism shapes both historical memory and modern communication. The novel emphasizes alternative narratives and incorporation of Arabic provides density to the memory and remain a source of continuity. By understanding and sharing these stories, Amal opposes the silences power of the dominant language. By using third language, she turns history into conversation instead of accepting the imposed meanings and stories.

6. Conclusion

This study has examined the idea of choosing a third language in Ahdaf Soueif's *The Map of Love* as a complicated process which is shaped by power, distance and negotiation. The narration of the novel is not linear, it moves between third person, first person and to the memoirs and historic records. This is how Soueif doesn't relies on a single narrator, she strengthens her argument through evidences. This highlights the power imbalance between the binaries. The analysis showed that power in *The Map of Love* is connected to linguistic authority, narrative control, and access to interpretation rather than political supremacy. English, Arabic, and translated discourse elaborate that certain voice

is given authority and power while the other is mediated. Soueif questions the loss of cultural identities and those unfair systems which caused the miscommunication and misunderstanding of the cultures. Choice of third language questions and opposes the false assumptions od injustice through distorted truth.

This negotiated area is also significantly shaped by distance—temporal, cultural, and emotional. The novel's multi-layered narrative proves that cross-cultural understanding is always filtered and distorted. Soueif doesn't eliminate this distance rather she maintains this distance as a constructive tension that facilitates introspection. In order to allow characters and narrators to interact with difference without turning it into sameness, the third language works within this tension. In the end, this study contended that The Map of Love suggested using a third language as a political and ethical tactic in postcolonial narrative. It is a negotiation environment where meaning is created via relational exchange rather than dominance and identities are built through dialogue rather than antagonism. Soueif criticizes the rigid cultural borders and provides a paradigm for cross-cultural communication. She suggests one should understand these power systems, considering distance in order to negotiate through language. Thus, the study promotes postcolonial literary criticism by highlighting the role of linguistic mediation in tales of cultural encounter and by repeating the value of Soueif's work in contemporary discussions about identity, translation, and international literary interchange.

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