CHAPTER THREE

INTERROGATING THE COMPLEX TEXTURE OF SELF AND
SUBJECTIVITY IN JOHN MAXWELL COETZEE’S *FOE*

John Maxwell Coetzee’s *Foe* (1986) is the reworking of Daniel Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) and it deals with the preoccupied notion of objectification of colonial subjects through Friday and Susan Barton. On the one hand there is Friday who is cannibal slave and has been muted by his master and Susan Barton who is voiceless and doesn’t have authority to write his own work, on the other. This novel depicts that how the testament of power and objectification control the becoming of colonial subjects. Coetzee with his protagonists try to fabricate the muteness which is the gift of colonizer and suppress the voice of colonial subjects from time immemorial. This novel deals with the muteness of Friday and Susan Barton. On the one hand Friday who is mute in literal sense because his tongue was cut by one of his master and Susan Barton, who wants to write her castaway story but not authorized to do that due to economic and gender realities, on the other. Further, it encounters the story of Susan Barton which was full of misadventures. She was single mother and her daughter is taken from her. She follows her child from England to Brazil, she lives there for some time but she never finds her daughter. When she was sailing back to Atlantic her boat met with an accident so she was a Castaway. Barton (Defoe’s *Roxana*) reaches on the island which is inhabited by Cruso and Friday who is cannibal slave, silenced forever. This novel has been divided into four parts. The first part deals with Susan Barton’s castaway, her life on island, love with Cruso, Friday’s muteness and death of Cruso, the second part deals with the letters written to Daniel Foe,
eminent writer of the time, discovery of fictitious daughter, freedom of Friday and the third part deals with the arrival of Susan and Friday at Mr. Foe’s house and Susan’s fight to write her own story. The fourth part of the novel narrates their ship journey.

Susan Barton landed on strange island confronted by a Negro. She tells him that she is castaway and all alone here. Her tongue was dry and she wanted to have water but he didn’t understand her. She thought she has been cast ashore on the island of cannibals, who is going to eat her. This island had a great rocky hill and the sea near to this had tribes of sea-birds. Soon she got a bowl of water. It was the best water she has ever had. She met a man of sixty years of age named Robinson Cruso. He leads her towards his hut of poles, which he termed his castle; had fenced to protect from apes, narrow bed and mat for Friday. Cruso was drifted on this island with Friday fifteen years back, when their ship went down. Susan slept on bed of grass spread by Friday. She was amazed on her fortune but thought she is safe on island under the supervision of Cruso and all will be well. She wanted to escape not from loneliness, rudeness, monotony of life but the beating wind which whistle in her ears. She got a knife to protect her from apes on the island because apes are not that much familiar with her. One day she asked Cruso to have pen and paper so that she can record the event of island but Cruso was not happy of her idea. He said there isn’t anything to remember and whatever he forgot was never worth remembering. He was leaving his terraces and walls behind that were more enough. One day she was exploring around because of boredom but when Cruso caught her he shouted on her that she has to do as he instructs. She shouted on him as well because she was a castaway not a prisoner. One evening Susan was preparing a supper so she ordered Friday to bring wood for fire. But Friday didn’t understand her later Cruso said firewood
and he fetch wood from woodpile. She asked Cruso about how many words Friday knows. The answer Cruso gave her carries the horrors of slavery and what Friday had to go through in his life as a slave. This cutting of Friday’s tongue becomes significant at many semantic levels in the novel. Cruso answers her shocked question of how Friday lost his tongue by telling her the reality which bear a true testimony to Friday’s ordeal as a child, “Perhaps they wanted to prevent him from ever telling his story…I could not help myself—with the horror we reserve for the mutilated. It was no comfort that his mutilation was secret, closed behind his lips (as some other mutilations are hidden by clothing), that outwardly he was like any Negro.” (21-24)

Nobody knows the psychological trauma of Friday’s tongulessness and the mystery shrouding his submission, subjugation to slavery. Trauma according to Oxford English Dictionary (2007) in psychology refers to a “psychic injury or deeply distressing experience especially one caused by emotional shock following a stressful event in the memory which is repressed and remains unhealed” (592). Psychological trauma first emerged in the postcolonial context by the psychiatrist Frantz Fanon through his famous work Black Skin, White Masks (1952) which depicts the complex reality of traumatize subjects in colonial world “white civilization and European culture have forced an existential deviation on the Negro” so that “what is often called the black soul is a white man’s artifact” (14). Fanon was called ‘A Negro’ by a fearful child (93). He faced sudden alienation from his own skin which can epitomize the trauma of colonized others and himself. This affirms that Negro ‘lives an ambiguity that is extraordinarily neurotic’ (192). As Bhabha in The location of culture (1994) points out “for Fanon psychic trauma results when the colonized subject realizes that he can never attain the whiteness he has
been taught to desire, or shed the blackness he has been taught to devalue” (117).

Similarly, Bill Ashcroft et al in Postcolonial Studies: The Key Concepts (2013) argues:

This amounts to the ‘permanent psychic injury’ that remains repressed and unhealed. Such an injury can have a historic and social dimension when trauma affects a colonized or formerly colonized society. It has particular relevance in indigenous societies of settler colonies where the expropriation of traditional lands, displacement of indigenous populations, and child removal (‘the stolen generations’) so traumatizes the society that social dysfunction results. (267-68)

After hearing Friday’s story Susan pays more attention towards him. She has helped him in household works and started living the life of island-dweller. One day Cruso came from terraces unwell. He was shivering with fever and it took twelve days and nights to nurse him properly. They fell in love and Susan has accepted this truth she was an islander and she can be here with Cruso and Friday. They made love once but after that Cruso held some distant from her. She was ready to spend her life and wished to bear Cruso’s child but she thought that this silence on their lives driven her mad. It rained profusely on island for three days. Susan visited Cruso’s terraces it was covered on the hillside at the eastern side of the island. It had twelve levels of terracing and banked with stone walls. When she asked him about planting something he replied that it is his misfortune not to plant anything and it is reserved for whosoever will come after them with seeds. He just cleaned the ground and piled up stones and nothing much he can do without seeds. Susan was unhappy on the island and found the slow passage of time and the lack of conversations painful. She became deaf as Friday was mute because there was no one to talk. One day she asked Cruso if there is any law on island. He replied laws are
meant to curb the desire and if your desires are not immoderate then there is no need for any law. One morning Friday brought Cruso in dying condition and this time Susan cannot help him. Very next day a merchantman named John H obart anchored his ship on the island. They picked up Cruso, Friday and Susan to the ship towards England. Susan narrates her story to Captain Smith so he asked her to write her story because there hasn’t been any female castaway earlier in their nation. Susan was little bit confused because as far as her story is concern she was afraid it may vanish the charm of her story. She had imagined their life in England and promised Cruso that they will visit his island with sack full of seeds to plant terraces. They were three days away to reach to the port when Cruso died. He took a long sigh and his body turned cold. Susan informed Friday about his master’s death but she was confused whether he knows anything about death, or human beings are subject to death. Cruso was buried next day in the presence of crew and captain said a prayer. Susan’s suppression doesn’t stop here she has to protect herself from being subjugated by the male patriarchy.

Therefore, *Foe* also echoes the suppression of female protagonist Susan Barton who is not authorized to obtain freedom to write her own story. She was asked to curtail truth from her story so that her story can be modified according to Mr. Daniel Foe (eminent man of letters). Cruso’s death, Friday’s inability for speech and reshaping of her narrative according to Foe, forced her to struggle for narrating her own story. It depicts that how economic condition and gender plays important roles in the subjugation of female writer. Susan is doubly suppressed on the one hand being female and on the other for not having strong economic background:
[...] I am a free woman who asserts her freedom by telling her story according to her own desire…In the beginning I thought I would tell you the story of the island and, being done with that, return to my former life. But now my life grows to be story and there is nothing of my own left to me. I thought I was myself and this girl a creature from another order speaking words you made up for her. But now I am full of doubt. Nothing is left to me but doubt. I am doubt itself. Who is speaking me? Am I phantom too? To what order do I belong? And you: who are you? (131-33)

This indicates that she has doubly been interpellated into a subject as explained by Althusser where, which meant the construction of mind and turning someone into subject. Said has also argued that the construction of writer’s conscious is controlled by the hegemonic realities therefore our history is Problematic. In Althusser’s sense Problematic is a process in which the knowledge of geography, sociology, economics, political systems, and anthropology have been formed by colonial masters and they have been manifested in different light:

Orientalism is not a mere political subject matter or field that is reflected passively by culture, scholarship, or institutions; nor is it a large and diffuse collection of texts about the Orient: nor is it representative and expressive of some nefarious “western” imperialist plot to hold down the “oriental” world. (12)

Author has the authority to modulate the historical realities and therefore Said argues for the authentification of historical sources. Context of the text depends upon the authority of the master and how a text is formed in economic, linguistic, cultural, and historical
realities of that time “There is nothing mysterious or natural about authority. It is formed, irradiated, disseminated; it is instrumental, it is persuasive; it has status, it establishes canons of taste and value; it is virtually indistinguishable from certain ideas it dignifies as true, and from traditions, perceptions, and judgments it forms, transmits, reproduces…All these attributes of authority apply to Orientalism” (19-20). Similarly, Virginia Woolf in her seminal text A Room of One’s Own (1929) tries to fight for economic freedom for female so that they can write in their own space. This text revolves around the metaphor of “room” which is not only a room as a living space but independence to explore own consciousness when woman want to write something along with financial freedom. So she argues “a woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to write fiction…to have a room of her own, let alone quiet room or sound-proof room…unless her parents were exceptionally rich or very noble…separate lodging…from the claims and tyrannies of their families” (4, 52).

Daniel Foe wants to resettle her story “The island is not a story in itself, said Foe gently, lying a hand on my knee. We can bring it to life only by settling it within a larger story” (117). But Susan doesn’t agree on his proposal and argues that “The story I desire to b known by is the story of the island. You call it an episode, but i call it a story in its own right. It commences with my being cast away and concludes with the death of Cruso and return of Friday and myself to England, full of new hope” (121). Virginia Woolf (1929) compares fiction with the spider’s web because it cannot be spun in the midair likewise fiction it does not arise in a vacuum but it is “attached to life at all four corners” and it is “attached to grossly material things” (43-44). She has concluded so on the basis of her own condition because she doesn’t feel free till the time she begins to receive a
fixed income through inheritance which further changes her outlook towards men. She articulates this state as the “freedom to think of things in themselves...power to think for oneself” (38-39, 106) and “the right to speak their minds” (64, 66). M.A.R Habib in *A History Of Literary Criticism and Theory: From Plato To The Present* (2008) explores that how Woolf situates literature within the realm of economic, social and political context. The historical tradition of literature which has been written by man and defines woman’s image through their perspectives therefore Habib articulates “The metaphor of one’s own “room” as embodying the ability to think independently, takes another level of significance from its resistance to the appropriation of language, history, and tradition by men...A room of one’s own might also represent the possibility or ideal, of writing in a female language or at least appropriating language for female use”(677, 678). Further, Woolf (1929) criticizes the attitude of men towards women “women have burnt like beacons in all the works of all poets” women has been treated as important character but in reality “she was locked up, beaten and flung about the room” as per imagination she has given prime position but she is “completely insignificant” and is “all but absent from history” (43). She explains the theory of “androgyny” Greek term fusion of two words man and woman according to *The Oxford Companion to English Literature* (2009) which means ‘perhaps a mind that is purely masculine cannot create, any more than a mind that is purely feminine’ (859). According to Woolf “in each one of us two powers preside, one male, one female, and in the man’s brain, the man predominates over the woman, and in the woman’s brain, the woman predominates over the man. The normal and comfortable state of being is that when the two live in harmony together, spiritually co-operating...Coleridge perhaps meant this when he said that a great mind is androgynous”
She suggests to have a mixture of the two because “the intellect seems to predominate and the other faculties of the mind harden and becomes barren” and if we have to be creative then there should be amalgamation of both “marriage of opposites has to be consummated. The whole of the mind must lie wide open if we are to get the sense that the writer is communicating his experience with perfect fullness” (104). According to Woolf reality comprises “common life” and “world of reality” so that women can see “human beings not always in their relation to each other but in relation to reality” (113-114). Therefore, women can be liberated in real sense and can see the world from their own perspectives not through the eyes of men so that they can define the vision of reality.

Female subjectivity is determined not only by the power structure but also by the complex setup of dominant patriarchy. Simone de Beauvoir in *The Second Sex* (1952) argues that woman has given secondary position from time immemorial and always treated as other. She articulates “one is not born, but becomes a woman. No biological, psychological, or economic fate determines the figure that the human female presents in society: it is civilization as a whole that produces this creature, feminine” (249). Susan Barton in the novel has to fight for her right throughout the novel because she doesn’t have any male to stand beside her that’s why she has always been looked down upon for being female. Simone de Beauvoir points out that a man doesn’t have to preface his opinions with “I am a man” but woman has to confine her femininity with her sex. She asserts a man “thinks of his body as a direct and normal connection with the world, which he believes he apprehends objectively, whereas he regards the body of woman as a hindrance, a prison…Woman has ovaries, a uterus; these peculiarities imprison her in subjectivity, circumscribe her within the limits of her own nature”(xv). Susan Barton is
interpreted as a whore in the brutal world of man where man holds the supreme position. She is thought to be a whore because she had left her home alone in the search of her daughter and a single woman who roams around is a whore in Bahia:

Bahia is a city built on hills…The streets are a-bustle with people going about their business, slave and free, Portuguese and Negro and Indian and half-breed. But the Portuguese women are seldom to be seen abroad. For the Portuguese are a very jealous race. They have saying that: in her life a woman has but three occasions to leave house- for her baptism, her wedding, and her burial. A woman who goes abroad freely is thought a whore. I was thought a whore. (115)

De Beauvoir (1952) criticize Aristotle and St. Thomas saying that “female is a female by virtue of a certain lack of qualities” and “female nature is afflicted with a natural defectiveness” (xvi). Therefore, she summarizes this historical tradition of thought as “Thus humanity is male and man defines woman not in herself but as relative to him; she is not regarded as an autonomous being…she is the incidental, the inessential as opposed to the essential. He is the subject, he is the Absolute- she is the other” (xvi). Women’s existence bound to her body because she has suffered from the “bondage of reproduction” (57) and she doesn’t have anything to rely on because “The body, the sexual life, and the resources of technology exists for man” within the “total perspective” which defines his existence only (55). Women is dethroned from the right of property and she herself was property before marriage her father’s and then her husband’s property. Therefore her existence defined by “chaos, darkness and evil” (74). Woman can be emancipated by giving her economic, social, and psychological freedom. Women can attain the inner metamorphosis through social and economic
equality and through this “the slavery of half of humanity can be abolished” (688).

Further, Carol Lazzaro-Weis in his work From Margins to Mainstream: Feminism and Fictional Modes in Italian Women’s Writings 1968-1990 (1993) explains that “[a] theory of experience allows women to contemplate how we place ourselves or are placed in social reality, and what constitutes that which we perceive as a subject” (09).

Susan has to fight with the strange eyes of sailors because she felt unsafe as only female onboard. She is not sure whether do they believe that she is Mrs. Cruso or they know that she is not Mrs. Cruso. Susan lives by the name Mrs. Cruso because she felt unprotected being with Negro slave with no tongue and no one else to protect her:

I should tell you that Captain Smith had proposed that I call Cruso my husband and declare we had been shipwrecked together, to make my path easier both on board and when we should come ashore in England. If the story of Bahia and the mutineers got about, he said, it would not easily be understood what kind of woman I was. I laughed when he said this—what kind of woman was I, in truth?—but took his advice, and so was known as Mrs. Cruso to all on board. (42)

But the she continues and asks, ‘Mrs. Cruso or as a bold adventuress? Think of me what you may, it was I who shared Cruso’s bed and closed Cruso’s eyes, as it is I who have disposal of all that Cruso leaves behind, which is the story of his island’ (45). This powerful representation of Susan echoes the distinction Judith Butler made in her two famous interventions Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity (1990) and essay Imitation and Gender Insubordination (1991) between Sex and Gender where she strongly argues that while sex is biological, gender is culturally constructed and it is based on cultural performances:
If heterosexuality is compelled to *repeat itself* in order to establish the illusion of its own uniformity and identity, then this is an identity permanently at risk, for what if it fails to repeat, or if the very exercise of repetition is redeployed for a very different performative purpose? If there is, as it were, always a compulsion to repeat, repetition never fully accomplishes identity. That there is a need for repetition at all is a sign that identity is not self-identical. It requires to be instituted again and again, which is to say that it runs the risk of becoming de-instituted at every interval. (24)

This de-institutionalization of gender which occurs through Susan’s powerful character is what challenges the stereotyped patriarchal system in the novel. Further, Helene Cixous’s “The Laugh of the Medusa” (1976) breaks the myth of Medusa which was related to the repression of female sexuality and beauty. She tries to see the “laugh” of Medusa as a liberating force in the history of male mythology. She intervenes for the female language and negates the notions related with female body. She asserts that “Woman must write herself…Woman must put herself into the text-as into the world and into history- by her own movement” and “Write yourself. Your body must be heard” (279, 284).

This novel also deals with the suppression of Friday, who was a Negro slave, it was not only his muteness but his race also alters and suppresses his subjectivity. Slavery and race are intertwined with each other as Frantz Fanon in *The Wretched of the Earth* (1963) affirms “you are rich because you are white, you are white because you are rich” (31). Not only Fanon but other critics such as Edward Andrew in *Shylock’s Rights: A Grammar of Lockian Claims* (1988) highlights that how “John
Locke also profited from slave trade, justified slavery in his writings, codified it in the constitutions he wrote for American colonies, advocated colonial conquest, and denied the right to rebel against the colonial power” (62). Not only John Locke but David Hume also negates the capability of Negros as Henry Louis Gates in “Writing, ‘Race,’ and the Difference it Makes” (1985) exemplifies when David Hume comments on the ability of Blacks “I am apt to suspect the Negroes, and in general all the other species of men (for there are four or five different kinds) to be naturally inferior to whites” (10). Hume in his essay “Of National Characteristics” (1748) states that the Negroes were “naturally inferior to the whites” and it was on the basis of “nature” that negroes had “no arts, no sciences” (60). He does not only connect the color with intelligence but extends his comparison between blackness and stupidity. So Gates concludes “The correlation of ‘black’ and ‘stupid’ Kant posits as if it were self- evident” (10-11).

Further, Gates reveals “the remarkable capacity of European philosophers to conceive of ‘humanity’ in ideal terms (white, male) yet despite, abhor, colonize, or exploit human beings who are not ‘ideal’” (408). Friday’s slavery and race was reason behind his suppressed voice which never unravelled the mystery behind his silenced words. Susan poignantly points out the pain and the lack of expression in the following quote:

[…] how did you come to lose your tongue? Your master says the slavers cut it out; but I never heard of such a practice, nor did I ever meet a slave in Brazil who is dumb. Is the truth is that your master cut it out himself and blamed the slavers?

…The tongue is like the heart, in that way, is it not? Save that we do not die when a knife pierces the tongue. To that degree we may say the tongue belongs to the world of play, whereas the heart belongs to the world of earnest. (84, 85)
This violence on the colonized people is a universal phenomenon found in most European colonies. In this light, Frantz Fanon (1963) defines slavery as being nothing but the creation of colonial power, especially by the European countries.

Violence in the colonies does not only have for its aim the keeping of these enslaved men at arm’s length; it seeks to dehumanize them...European has only been able to become a man through creating slaves and monsters...This European opulence is literally scandalous, for it has been founded on slavery, it has been nourished with the blood of slaves and it comes directly from the soil and from the subsoil of that underdeveloped world. The well-being and the progress of Europe have been built up with sweat and the dead bodies of Negroes, Arabs, Indians and the yellow races.

(13,22,76)

Similarly, Harriet Jacobs asserts in her Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl (2000) in discussing how “slavery is a curse to the whites as well as to the blacks” (Jacobs 2000:56). W.E.B. Du Bois considered the history of philosophical discussions of identity, agency, and ethics when he published The Souls of Black Folk (1989). He asks and painstakingly answers the question “How does it feel to be a problem?”(1). Mr. Daniel Foe asked Susan to use Friday as a tool for her story and use him as long as they wish to. Because of his tongue he cannot speak about his history so there was a golden chance for Mr. Daniel Foe to write whatever he wants to write but Susan was not in this favor and again protests for Friday:

Friday’s desires are not dark to me. He desires to be liberated, as I do too. Our desires are plain, his and mine. But how is Friday to recover his freedom, who has
been slave for all his life? That is true question. Should I liberate him into the world of wolves and expect to be commended for it? ...Even in his native Africa, dumb and friendless, would he know freedom? There is an urging that we feel, all of us, in our hearts, to be free; yet which of us can say what freedom truly is?... As to Friday, how can Friday know what freedom means when he barely knows his name? (148-49)

Susan’s concerns for Friday are well established and go deep in the field of the construction of self through language. Fanon (1963) asserts that slavery is rooted in the colonial power. Slaves are made for cheap labour that cannot voice themselves and live life throughout merely as puppets in the hand of powerful settlers:

Deportations, massacres, forced labour and slavery have been the main methods used by capitalism to increase its wealth, its gold or diamond reserves, and to establish its power. Europe has stuffed herself inordinately with the gold and raw materials of the colonial countries: Latin America, China and Africa…The wealth which smothers her is that which was stolen from underdeveloped peoples. The ports of Holland, the docks of Bordeaux and Liverpool were specialized in the Negro slave-trade, and owe their renown to millions of deported slaves. (80, 81)

Susan wants to liberate him from his muteness so that he can speak through pictures, gestures or written words so she tries to teach him few words. In these efforts too, she suddenly and very powerfully puts to the fore a major problematic hiding behind the purpose of teaching language to a colonized person.

“Now do Friday!” I say, and stand aside. Watch and do: those are my two principal words for Friday, and with them I accomplish much…While he works I teach him
the names of things. I tell myself I talk to Friday to educate him out of darkness and silence. But is that the truth? There are times when benevolence deserts me and I use words only as the shortest way to subject him to my will. (56-60)

Susan made every attempt to persuade him to speak “But what we can accept in life we cannot accept in history. To tell my story and be silent on Friday’s tongue is no better than offering a book for sale with pages in it quietly left empty. Yet the only tongue that can tell Friday’s secret is the tongue he has lost!” (67). She wants to know the truth behind his muteness so she makes two sketches. In one sketch she draws a man with a knife in his hand (Cruso) and a black man kneeling before him naked with tied hand. She asked him again and again ‘consider these pictures, Friday,’… ‘Then tell me the truth?’… ‘Cruso cut out Friday’s tongue,’ (68) in second sketch she pictured little Friday with arms starched behind him and this time man with knife was a slave-trader. She explained him who is slave trader and again asked him ‘Did a slave trader cut out your tongue, Friday? Was it a slave-trader or master Cruso?’ (69) But all her attempts were futile. She concluded that may be long years of speechlessness lost his ability to speak anything. She convinced herself that he has lost his tongue but not ears so she doesn’t stop to teach him anything new. She makes two sketches to unravel the mystery behind his cutting of tongue but everything was useless:

[…] many stories can be told of Friday’s tongue, but the true story is buried within Friday, who is mute. The true story will not be heard till by art we have found a means of giving voice to Friday…Friday has no commands of words and therefore no defence against being re-shaped day by day in conformity with the
desires of others. I say he is a cannibal and he becomes a cannibal; I say he is a laundryman he becomes a laundryman. What is the truth of Friday? (118,121)

This novel also echoes the phenomenon of Foucauldian concept of silence and resistance which have been tools to negate hegemonic power. Silence is a way of resistance as it has been depicted by Michael Foucault in his *The History of Sexuality (1978)*. Unlearning the language can be done by the process called silence because silence is a tool to negate hegemonic power and silencing gives power not to be subjectivized. He insists that power is everywhere because it comes from everywhere and “there is power, there is resistance, and yet…this resistance is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power” and “no single focus of great Refusal, no soul of revolt, source of all rebellions, or pure law of the revolutionary. Instead there is a plurality of resistances, each of them a special case” (95-96). This resistance can exist only “in the strategic fields of power relations” and it is not “doomed to perpetual defeat” (96). He reinstates that how society form a “dense web” through apparatuses and institutions which play an important role in the suppression of weak people of society and resistance “traverses social stratifications and individual unities” which further make revolution possible through “strategic codification of these points of resistance” (96). Silencing can be an act of liberation in Bhabha’s views and identity is like a hymen (mixture of two) or *pharmakon*. Homi Bhabha in his *Location of Culture (1994)* reinstates the fact that how the colonizers have subjugate the colonized the natives through power and turned them into an object. The process of the object formation or making of colonial slaves can be seen as a result of power politics. In this process the colonial masters with the structure of power or authority turn the colonized self into objects and prove themselves as subject. Colonial subject is signifier (image) and
the signified (meaning) changed when the master changed. ‘Mimicry’ shouldn’t be complete enslavement of the mind by the hegemonic power of the colonizer. Mimicry is a process which allows colonized to understand or negotiate with a particular cultural tradition in order to interrogate and to find out some creative and model knowledge, tradition or culture:

[a] range of contemporary critical theories suggest that it is from those who have suffered the sentence of history-- subjugation, domination, diaspora, displacement—that we learn our most enduring lessons for living and thinking. There is even growing conviction that the affective experience of social marginality…transforms our critical strategies. (172)

Friday’s muteness was his resistance against his master. He doesn’t want to learn to read and write because he doesn’t want to be the part of the discourse of his master. Barton wants to teach him her language but Friday’s silence echoes his disinterestedness in their discourse. The last paragraph of the novel articulates and justifies all that Suasn has learnt about words and power, “but this is not a place of words…It is the home of Friday” (157).

Thus the chapter in nutshell explicates the fact that hegemony plays an important in construction and subjectivization of colonial subjects. In the process of colonization the colonial subjects are enslaved and interpellated the power of knowledge system, language, and economic realities. As it has been explained by several theorists that colonial subjects gradually in the process of colonization gets translated into an object from subject. The journey doesn’t stop here, in fact they further translate themselves into
a suppressed subject because their subjectivities and self are not powerful to reflect and represent themselves rather they become an object of the desire of the self which turn them into other. Further, the novel shows the limitations of language because Susan Barton is mute in non-literal sense for not being able to write her story in her own right. Friday is mute in the literal sense and is not able to express his thoughts and ideas because of tonguelessness on the other. They both are not free to express themselves as they wanted to. Economic freedom also pays an important role in the construction of Susan’s subjectivity because being incapable to write her story she has to fight with Mr. Daniel Foe. Because he wants to set her story in his own right not in the way she has wanted to narrate. Language also plays an important role in the formation of one as a subject. Sapir and Whorf in their ‘linguistic determinism’ explain the fact that thought and language are inseparably intertwined and thus the present study has explicated the proposition that the construction of the self is possible through linguistic realities