



Language and Gender in Short Films: I'm Just Your Clown: Sociolinguistic Study

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ABSTRACT

The film I'm Just Your Clown is a short film on the Fikrifadlu YouTube channel about the story of the life of a teenage girl named Fia who is cheated on by her boyfriend and then tries to tell her complaints to her boyfriend Alwi. The use of language between female and male characters in this film is the focus of this research. The aim of this research is to describe the language differences between male and female characters and to describe the factors that influence the language differences between male and female characters. This research is a qualitative descriptive research. The data source in this research is the short film Aku Only Your Badut on the Fikrifadlu YouTube channel which was viewed and taken by watching the film from start to finish. Data collection was carried out by recording observations and then collecting them. The results of the research were to see the differences in language and characteristics of the male and female characters in this film.

Keywords: Sociolinguistic Study, Language and Gender, Analyzing Film

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INTRODUCTION

According to the Big Indonesian Dictionary, a film is a live picture play (story).¹ Films in English are called *motion picture* (live image). Film is a combination of efforts to convey messages through moving images, the use of camera technology, color and sound. These elements are based on a story that contains a message that the director wants to convey to the film audience. In the current era where technology is developing rapidly, films are a spectacle that people always enjoy, so there is no doubt that films can be an important medium for conveying various messages to the public.

Films have several types²: Film Documents (*Documentary Film*), Short Story Films (*Short Film*), Long Story Films (*Feature-Length Film*), Company Profile Film (*Corporate Profile*), Television Advertising Films (*TV Commercial*). Short films are usually under 60 minutes long. This type of film is often produced by film students or people/groups who like the world of film and want to practice making films well. Apart from that, there are also those who specialize in producing short films, and usually the results of this production are supplied to production houses or television channels.

¹ KBBI

² https://elib.unikom.ac.id/files/disk1/662/jbptunikompp-gdl-robtaofik-33085-10-unikom_r-i.pdf

The short film on Fikrifadlu's YouTube account entitled "I'm Just Your Clown" has been watched more than one million times. This film tells the story of the lives of today's teenagers who have problems with their boyfriends because they were caught cheating. Alifhia Fitri, usually called Fia, caught her boyfriend Fikri cheating in a cafe, then slapped him and immediately left him. Then he met his boyfriend named Alwi to tell him about his girlfriend cheating on him. Then Alwi tried to calm Fia's heart by continuing to try to cheer her up, so that Fia slowly began to return to being as cheerful as before. Until one day Alwi invited Fia to meet at a restaurant, but before Alwi met Fikri, Fia's ex-boyfriend came first and immediately proposed to Fia. Without thinking, Fia accepted his proposal because Fia still had hopes for Fikri. This incident was accidentally witnessed by Alwi, who also slowly liked Fia, but when he saw this incident, Alwi was disappointed and immediately left the two of them.³

Language is a communication tool used by society to express ideas that have become a common consensus. These language expressions describe the tendencies of the people who speak them. Therefore, to study and explain language, it must involve social aspects that characterize that society,⁴ such as social order, age, gender and so on. In Indonesian, there are lingual units which are biologically sexist to differentiate gender, such as the phoneme /a/ for the masculine gender and the phoneme /i/ for the feminine gender.⁵ research conducted by Holmes showed that in the languages of Indian tribes in South America, some words used by men were longer in sound than those used by women.

We can not only find the influence of gender in speaking language in society, we also find it in the media, one of which is the short film. This time the researcher will try to analyze the language and gender in the short film entitled "I'm Just Your Clown" on the Fikrifadlu Youtube channel.

Research on language and gender issues in films has also been widely carried out, including by Rahma Salbiah from UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta who analyzed language and gender in the film *Athirah*, directed by Riri Riza. This film tells the story of a woman who is very patient with her polygamous husband.⁶ Then there was also Haira Rizka from IAIN Syekh Nur Jati Cirebon who analyzed two cartoon films with two male and female main characters, namely the cartoon films *Dora the Explorer* and *Go Diego Go*, where these two cartoon films each starred a male and female character, giving rise to different languages.⁷ There is also Istina Husen who analyzed language and gender in the film *Hantu Taman Lawang* directed by Aditya Gumay where she found not only external differences regarding gender in the film, but also social and cultural ones, namely body movements and facial expressions, voice and intonation, ways of behaving towards other people.⁸

³ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JLri7R3OoY4&t=447s>

⁴ Harimurti Kridalaksana, *Language Functions and Language Attitudes* (Flores: Nusa Indah, 1985), p. 4

⁵ Triyono Sulis, —*Gender Marking Lingual Units*, in *Humanities Journal*, Faculty of Cultural Sciences UGM Vol. XV, No. 3 years. 2003, p. 58

⁶ Rahma Salbiah, *Language and Gender in Athirah's Film*, an-Nahdah al-'Arabiyah; Journal of Arabic Language and Literature.

⁷ Hair Rizka, *Language and Gender in the Cartoon Film Go Diego Go and Dora the Explorer: A Sociolinguistic Study*, Vol.2 No.2 July-December 2017

⁸ Istiana Husn, *Language and Gender in the Film Hantu Taman Lawang*,

Sociolinguistics studies the relationship between language and society, which links two fields that can be studied separately, namely the formal structure of language by linguistics and the structure of society by sociology (Wardhaugh 1984: 4). Sociolinguistics is an interdisciplinary science between sociology and linguistics, two fields of empirical science that are very closely related. What is sociology and linguistics? Many limitations have been made by sociologists regarding sociology, but the point is that sociology is an objective and scientific study of humans in society, institutions and social processes that exist in society. Sociology tries to find out how society occurs, lasts and continues to exist. By studying social institutions and all social problems in a society, we will find out how humans adapt to their environment, how they socialize, and place themselves in their respective places in society. Linguistics is a field of science that studies language, or a field of science that takes language as its object of study. Thus, it can easily be said that sociolinguistics is an interdisciplinary field of science that studies language in relation to the use of that language in society. Sociolinguistics can be defined as the study of language in relation to society.⁹

In sociolinguistic studies, language is defined as a system of symbols, in the form of sounds, arbitrary, productive, dynamic, diverse and human. As a social phenomenon, language and language use are not only determined by linguistic factors, language is influenced by social and situational factors. Social factors, for example, social status, education level, age, economic level, gender, etc. Situational factors, for example, who speaks, in what language, to whom, when, where, and on what issue. A linguistic distinguishing aspect that is not always present in language, namely gender. According to research, there are indeed a number of people who use men's speech with women's speech. Language differences do not mean two completely different and separate languages, but their language is still one, it's just that men and women use language with different characteristics. Women maintain language more while men are more innovative and innovative.¹⁰

Of course, location, different cultural situations and the age of a person will make differences in the style of language spoken by men and women. Therefore, this research aims to analyze the language of men and women in the short film entitled I'm Just Your Clown. This research analyzes the differences in male and female language in the film.

METHOD

This research is descriptive qualitative research. The data source for this research is from the film I'm Just Your Clown from the Fikrifadlu Youtube channel by watching the film from start to finish because the duration of the film is no more than 15 minutes. Data collection was carried out using observation techniques and recording the data and then collecting it.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Analysis of Language and Gender in the Short Film "Aku Anya Clown You"

Many studies on language and gender have been carried out by linguists using foreign cultural contexts (western culture). In the early period (1960-1970s) research focused on grouping speakers according to biological sex. This research highlights the existence of phonological and grammatical differences between men and women. The research paradigm regarding language and gender then changes to the conversational

⁹ Sayama Malabar, *sociolinguistics*, (Gorontalo, Ideas Publishing: 2015) Pg. 2

¹⁰ Rahma Salbiah, *Language and Gender in Athirah's Film*, an-Nahdah al-'Arabiyah; Journal of Arabic Language and Literature. Things. 59

strategies used by women and men. Further research is based on the use of conversational strategies that can be used to increase conversational dominance.¹¹

The things that can be researched related to language and gender include:

1. How is the use of language different between men and women (for example: grammar, pronunciation, choice of vocabulary, choice of topics, strategies used in conversation, use of taboo words, politeness, accuracy in written language)
2. Can similar patterns be observed across societies?
3. Do men and women speak differently in the same group and in different groups?
4. How are men and women as communicators portrayed in literature, advertising, comedy, and so on?
5. What is meant by sexist language, where does it occur, and why?
6. What is society's attitude towards men's and women's language?
7. What is the role of gender differences in language change?
8. How do children learn to speak and write according to their gender?¹²

For example, one of the studies regarding conversation strategies between men and women is regarding language politeness. This research was conducted by Brown on the Maya tribe in Mexico. Brown tested the hypothesis which states that women are more polite than men, women are more sensitive regarding the facial needs of others. He found that women use politeness indicators more than men, and that women have distinctively feminine strategies regarding politeness. The results of this research are in line with Lakoff's argument that women use a style of speech that is characterized by features that convey hesitation, ephemerality and politeness: it seems reasonable to predict that women in general will speak more formally and politely, because women are culturally positioned in a status that is relatively secondary to men and because a high level of politeness is expressed from subordinates to superiors.

Example:

A: Please, sir, put my data on a flash disk!

From the conversation excerpt above, we can see that A actually told someone else (in this case someone called Pak) to move the data to his flash disk. The strategy chosen so that the order does not offend other people's feelings is by choosing the words "please, sir" and using a sulky style. Apart from that, the word 'dong' is a form of solidarity' between the two people. With the strategy he uses, other people want to carry out his orders without feeling that their face is being threatened.

Men and women differ fundamentally in the way they use language to communicate. The versions used in the differences between male and female language are classified as follows:

1) Women's Language

At 0.55 Minutes. **ALIFHIA FITRI : Alwi, come here!!**

In this quote, Fia wants to meet Alwi because she wants to tell him something, then she sees Alwi sitting with her friends at a hangout place, and Fia calls Alwi from a distance to come over to her.

From Fia's actions we see that a woman feels quite embarrassed about meeting her male friends who are hanging out together. Therefore, in this

¹¹ Umi Hijri, *Language and Gender*, Lecturer at the Tarbiyah and Teacher Training Faculty Iain Raden Intan Lampung

¹² Alison Wray, Trott and Bloomer, *Project in Linguistics*, p. 139-140.

scene, Fia calls Alwi from a distance so that Alwi approaches her, not Fia who comes in the middle of a crowd of Alwi's friends.

At 1.38 Minutes. **ALIFHIA FITRI : Alwi, where are you? (via cell phone)**

I want to tell you a story, I want to confide in you

This quote tells us that Fia always contacted Alwi to meet him, because she wanted to tell him about her boyfriend and she felt suspicious that he was cheating on her, so she contacted Alwi several times to meet him.

This incident depicts a weak woman who needs a friend to talk to and share all the complaints that have happened to her. So he had to contact Alwi so he could tell Alwi what happened to his girlfriend. Because women think men are strong and have certain ways of calming women who are jealous and need calm. The quote above also shows that the language used by Fia shows that women need a place to complain, to tell the other person about their life.

At 3.28 Minutes. **ALIFHIA FITRI : But I still love him, but me too I've started trying to ignore him, I don't reply to his WhatsApp anymore, even if it's only for 10 minutes hehe**

In this dialogue, Fia tells the story of when she met Alwi when she wanted to tell him about her cheating boyfriend, and then Alwi immediately told Fia to just leave him because she didn't deserve a man like that.

However, we can see Fia's answer, where even though her heart is hurt, she still loves her boyfriend, even though she tries to ignore WA messages from her boyfriend, but she is only able to not reply for 10 minutes.

From the dialogue above, it explains that a woman who really sincerely loves someone, even though her heart has been hurt, she still cannot immediately leave him, in contrast to men who are more dominant in using logic rather than feelings, where when a man is cheated on, he will without thinking twice immediately leave the woman. Even in the dialogue above, Fia tried to ignore her boyfriend, but she still couldn't do it, she could only not reply to his WA for 10 minutes.

In detail, Pan describes the linguistic characteristics of women, including: (1) they tend to use more correct and standard pronunciation of words than men, (2) they usually speak in a higher tone than men, (3) their speaking intonation sounds more emotional, gentle and full of affection (Haira Rizka, 2017: 137).

At 9.19 Minutes. **ALIFHIA FITRI: Thank you for accompanying me then**

In this scene, Fia is disappointed and sad because her boyfriend is cheating on her, then Alwi always takes her out to play to erase her memories of her boyfriend and also to get rid of her sadness until Fia manages to get rid of that feeling of sadness and is happy again because of the actions Alwi takes to cheer her up.

In the dialogue above, Fia can be seen thanking Alwi for inviting her to play and entertaining her until the sadness in her heart disappeared and Fia managed to erase her memories of her boyfriend who had betrayed her. Here we see the figure of a weak woman who needs the strength of a man to be able to comfort her to relieve her sadness. We know that the thank you

above is due to the feeling of joy that arises from a woman's heart because she feels happy that there is a man who is trying to comfort her.

Men's goals in using language tend to be about getting something, while women tend to be about making connections with other people (Hani Atus Sholikhah, 2015: 31). Women are known to be gentle, beautiful, emotional and motherly, while men are considered strong, rational, powerful and manly (Haira Rizka, 2017:148).

2) Men's Language

At 3.20 Minutes, **Alwi: Did you hear that, it's like that, just keep it away, don't defend it**

In this scene, Fia comes to Alwi and tells him about her cheating boyfriend. And Alwi, as a man, immediately told Fia to just leave him, but Fia was unable to do that immediately because of the love that still existed for him. Here the differences between men and women are very visible in responding to things related to feelings. Where a man, when he has been hurt, will not think twice and will immediately leave him, while a woman is still trying to find a way of kindness so that she can still be with the person she loves.

Men tend to prioritize logic. Instinctively, his male side supports him to speak focused, direct, clear, logical, and target-oriented after much thought and consideration (Gray, 1998). This means that, in substance, men use one focus point to solve problems in their conversations (Hani Atus Sholikhah, 2015: 27)

At 6.39 Minutes **Alwi: that's it, Fi, you stop being so upset like this, your father is sick, Fia, he'll be really sad if you're like this and then.**

This dialogue tells the story of Fia who keeps thinking about her lover so she doesn't want to do anything and is always brooding. Alwi, who is on the side as a male figure, tries to calm Fia so that she can forget about her lover and not think about him anymore and Alwi tries to make Fia aware of what impact will happen to her father if he continues like that.

In this scene it can be seen that Alwi as a male figure tries to calm Fia, where he tries to be the figure of an imam who wants to calm his makmum when he is sad. A man will feel very proud when he is trusted by a woman to be a place to vent and tell his stories. And Alwi tried to succeed in that.

Gray said that in the eyes of women when men speak, they seem more linear, simple, not comprehensive, do not show emotion, usually in short sentences, and in the form of statements and are hierarchically oriented (Hani Atus Sholikhah, 2015: 25).

At 7 minutes. **42 Alwi: what are you doing here, are you listening? You're not useful at all for Fia, Fia doesn't need Loo in her life.**

In the scene, Fia's boyfriend comes to her house to try to apologize to Fia for his mistake, and Alwi happens to be at Fia's house at that time to calm her down.

Alwi spontaneously, as a man, tries to protect Fia by trying to scold and throw Fia's boyfriend out of his house so that he doesn't bother Fia anymore and so that Fia doesn't keep thinking about him. Alwi is seen as a man trying to protect a woman who is hurting. A man will indeed be very happy and proud when he succeeds in becoming a protective figure for women.

Because there are men who want to protect and women who want to be protected.

In Minutes 8.24 Alwi: **it's 10 o'clock, for example if we go down to the river to play white water rafting and swim in the river, it's busy, right?**

In the scene above, Alwi takes Fia to the playground to get rid of her sadness, but Fia is still sad and always thinks about her cheating lover, but Alwi doesn't run out of ideas to always comfort and give Fia peace.

In the dialogue above, you can see the figure of a man, namely Alwi, who is trying to cheer up Fia, and is lured with excitement if the two of them go there, as depicted in the dialogue above.

CONCLUSION

From the analysis above we can understand that a person's language and gender greatly influence a person's speech, apart from that social factors also influence this. Of course, men and women have different languages because of their different genders, so we can easily distinguish which language is usually used by men and which language is usually used by women. Likewise, a person's age will greatly influence it. The language of teenage boys and teenage girls is certainly very different from that of those who are no longer teenagers.

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