

**Van Dijk's Micro and Macro Analysis in Reavling Islamic Principles in "Does My Head Look Big in This?" By Randa Abdel-Fattah**

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**Abstract**

Literature has long been used to discuss and reflect on societal, religious, and cultural values. The story of Amal Mohamed Nasrullah Abdel-Hakim, a young Muslim Australian girl who always wears a headscarf, is told in Randa Abdel-Fattah's 2005 book "Does My Head Look Big in This?". It examines how Islamic principles are demonstrated, negotiated, and lived in the modern Western world by reading this book. The problem of this study is reflected through the hidden ideologies that are used to reflect either good images or bad images about Islam. The gap is clearly manifested because there is no study that addresses the same topic within the same book..

This article's objective is to examine how "Does My Head Look Big in This?" demonstrates Islamic principles via its themes, character development, and narrative structure. The book discusses Islamophobia, cultural misunderstanding, and the formation of teenage identity in addition to discussing key Islamic values like justice (Adl), humility (ḥayā'), honesty (ikhlāṣ), patience (ṣabr), and compassion (raḥma). The data are analyzed depending on van Dijk's model (1980). This model present two aspects to analyze the data. The first one is the micro and the second is macro analysis. The results of the study show that the principles of Islam are reflected positively.

**Keywords:** Principles, Hijab, Discourse, micro and macro.

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## تحليل فان دايك الجزئي والكلي للكشف عن مبادئ الإسلامية في كتاب "هل يبدو رأسي كبيراً في هذا؟" بقلم رندا عبد الفتاح

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### المستخلص

لطالما استخدم الأدب لمناقشة القيم المجتمعية والدينية والثقافية والتأمل فيها. يروي كتاب رندا عبد الفتاح الصادر عام ٢٠٠٥ بعنوان "هل يبدو رأسي كبيراً في هذا؟" قصة أمل محمد نصر الله عبد الحكيم، وهي فتاة أسترالية مسلمة شابة ترتدي الحجاب دائماً. ويتناول الكتاب كيفية تجلّي المبادئ الإسلامية، والتفاوض بشأنها، وتطبيقها في العالم الغربي الحديث. تتجلى مشكلة هذه الدراسة في الأيديولوجيات الخفية التي تُستخدم لرسم صور إيجابية أو سلبية عن الإسلام. وتتجلى هذه الفجوة بوضوح في غياب دراسة تتناول الموضوع نفسه في الكتاب نفسه.

يهدف هذا المقال إلى دراسة كيفية عرض كتاب "هل يبدو رأسي كبيراً في هذا؟" للمبادئ الإسلامية من خلال مواضيعه، وتطور شخصياته، وبنيت السردية. يناقش الكتاب الإسلاموفوبيا، وسوء الفهم الثقافي، وتكوين هوية المراهقين، بالإضافة إلى مناقشة القيم الإسلامية الأساسية كالعدل والحياء والإخلاص والصبر والرحمة. وقد حُللت البيانات بناءً على نموذج فان ديك (١٩٨٠). ويعرض هذا النموذج جانبين لتحليل البيانات: الأول هو التحليل الجزئي والثاني هو التحليل الكلي. وتُظهر نتائج الدراسة أن مبادئ الإسلام تنعكس إيجاباً.

**كلمات مفتاحية:** المبادئ، الحجاب، الخطاب، الجزئي والكلي.

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### 1. An Introduction

“Does My Head Look Big in This?”, Randa Abdel-Fattah's critically acclaimed young adult book, is more than just a straightforward coming-of-age tale. The compelling story of Amal Mohamed Nasrullah Abdel-Hakim, a sixteen-year-old Australian-Palestinian-Muslim girl who decides to wear the hijab full-time, is at its core. Although she is frequently praised for her humor and genuine adolescent voice, the book is a powerful literary work that vividly reflects, challenges, and ultimately affirms fundamental Islamic principles in a modern Western setting. To go beyond a thematic listing and explore the complex how of this reflection—how Islamic values are woven into the fabric of the story, perceived, negotiated, and resisted—this analysis makes use of Teun A. van Dijk's critical discourse analysis (CDA). A van Dijkian approach provides a methodical lens through which to analyze the intricate interactions among Islamic ideology, personal identity, and societal discourse in Abdel-Fattah's work. This approach focuses on both macro-structures (global meaning, themes, schemas) and micro-structures (specific linguistic choices, syntax, rhetoric).

For this investigation, Van Dijk's model is especially suitable. His CDA highlights that discourse is a type of social practice that is inextricably linked to ideology and power dynamics rather than just being a text. It looks at the ways in which texts support the creation, dissemination, and possible opposition to prevailing social structures and ideologies. We determine the overarching themes and schematic representations that structure the novel's meaning in relation to Islam by examining macro-structures. In what ways does Amal's worldview rest on the idea of Tawhid, or the Oneness of Allah, either explicitly or implicitly? Through Amal's everyday hardships and victories, how is the idea of Ihsan (excellence in faith and conduct) framed by the narrative structure? How are overarching themes developed and resolved, such as the Ummah (the Muslim community around the world) versus personal faith, or religious duty (Fardh) versus social pressure? These overarching storylines make up the macro-level representation of Islamic principles.

## **2-Critical Discourse Analysis**

Critical Discourse Analysis (henceforth, CDA) is a type of analytical discourse research. Its main focus is to show how speech and text in social and political contexts enact, reproduce, and resist social processes such as inequality, dominance, and abuse of power (van Dijk, 2001: 352). Widdowson contends in the preface of his book (Text, Context, Pretext, 2004) that CDA emphasizes the need for people to comprehend how language generally implies abuse of power. It also examines the ways in which language can distort and deceive reality. Beaugrande (2006) asserts that it is a diverse body of multidisciplinary knowledge that is difficult to categorize. It is referred to as interdisciplinary because it lies in the middle of sociology and linguistics. According to some linguists, it is difficult to fully understand the connections between society and discourse unless sociology and logistics methods are fully integrated (Wodak, 2006). According to Fairclough, it is the study of causality and determination between (a) discursive practices, events, and texts and (b) larger social and cultural structures, relations, and processes; how power relations and power struggles shape these practices, events, and texts ideologically; and how the opacity of these relationships between discourse and society contributes to the maintenance of power and hegemony. (1993: 135).

Pioneers such as Fowler, Fairclough, van Dijk, and Wodak have used the term CDA to refer to a particular field of applied linguistics (Hart, 2010: 3). Consequently, CDA helps to develop a variety of theories and approaches that make it easier to explore and empirically analyze the connections between discourse, society, and cultural development in a variety of fields. Nonetheless, Aristotle's study of rhetoric is generally credited with inspiring CDA. Aristotle defined rhetoric as "the ability to observe the available means of persuasion in any given case" (Richardson, 2007: 165). Nonetheless, CDA is currently the philosophical focus of Frankfurt School critical theory, which includes works in CDA in its broadest sense by Marxists such as Adorno, Horkheimer, Habermas, and later Foucault's discourse analysis of Post-Structuralism (Hart, 2010: *ibid*). The authors of *Language and Control* (Fowler et al., 1979) and *Language as Ideology* (Kress and Hodge, 1979) founded CDA as a branch of applied linguistics at the University of East

Anglia under the name Critical Linguistics, according to Flowerdew (2013: 178). It was then introduced under the general heading of CDA, of which Critical Linguistics is a subfield. Therefore, CDA is not a single theory; rather, it is based on multiple theories (Hart, 2010: 3) and is designed to analyze different types of data using different methods (Weiss and Wodak, 2003: 12). As a result, CDA is especially interested in studies that clarify and investigate the underlying connections between language and power. These days, CDA is used more specifically to respond to the "critical linguistic approach" of many academics, such as Martin, van Dijk, and Lemke, who stress that the discursive aspect of text is the essential element of communication. According to Weiss & Wodak (2003: 13), CDA is broad and includes a variety of linguistically based theories and methods. According to Van Dijk (1993), CDA and critical linguistics share the objective of "doing linguistic, semiotic, or discourse analysis".

In CDA research, language is a social practice, according to Fairclough (1989: 23). He claims that "using language is a process that is commonly used as social conduct." Relational, dialectical, and transdisciplinary are three essential components of Fairclough's CDA theory (2010: 3). He continues by stating that it is relational since it focuses mainly on social relationships. These connections, or connections within connections, are organized in a hierarchical fashion. It is dialectical in that social relations are complexly organized into layers and speech is not an independent entity. Discourse can be understood by examining different relationships. Finally, by examining the dialectical connections between discourse and other objects (such as power), CDA is a transdisciplinary approach that goes beyond the traditional divisions between fields like linguistics, politics, sociology, and so forth (Fairclough, 2010: 3-4). In contrast to simply translating struggle or systemic domination, Foucault contends that discourse is a matter for its own sake and through which conflict arises. Accordingly, discourse is the power that people want to gain the most (Fairclough, 1992: 51).

CDA identifies issues such as gender, ethnicity, cultural diversity, and identity, as well as how these situations are generated and reflected in texts (Paltridge, 2012: 186). Additionally, it shows how language use is related to the social, political, and cultural context in which it is used. It

explores how language and social systems are mutually reinforcing, with one creating the other. Rogers (2011: 1) states that the foundation of CDA is the notion that language use has social ramifications. Stated differently, discourse both creates and reflects the social environment. This type of analysis could also be used to analyze and challenge the text, according to Clark (1995). It is the duty of critical analysts to look into the ideologies and attitudes that are hidden in the use of discourse since they are connected to experiences, concepts, and worldviews (cited in Paltridge, 2012: 186).

### **3- The Goals and Foundations of CDA**

CDA looks for attitudes, beliefs, and points of view that are hidden and "often out of sight," according to Paltridge (2013: 186). The aim of CDA is to investigate the linguistic discursive component of social and cultural phenomena and change processes. Among the issues that CDA has tackled are mass communication, racism, identity, economics, democracy, and politics (Jorgensen and Philips, 2002:61). Hart (2010: 5) asserts that the best tools for revealing instances of ideology and manipulation in public are critical discourse analysts, which raises readers' critical awareness. Wodak states that "the goal of CDA is to analyze both opaque and transparent structural relationships of dominance, discrimination, power, and control as manifested in language" (1995: 204). According to Van Dijk (2011), a CDA work must meet specific criteria. He summarizes them as follows:

- 1) Rather than being paradigm-oriented, it is issue-oriented, or problem-oriented. Any theoretical and methodological approach is acceptable as long as it can effectively examine relevant social issues such as racism, sexism, colonialism, and other forms of social inequality.
- 2) Rather than being a school, a field, or a subfield of discourse analysis, CDA refers to an openly critical approach, viewpoint, or posture of analyzing text and discourse.
- 3) In order to thoroughly examine social issues or topics, CDA work is typically inter- or multidisciplinary and focuses especially on the connections between discourse and society (including social cognition, politics, and culture).

- 4) CDA has historically and systematically been a part of a wide range of critical studies in the humanities and social sciences, such as political science, psychology, sociology, mass communication research, and law literature, many of which are quite peripheral or marginalized.
  - 5) CDA studies may look at all levels and facets of discourse, including those pertaining to rhetoric, style, pragmatic tactics, speech acts, grammar (phonology, syntax, and semantics), and interaction.
  - 6) In contrast to merely "verbal" approaches to discourse, many CDA studies concentrate on other semiotic elements of communication events, such as pictures, videos, music, sound, gestures, etc.
  - 7) When analyzing the role of discourse in society, CDA pays close attention to how members of social groups use speech and writing to either replicate or reject dominance, power, and unequal relations.
  - 8) Much CDA research focuses on how class, gender, ethnicity, race, sexual orientation, language, religion, age, nationality, or world area are used to discursively enact or legitimize dominance and resistance in social relationships.
  - 9) One of the descriptive, explanatory, and practical objectives of CDA studies is to try to uncover, reveal, or disclose what is hidden, implicit, or otherwise not immediately apparent in relations of discursively enacted dominance or their underlying ideologies. To put it another way, CDA is concerned with the strategies of manipulation, legitimation, consent fabrication, and other discursive techniques that are used to influence people's beliefs (and consequently their actions) in order to serve the interests of the powerful.
  - 10) This quest for the discursive tools of mental control and social influence points to a critical and antagonistic mindset toward the powerful and elites, especially those who abuse their position. By creating strategic recommendations for the application and expansion of counter-power and counter-ideologies in practices of challenge and resistance, for example, CDA research aims to create or preserve a broad perspective of solidarity with oppressed groups (van Dijk, 1995: 17-18). Van Dijk (2011: 353) asserts that critical discourse research needs to fulfill a number of requirements in order to effectively achieve its goals.
    - 1) It emphasizes social issues and political difficulties over contemporary concepts and fashions.
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- 2) A critical analysis of social issues that is empirically sound usually requires a multidisciplinary approach.
- 3) Rather than merely describing speech patterns, it aims to explain them in terms of social interaction characteristics, especially social structure.
- 4) More specifically, CDA focuses on discourse structures that reproduce, legitimize, enact, validate, or challenge power and dominance relations in society.
- 5) As is often the case with more marginal research traditions, CDA research needs to be "better" than other research in order to be acknowledged.

The CDA mean tents are summarized as follows by Fairclough and Wodak (1997: 271–80):

- 1) CDA addresses social issues.
- 2) In CDA, power relations are discursive.
- 3) Discourse is the foundation of culture and society.
- 4) Ideological discourse fulfills its purpose.
- 5) Conversations have a past.
- 6) Text and society have a mediated relationship.
- 7) Discourse analysis offers interpretation and justification.
- 8) Hart (2010) asserts on page 15 that discourse is a form of social activity.

#### 4-Methodology

This study adopts van Dijk's model (1980) to examine the micro-structures, which are the fundamental units of discourse in which ideology is delicately incorporated and challenged. This entails examining:

**Lexical Choices:** The particular terms used to characterize Muslim characters, non-Muslim responses, and Islamic practices (e.g., "hijab" vs. "headscarf," "prayer" vs. "Salah"). How do people respond to the narrator's use of Arabic terms (Insha'Allah, Alhamdulillah) and does it come naturally to them?

**Syntax and Grammar:** Sentence structures used in dialogue involving prejudice (exposing microaggressions rooted in Islamophobia) versus internal monologue (reflecting faith struggles like Ṣabr - patience).



Devices of Rhetoric: irony (pointing out social inconsistencies), metaphor, humor (often Amal's weapon and shield), and argumentation techniques in discussions of religion, identity, and prejudice.

**Local Coherence:** The way that distinct phrases and exchanges relate to one another to create interpretations of Islamic values. How, for instance, does a discussion about the hijab with a teacher who dismisses it locally create meaning around Ḥayā' (modesty) and religious freedom?

**Speech Acts:** How statements of prayer, challenges to stereotypes, or statements of faith ("I'm taking on the hijab") serve as social actions in the story world.

"Does My Head Look Big in This", a dual-level analysis? appears as a dynamic discourse enacting Islamic principles rather than merely a story about a Muslim girl. Amal's journey serves as a case study for using faith (Iman) in trying circumstances. Her decision to wear the hijab is an example of commitment and Niyyah, or sincere intention. The Islamic promotion of strength and good character (Akhlaq) is reflected in her clever retorts and internal resilience, while her responses to prejudice frequently exhibit Ṣabr (patience) and Hilm (forbearance). Through occasionally humorous or thought-provoking intra-community interactions, the novel also critically engages with the Muslim community itself, reflecting the principles of Amr bil Ma'ruf wa Nahy anil Munkar (enjoining good and forbidding wrong) and Nasihah (sincere advice).

Additionally, the story embodies the idea of Da'wah (inviting to Islam) by means of the genuine, relatable depiction of a Muslim adolescent juggling universal issues with particular religious obligations, rather than through proselytizing. Through the development of a counter-schema based on normalcy, intelligence, humor, faith, and the relatable struggles of adolescence, all rooted in Islamic ethics, the discourse actively challenges dominant negative macrosocial schemas about Muslims that are prevalent in Western media and society—schemas of oppression, extremism, or foreignness.

The context for a thorough van Dijkian investigation is established by this introduction. We can systematically reveal how Abdel-Fattah's novel brilliantly reflects fundamental Islamic principles by analyzing the macro-thematic structures that frame Islamic values and the micro-

linguistic details that give them life (and are under attack). It illustrates how these ideas serve as a lived framework for identity, resiliency, moral behavior, and negotiating the difficulties of belonging in a multicultural and frequently cynical world rather than as abstract dogmas. The most well-known interpretations of Islamic principles will be displayed in the following sections, which will then analyze a chosen, well-known passage to demonstrate how discourse itself serves as a vehicle for the embodiment, articulation, defense, and eventual understanding of Islamic faith

## **5- Reflection of the most prominent principles of Islam:**

### **5-1-Islamic Ethical Values in “Does My Head Look Big in This?”**

#### **A-Intention and Silence (Ikhlāṣ)**

Ikhlāṣ, or sincerity in faith and deeds, is one of the fundamental tenets of Islam. Amal's dedication to wearing the hijab and upholding her faith is presented as a genuine, independent choice as opposed to giving in to peer pressure. By giving Amal a thoughtful voice that frequently challenges the significance of religious deeds, Abdel-Fattah highlights this internal dimension and emphasizes the importance of Niyyah (intention). According to Islamic scholars, an action's worth is determined by its motivation (Nasr, 2002). This deliberate devotion is evident in Amal's prayer, fasting, and modest attire, demonstrating how faith is both a personal journey and a collective duty.

#### **B-Identity and modesty (Ḥayā')**

Another important theme in the book is modesty, which is primarily represented by Amal's decision to wear the hijab. According to Esposito (2002), the hijab is a tangible representation of ḥayā', which in Islam denotes modesty in appearance, speech, and behavior. Abdel-Fattah presents the hijab as an empowering option that enables Amal to assert her identity in the face of competing cultural norms, rather than as a sign of oppression. Western stereotypes that associate the hijab with subservience are challenged by Amal's experience. Rather, it turns into a place of religious dedication, dignity, and self-expression. This is consistent with Muslim feminist viewpoints that assert modesty as a means of self-determination (Badran, 2009).

**C- Resilience and Patience (Ṣabr)**

Amal's reactions to social exclusion and Islamophobia frequently illustrate the virtue of patience, or ṣabr. She reflects the Qur'anic advice to bear hardships with patience (Qur'an 2:153) by enduring bullying and miscommunication with a spirit of perseverance. Her experience serves as an example of the moral principle of upholding integrity and faith in the face of hardship (Nasr, 2002).

**D-Social Ethics and Adl(Justice)**

Amal's awareness of social injustices, particularly those pertaining to discrimination against Muslims and minorities, brings the theme of justice (Adl) to light. She embodies Islam's emphasis on social justice and the preservation of human dignity by promoting justice and respect (Esposito, 2002). Islamophobia is criticized in Abdel-Fattah's story as an injustice that needs to be addressed with empathy and understanding.

**E- Interpersonal Relations and Compassion (Raḥma)**

Amal's relationships with her family and friends are infused with compassion, or raḥma. Islam's exhortation to be kind and understanding to others is reflected in the book (Qur'an 21:107). The ethical ideal of Ummah as a community bound by mercy is reflected in Amal's friendships, which are characterized by mutual respect and understanding, despite occasionally being put to the test by cultural differences.

**5-2-The Hijab as a Sign of Empowerment and Faith****A-Hijab as an Indication of Religious Commitment**

According to Amal, donning a headscarf is essentially a means for her to demonstrate her Islamic faith and submit to Allah. This choice is discussed in the book in relation to Taqwā (Allah-consciousness), a fundamental Islamic precept that guides moral conduct and restraint (Nasr, 2002). Amal believes that the headscarf expresses her inner feelings and is more than just a piece of apparel. This picture contradicts the oversimplified Western narratives that view the headscarf as an indication of cultural backwardness or oppression (Shirazi, 2010). Amal's decision to don the hijab instead demonstrates how Islamic principles emphasize self-determination and dignity through voluntarily submitting to Allah.

**B. Using the Hijab to Guard Against Stereotypes and Islamophobia**

Abdel-Fattah demonstrates how Amal's social circle is clearly tense due to the hijab, which breeds prejudice and misunderstanding. The book's candid examination of Islamophobia reveals the hijab as a battlefield where social acceptance and cultural identity clash. Amal's choice to wear the hijab in the face of discrimination and harassment serves as an illustration of how to resist pressure to conform to Western secular norms. According to Meer and Modood (2009), public manifestations of Muslim identity may run counter to popular narratives and seek acceptance in multicultural communities.

**C. Women's Freedom and the Hijab**

In line with Muslim feminist studies, the novel depicts the hijab as something that women who aspire to be strong and independent may choose to wear. Amal's deliberate decision contradicts the notion that humility is merely about having limitations. Her definition of modesty encompasses more than just appearance; it also involves moral rectitude and self-respect. This viewpoint backs up Badran's (2009) assertion that Muslim women can use the hijab to define themselves in both religious and nonreligious contexts and to achieve spiritual liberation.

**D—The Confluence of Identity, Religion, and Culture**

Abdel-Fattah examines the relationship between religion, culture, and national identity through Amal's hijab. Amal's Palestinian-Egyptian heritage and her Australian upbringing are united by the hijab rather than divided. The novel questions the straightforward divisions between "Western" and "Muslim" identities by introducing a dual personality that encompasses both religious belief and cultural affiliation.

**5-3-Religious Practices and Communal Life****A- the Prayer (Ṣalāh), as a Spiritual Anchor**

Amal's dedication to the five daily prayers emphasizes how Ṣalāh fosters discipline, mindfulness, and a closer relationship with Allah. Amal prioritizes her prayers in spite of practical obstacles like the absence of designated prayer areas at school, demonstrating the importance of Ṣalāh as a source of serenity and moral stability (Nasr, 2002). Additionally, prayer has a social purpose by strengthening her sense of inclusion in the Muslim community worldwide and boosting her fortitude in the face of

adversity.

### **B-Fasting (Ṣawm) During Ramadan**

Ramadan fasting is a symbol of spiritual rejuvenation and self-control. Amal's thoughts on Ṣawm highlight its moral aspects, which include raising moral consciousness and developing empathy for the underprivileged (Qur'an 2:183). Muslim families and friends' social ties are further strengthened by the communal breaking of fasts (Iftār).

### **C-Community and Family Assistance**

Amal's religious development is greatly aided by her family. Her parents support her independence and offer her guidance based on Islamic principles, despite their moderate religious beliefs. The book portrays a loving, caring family setting where faith is organically incorporated. Beyond family, Amal's connections with Muslim peers and involvement in neighborhood gatherings strengthen the Qur'anic ideal of the Ummah as a cohesive, caring community by fostering a sense of shared identity and support.

## **5-4-Islamophobia and Challenges to Identity**

### **A. Discrimination Experiences**

Racism and Islamophobic epithets like "terrorist" and "towelhead," which are used against visible Muslims in society, are encountered by Amal (Nimer, 2015). Amal's sense of security and belonging are called into question by these encounters, but they also make her more determined to proudly claim her identity.

### **B. Stereotypes and Misrepresentations in the Media**

The book criticizes the media's role in spreading unfavorable preconceptions about Muslims, emphasizing how these stories fuel misinformation and anxiety. A counter-narrative that highlights the diversity and humanity of Muslims is provided by Amal's attempts to educate her classmates (Meer & Modood, 2009).

### **C. Oppression's Intersectionality**

Amal is subject to various forms of marginalization because she is a Muslim woman of Palestinian-Egyptian heritage. By showing how Amal navigates gender, ethnicity, and religion in a sometimes hostile setting, the book presents this intersectionality as a source of both complexity and strength (Crenshaw, 1991).

**6-Analysis of Selected Prominent Extract:**

Here is one potent extract from Does My Head Look Big in This? by Randa Abdel-Fattah, followed by a van Dijk model analysis:

**Selected Extract from Chapter 2:**

*"It's not just a scarf. It's not just a silly piece of material I'm putting on my head. It's my decision. My faith. My identity. And nobody, not Leila's mum, not Mrs. Vaselli, not Adam, not the whole freaking world, is going to take that away from me or make me feel like I'm doing something wrong. They can stare, they can whisper, they can even shout abuse. But this hijab? It's mine. It's my choice. It's my connection to Allah. And it makes me feel strong. Stronger than any of them".*

Using van Dijk's Model for analysis:

Analysis at the micro level (local meaning, linguistic structures):

**Word Choice Lexicon:** Pronouns that are extremely possessive predominate ("My decision," "My faith," "My identity," "mine," "My choice," "My connection"). This highlights individual autonomy and responsibility. The significance of the hijab is elevated beyond its physical aspect by using terms that contrast ("silly piece of material" vs. "faith," "identity," and "connection to Allah"). Definitive verbs ("is going to," "makes me feel") assert control, while strong verbs ("take away," "shout abuse") portray the perceived threat. Empowerment is directly communicated by words like "strong" and "stronger."

Short, declarative sentences and clauses ("It's my decision." "My faith." "My identity." "It's mine."), which reflect inner conviction and certainty, produce a rhythmic, forceful, and resolute tone. "They can..." structures are used repeatedly, creating a crescendo of defiance against resistance.

**Devices of Rhetoric:** Repetition strengthens resilience and ownership ("My... My... My..."; "They can... they can... they can..."). The main conflict and Amal's viewpoint are highlighted by contrast and juxtaposition ("silly piece of material" vs. "connection to Allah"; "stare... whisper... shout abuse" vs. "strong... stronger"). The hijab is spiritualized when it is framed metaphorically as a "connection."

**Local Coherence:** The following sentences are thematically closely related and form a logical argument: This object is deeply meaningful

(faith, identity, connection) - It is my choice - As a result, external opposition is irrelevant - It gives me power.

**Themes & Topics for Macro-Level Analysis (Global Meaning, Social Cognition, Context):** The following primary macro-themes are directly addressed in this extract:

The Hijab as a Sign of Empowerment and Faith: Clearly expressed ("My faith," "My connection to Allah," "makes me feel strong").

Hijab as a Sign of Religious Devotion: The hijab is regarded as a personal "connection to Allah" and an act of faith.

"My decision," "My choice," "nobody... is going to take that away," and "It makes me feel strong" are the main themes of Hijab and Feminist Autonomy. It rejects outside authority and presents the hijab as an act of self-determination.

**Sincerity (Ikhlāṣ) and Intention:** Inferred from the decision's intensely personal nature ("My faith," "My connection to Allah"). Instead of focusing on getting approval from others, the emphasis is on her inner state and relationship with Allah.

**Identity and Modesty (Ḥayā’):** The hijab is an external expression of an internal value (modesty of faith and self) and is inextricably linked to her core identity ("My identity").

Resilience and patience (Ṣabr) are implied in the statement of inner strength ("stronger than any of them") and the recognition of opposition ("They can stare... shout abuse"). It illustrates the fortitude needed to uphold her decision.

Intersection of Faith, Culture, and Identity: The hijab is situated at the intersection of her religious beliefs (faith), identity, and the cultural/social context she traverses (opposition).

**Islamophobia and Identity Issues:** The expected responses ("whisper," "shout abuse," and "stare") stand in for the Islamophobic obstacles she must overcome in order to preserve her identity.

The Hijab as a Counter to Stereotypes and Islamophobia: Islamophobic narratives that portray the hijab as oppressive or dangerous are directly challenged by her defiant attitude ("nobody... is going to take that away") and her portrayal of the hijab as a symbol of strength.

Oppression's Intersectionality: Although the focus is on Islamophobia, the focus on her resistance and choice also subtly challenges any

patriarchal interpretations (from both inside and outside her community) that might try to influence her choice, addressing the ways in which gender and religious discrimination intersect.

**Social cognition (attitudes, ideologies, and beliefs): Amal's internal schema is revealed in this passage:**

An attitude of defiance against societal prejudice and control; a belief in the hijab as a profound spiritual and identity marker; and an ideology of personal religious autonomy and empowerment. It challenges dominant Western/Islamophobic ideologies that frame the hijab solely as oppression or foreignness, replacing it with an ideology of self-defined faith and strength.

**Context (Situation, Knowledge, Power):** Amal's decision to wear the hijab full-time because she believed it would anger people is the source of the comment. It demonstrates your awareness of the pervasive Islamophobia. In contrast to the cultural power structures (prejudice, stereotype) that attempt to minimize the significance of her choice, it articulates her own power (agency, conviction).

**Global Coherence:** In the face of social opposition, the macro-proposition asserts religious identity and self-determination. It claims that Amal's strength and relationship with Allah depend on the hijab, but it also explains that the hijab has a different meaning for her than for others.

## 7-Conclusion

The work of Randa Abdel-Fattah encourage readers to appreciate the uniqueness and value of Muslim adolescent identities while challenging basic stereotypes. It contributes significantly to conversations about religion, diversity, and social justice, making it a valuable tool for scholars, educators, and readers interested in learning about contemporary Islamic realities. Randa Abdel-Fattah's *Does My Head Look Big in This?* provides a deep literary analysis of Islamic principles as lived realities in a Western context, going beyond its young adult genre. Through Amal Mohamed Nasrullah Abdel-Hakim's journey, the story effectively illustrates the fundamental Islamic virtues of justice (Adl), humility (ḥayā'), patience (ṣabr), honesty (ikhlāṣ), and compassion (raḥma). These values are dynamic frameworks that influence morals, strength, and identity; they are not merely regulations.



This study has systematically demonstrated how these concepts are woven into the novel's macro-structures (thematic arcs, narrative schemas) and micro-structures (lexical choices, syntax, and rhetorical devices) using van Dijk's critical discourse analysis (CDA). This demonstrates how ideologies can be discussed and challenged in discourse.

The primary symbol of the book is the headscarf, which stands for the intersection of cultural identity, independence, and faith. It is demonstrated by Amal's agency as an act of genuine devotion (ikhlāṣ) and Allah-consciousness (Taqwā), which dispels misconceptions about Islam and reclaims modesty (ḥayā') as a source of empowerment. At the same time, Amal's spiritual discipline is founded on routine practices like prayer (Salah) and fasting (Ṣawm), which strengthen the Ummah as a whole and assist her in overcoming discrimination.

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